

Advice to opium eaters, with a detail of the effects of that drug upon the human frame, and a minute description of the sensations of a person who has been in the habit of taking opium ... / Written by himself ; to which are subjoined full directions which will enable every opium-eater entirely to conquer that injurious habit.

Publication/Creation

London : Printed for W.R. Goodluck ..., 1823.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/xskqt67y>

License and attribution

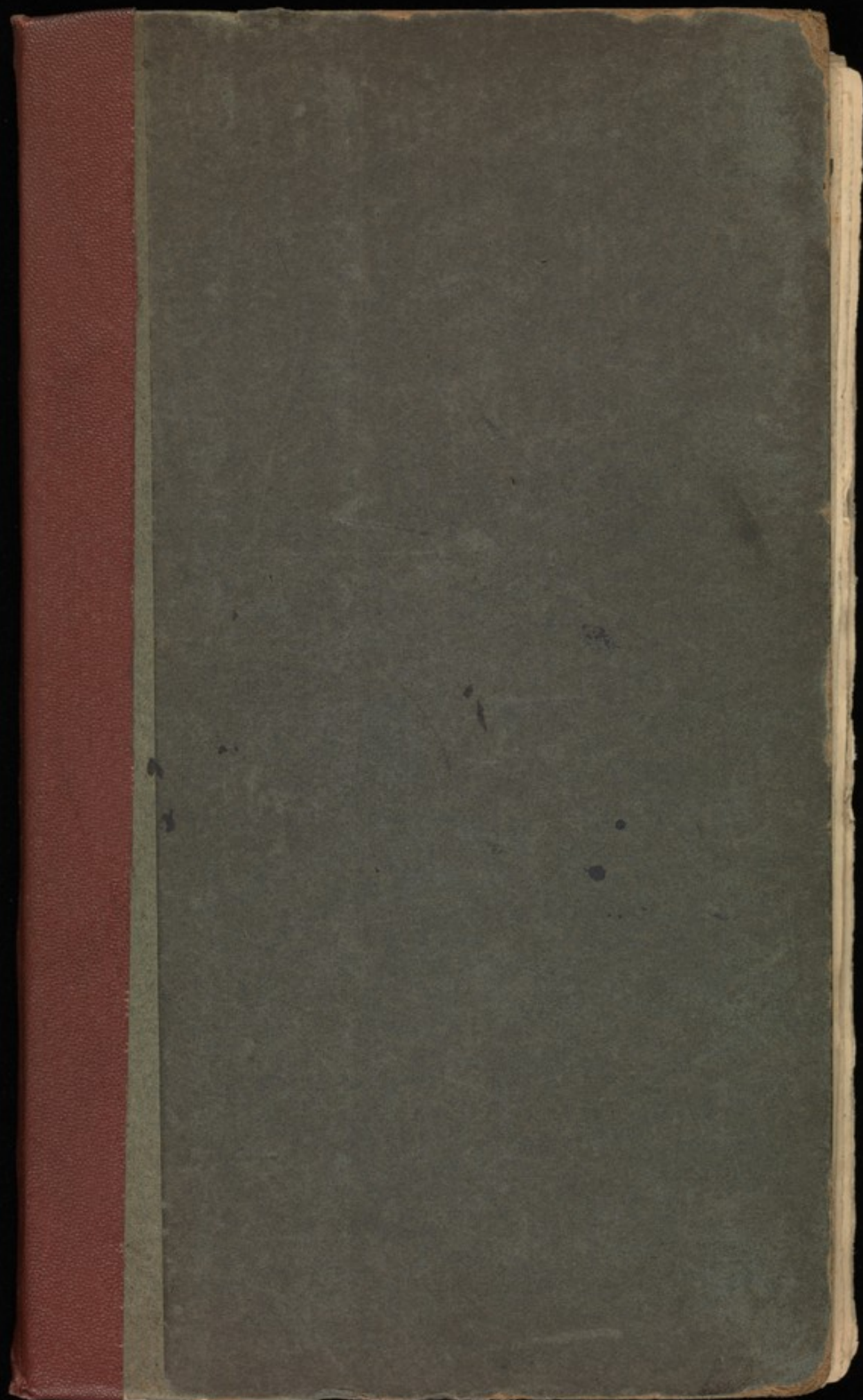
You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution, Non-commercial license.

Non-commercial use includes private study, academic research, teaching, and other activities that are not primarily intended for, or directed towards, commercial advantage or private monetary compensation. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>



P 10,337/B

~~46~~

31

76

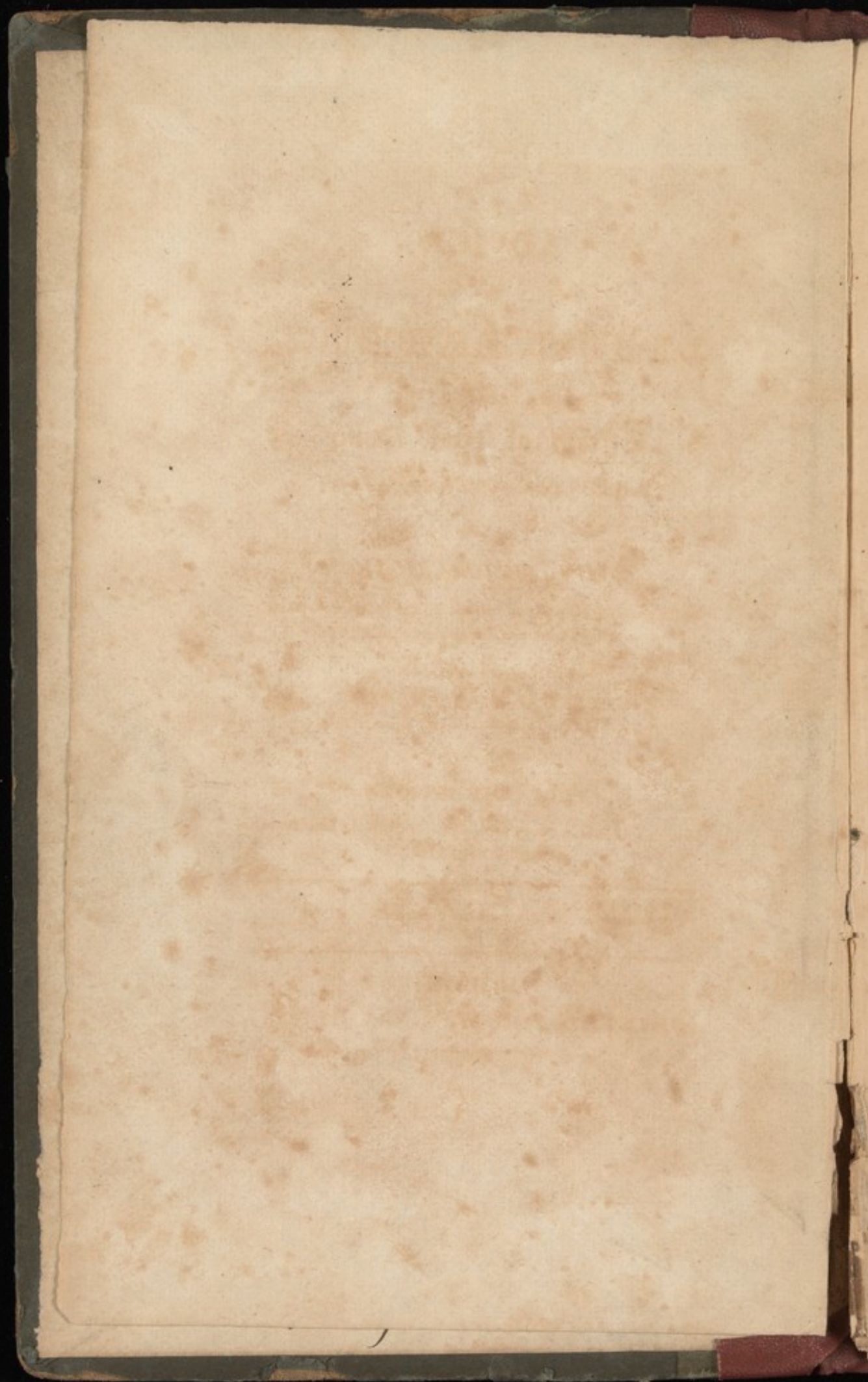
162
~~12~~

14
—
5

34 E

24594

Hod 757
23/6/10



ADVICE
TO
OPIUM EATERS,

WITH A DETAIL OF THE
Effects of that Drug
UPON THE HUMAN FRAME:

AND
A MINUTE DESCRIPTION

Of the Sensations of a Person who has been in the Habit of taking
Opium in large Quantities, during a period of Eight Years.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

To which are subjoined,

FULL DIRECTIONS

Which will enable every Opium-eater entirely to conquer
that injurious Habit.

“ Put this in any liquid thing you will,
“ And drink it off; and if you had the strength
“ Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.”—*Shakspeare.*

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR W. R. GOODLUCK,
80, CORNHILL.

1823.

24594



PREFACE.

—000—

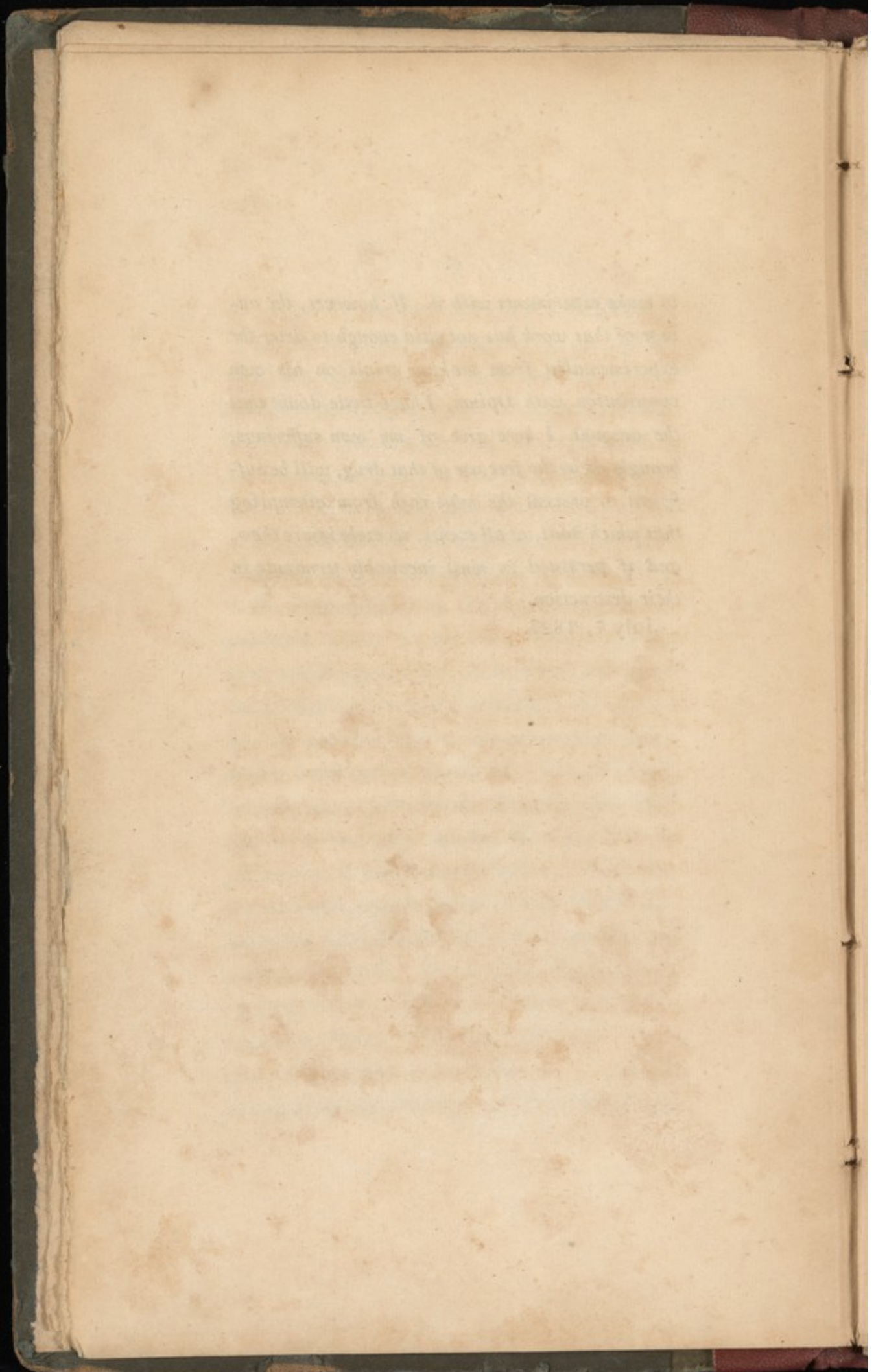
IN presenting the following pages to the world, I feel myself influenced by the same feelings which would impel a pilot who had severely damaged his vessel against a concealed rock, to warn other navigators of the lurking danger. I do not intend to boast, when I assure my readers, that I here present them with an opportunity of acquiring the very best kind of experience; viz. that which is purchased at the expence of another person, as for the certain and valuable knowledge I here tender them, I have unfortunately already paid, and fear I have still to pay a most severe and terrible price. It is with a view to prevent others from injuring their constitutions with Opium, as I have mine, that I publish this detailed description of my case, which, I am sure, will, if perused with attention, prove of the most important benefit to many persons.

I was the rather induced to hasten the appearance

of this work by the insertion of a paragraph in one of the public journals, stating that an eminent medical practitioner had affirmed, on an inquest, that many persons had greatly injured themselves by taking Opium experimentally, which trial they had been enticed to make by the fascinating description of the exquisite pleasure attendant on the taking of that drug, given in a recent publication on the subject. I suppose the book alluded to, to be that entitled, "*The Confessions of an English Opium Eater*," published a year or two ago. I have read this book, which appears to be the production of a gentleman and an accomplished scholar, but am at a loss to conceive how his communications on the subject could induce any person to be mad enough to make any experiments on themselves with Opium, as he decidedly informs the reader that the pleasure he derived from that injurious drug were far more than counter-balanced by the terrific consequences entailed upon him by his unguarded and unlimited use of it. He also uses this expression (p. 183, line 3.) "I saw that I must die if I continued the Opium." This, one would think, would give to those who were so happy as never to have known the misery of taking it, little encouragement

to make experiments with it. If, however, the author of that work has not said enough to deter the experimentalist from making trials on his own constitution with Opium, I have little doubt that the account I here give of my own sufferings, brought on by the free use of that drug, will be sufficient to prevent the most rash from attempting that which must, at all events, severely injure them, and if persisted in must inevitably terminate in their destruction.

July 7, 1823.



ADVICE TO OPIUM-EATERS.

—000—

CHAPTER I.

Introductory Observations.—Cause of my first taking Opium.—Which soon becomes a confirmed Habit.

AS I have no doubt but medical men may derive considerable information from an account of my case, I shall be particularly minute in the detail I am about to make of it. A perspicuous description of all the sensations of a man who has taken Opium in large quantities for several years, must, I should think, be valuable to the medical world, which cannot study too intimately the effects of that wonderful drug. The occasion of my first taking Opium, which took place between eight and nine years ago, was of that nature that I cannot publicly mention it. But as it may be important to the physical world to be informed of it, I shall detail it in a Latin note, which is given below.*

* Ut bene intelligant medici causas quæ me sollicitabant ab illo ultimo, periculosissimo atque extremo reme-

It was during a visit to Brighton in the year 1815, when I was not twenty years of age, that on the account I have mentioned, I began to take Opium. At first I took it at irregular intervals, and sometimes used æther and brandy as substitutes: and it was not till the year 1817 or 1818, that I acquired the habit of taking it constantly every day: a habit which unfortunately I still retain. Since the 1st day of January 1819, I have kept a regular account of the quantity taken each day: as I soon found it necessary to watch the progress of an enemy that I found gaining ground upon me so rapidly. This journal I will lay before the reader, to warn him of the insidious progress of this habit, which becomes necessary to a man's existence before he is aware of his dan-

dio, præsidium petere: in hoc loco has Latinè scribam, quia non decet istas in nostrâ linguâ ad oculos fœmineos monstrare. Diù me enervavit omni penissimè nocte morbus gravis iste a medicis vocatus nocturna pullutio, quæ non voluntaria emissio seminis virilis est in somno. Cum non aliter ab isto malo expers essem, in animo meo mecum volvebam OPIUM pro remedio tentare, atque maxima ex parte morbum meum sanavit istud medicamentum, quia pene omnibus noctibus, (opio sumpto,) arctiori quam solebam somno complexus eram, et nullis somniis turbulentis et stimulantibus tunc supervenientibus ab pollutione nocturnâ ista enervanti immunis eram.

ger. I began with 8 to 10 drops of laudanum, which gradually increased to an enormous quantity. Opium has this peculiar quality, that in a short time it loses almost all its power unless the Opium taker increases the dose, and hence in a few years he comes to take such a quantity as almost to exceed belief.



CHAPTER II.

Account of the pleasant Effects of Opium taken internally.

I WILL now proceed to detail the wonderful effects of Opium used internally. Of its effect in an external application I have nothing to say, as I speak almost entirely from my own experience, which is confined to the internal use of it.

I am fully sensible of the pernicious consequences that might result from adding or diminishing ought from the truth in a work of this nature, and I solemnly pledge my word that no puerile desire of exciting wonder respecting the surprising effects of this drug shall sway me to exaggerate in my account of them as experienced in my own person; my ipse dixi shall be made upon my own knowledge and upon that only.

First, I will describe its operation. O Opium, medicine of medicines, what genius shall I invoke to celebrate thy stupendous powers! the pen of a Homer only could, by description, do justice to a drug that can solace the bitterest woes, and convert the murkiest den into a

palace of delight. As the best things, when corrupted become the worst, so the wisdom of Divine providence has decreed that the greatest blessings enjoyed by man, shall, if abused, or made sources of intemperance, become our greatest curses and bring a heavy punishment on those who could not receive them with gratitude and wisdom. Thus Opium, one of the greatest blessings man enjoys, becomes, if used with intemperance, a source of inconceivable suffering.

The first great quality of Opium* is that of allaying pain. In this effect it is certain: no pain can stand before it: if a person can take Opium, he never need bear pain. The mode of its operation in producing this wonderful effect is unknown, and I fear it will long remain so. Opium is, when considered in this light only, a blessing of inestimable value.—Pain, that vanquisher of heroes and queller of the firmest mind, may here be made to yield in turn. Child-birth pains which are said to be

* The reader will understand that Opium and Laudanum are precisely of the the same nature, except that the latter, containing a spirit, operates also as a spirituous liquor in a great degree. Laudanum is made by pouring the best French brandy, or spirits of wine, upon crude Opium.

the greatest known by the human race, cannot stand against Opium, though it can seldom be much used in those cases, as a cessation of the pains, may retard, or altogether stop the delivery.

The following directions will give any person who is unaccustomed to Laudanum or Opium, and wishes to employ it in alloying pain. In such a case it is best to employ Laudanum, which usually operates in half an hour or twenty minutes, sometimes in fifteen, while Opium seldom begins to operate in less than forty minutes, and its effect is not in full force in less than an hour, or an hour and a quarter.* If a person not used to Opium be in violent pain, let him take ten drops of Laudanum in half a wine glass of water, and if the pain does not abate, let the same dose be repeated every half hour, until it ceases, which it assuredly will on the third or fourth dose. The reader will observe that I do not recommend this to every person indiscriminately, as some people cannot take five drops of Laudanum without being delirious. As for persons

* I am speaking here of Laudanum and Opium in small quantities, if taken in large quantities by a person not used to it, it would begin its operation in ten minutes or less, and bring on convulsions almost immediately.

who are used to Opium they do not need my directions how to relieve themselves from pain, all they have to do is to take a larger dose than they are accustomed to.

Opium not only takes away pain, but causes sensations of the most exquisite pleasure which is peculiar to itself and unlike every other pleasure. To give an adequate description of these sensations is impossible, but let not an idea of their exquisite nature tempt you, reader, to try them, for I warn you, you will pay a dreadful price if you acquire the habit of taking this seducing drug.

To proceed: these agreeable sensations of active pleasure are seldom experienced till a person has taken Opium for a period of ten days or a fortnight. About half an hour after the dose of Opium has been taken, a pleasant sensation arises about the region of the stomach; if the Opium-taker pursues some active occupation, such as walking, riding, &c. he feels an uncommon liveliness and activity, an extraordinary quick and alert spirit pervades his whole frame, his body and soul both seem to have received double strength, his nerves seem new strung; whatever he does is pleasant to him and he does it well; he feels as if he had just heard some very excellent intelligence, his

eyes sparkle, his heart beats joyously, nothing can give him any uneasiness. Wine, in its effects, resembles Opium in a small degree; as wine gives a little of mental exhilaration bestowed in so superlative a degree by Opium. To a man under the operation of the latter, nothing seems unhappy: a sentence of imprisonment, of banishment, nay even of death itself could at that time hardly disturb him.— If instead of some active employment the Opium-taker lies down when he has taken his dose, or sits perfectly still, he falls into a state of undescrivable content, in a state between sleeping and waking, a kind of dosing half slumber, in which the most agreeable images and thoughts are presented to the mind. The Turks usually prefer the latter mode of enjoyment, as they sit still for the most part after their Opium, which they take generally every afternoon about sun set. These are some of the effects of Opium; in the next chapter I shall give an account of several effects of this wonderful drug, which are opposite to each other in a wonderful degree.

CHAPTER III.

Account of the opposite effects of Opium taken internally.

THE effects of Opium that I have to relate, are so much more extraordinary than even those mentioned in the last chapter, that I am sensible nothing but my own personal experience can entitle me to claim for them the credence of the public: I shall therefore print in *Italics* those effects which I put down from any other authority than my own feelings; though I firmly believe that even those are perfectly true. Opium produces the following contrary effects. Those not printed in *Italics* I solemnly aver that I have myself experienced.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. It causes sleep. | 1. It also causes watchfulness, or the faculty of going for a long period without sleep. |
| 2. It causes sickness or nausea on the stomach. | 2. It quells sickness or nausea. |
| 3. It creates an agreeable lassitude or languor. | 3. It enables a person to bear almost incredible fatigue. |

4. It is generally very astringent to the bowels.

5. A long and free use of it materially injures the memory, and possibly the abilities.

6. It gives warmth in cold weather.

7. It causes thirst and heat.

8. It causes pleasure and quietude of mind.

4. Sometimes it causes a violent looseness.

5. During its operation it strengthens and enlivens the mind, causes aptitude for business, and gives unwonted vigor to the thoughts, and that kind of poetic fire that wine will sometimes give to an imagination of a delicate texture.

6. And enables a person to bear the most scorching heats of summer without inconvenience.

7. Yet is often cooling and diminishing thirst in fevers, and *has been known to cure a dropsy.*

8. It also causes uneasiness, catchings, and startings in the body, and *sometimes delirium and death.*

9. It new strings the nerves and muscles, strengthens the frame, and makes it capable of bearing any fatigue.

10. It gives extraordinary brightness to the eyes.

11. It causes exuberance of spirits, that according to the quantity approaches to ecstasy, and in very large quantities gives an Opium-taker the appearance of an enthusiastic semi-lunatic.

12. It causes pleasant dreams, and a gentle half-slumber, or a state between sleeping and waking, of indescribable pleasure.

9. It also relaxes the fibres, causes nervousness, *and brings on all the symptoms attendant on confirmed dram-drinking, and a premature old age if continued to excess for many years.*

10. It also gives the eyes the dead and glazed appearance of intoxication.

11. It also clouds or dulls the mind, creates languor, a black melancholy, listlessness, disinclination to move or speak, and a vacuum in the thoughts.

12. It also causes horrific visions, flittings before the eyes, terrifying dreams, and ghastly appearances in the sleep.

Beside these symptoms, so contrary to each other, Opium has the following effects. It yields a certain cure to colds and coughs, and difficulty of breathing; or rather it prevents them. During the eight years I have taken it, I have never had a cold or cough to remain a day, though I have frequently been wetted through both boots and stockings, without changing them. The reason of this is, that it greatly promotes both sensible and insensible perspiration, the cessation of which constitutes a cold.

This extraordinary drug is almost worshipped among the inhabitants of Turkey, who mix it with almost all their dishes. As their religion forbids wine, they have no means of exhilaration but Opium. From the large quantities they take, arises that carelessness and contempt of danger, and that frenzied courage which impels them to make those furious and desperate charges for which they are so remarkable. At the commencement of a war in Turkey, Opium always rises greatly in price, as the soldiers buy it up for their use during the campaign. The aid of brandy has frequently been employed for the same purpose, among Europeans, when soldiers have had to perform some very desperate piece of service.

CHAPTER IV.

Explanation of the Effects enumerated in the preceding Chapter.

OPIMUM causes sleep in those persons who, not being accustomed to it, take it in a small quantity. That (as I have mentioned) was its effect upon me for the first few months, but after that period, and as I increased the quantity, I found it absolutely contrary in its operation: far from promoting sleep, it made me particularly wakeful, and when I wanted to sit up all night to write or read, I found that by taking an extra dose, I could dispense with sleep with great ease, and feel quite lively and wakeful during the whole night. In 1819, I was preparing a work for the press, which required great labour in searching through many Greek and Latin authors, and I frequently took an extra quantity of Opium at midnight, which enlivened my spirits wonderfully, seemed to clear my head and enlighten my judgment, made the most laborious search among dry Latin books any thing but troublesome, and enabled me to pass the whole of a December's night, in intense study, sitting in my bed-chamber without a fire.

2. It will often create nausea when taken on a full stomach, but sometimes when in the morning I have woke up with a nausea occasioned by too large a dose on the previous evening, I have found the sickness turned by immediate recourse to an extra dose of Opium.

3. The languor I mentioned in Article 3. of the last chapter, comes on when the Opium-taker remains in a state of quietude, or a recumbent posture after he has taken his dose; its power of conferring strength I shall enlarge upon in Art. 9.

4. Opium is generally astringent. The cases in which it has been known to cause violent loosenesses is, that in a few instances, when persons have taken a very large quantity of Opium, intending to poison themselves, it has caused a violent looseness, which has carried off the poison, and relieved the intended suicide. This can happen only in very robust constitutions with a strong digestion.

The following account of a person who committed suicide with opium, may be interesting to the reader. About the year 1758, a young German, a native of Hesse, of the name of Stirn, came to England in the hope of bettering his fortune, which had suffered in the war

that just before that time had been carried on in Germany against the French.

After various vicissitudes, he was settled in the house of a Mr. Matthews, where he was to teach Latin to his landlord and music to his wife and daughter. Unhappily Matthews became jealous of Stirn, and one evening, when the latter returned home from a visit he had been making, he was met in the passage by a constable, who then gave him his trunk, and ignominiously expelled him the house under the charge of alienating Mrs. Matthews's affection from her husband, and obtaining money from her, which afterwards Matthews himself confessed to be false. Stirn, whose sense of honor was exquisitely delicate, conceiving his character irretrievably injured, was irritated almost, if not quite to madness. His temper was violent, and his piety not strong enough to check it. He went to a friend when he quitted Matthews's house, and used these words: "Sir, I am ruined, I cannot return to my own country: my friends would not receive an adulterer and a thief, for such am I said to be: I am desperate, I have forsaken my God and he has abandoned me." Let the fate of this unhappy young man be a warning to those who indulge in bursts of un-checked fury. Though he seemed under the dominion

of religion at times yet, at other periods, he was almost phrenzied with fury. Some time before he had resolved to shoot a Prussian nobleman, whom he suspected to have prejudiced him in the estimation of one of his friends: but this dreadful resolution he was happily turned from by the ramrod of his pistol breaking as he was loading it; upon which he fell upon his knees, and thanked God who had saved him from such a crime. This mercy, as he received it so profitably at the time, one might have hoped would have made a lasting impression, but no, for the night after he was expelled from Matthews's house, he went with a brace of loaded pistols in his pocket to a tavern where he knew that Matthews was in the habit of going in the evening to a club.—A friend, who from his wild and desperate manner, apprehended some mischief, accompanied him.

The name of this friend was Crawford. He observed that Stirn had drunk strong liquors frequently that night, which, he being a man of great temperance, had, with his agitation of mind, driven him into a state of phrenzy. Reader, let this story warn you, that you do not by drinking inflaming liquors when you are vexed or angry, add fuel to fire.

Matthews, and several of his friends, were in

the room when Stirn and Crawford entered, Stirn sat down sulkily and rolled his eyes in a wild manner, Crawford coming up close to Matthews whispered him.—“For God’s sake, Matthews, drink Stirn’s health: it is the only way to pacify him. You have accused him unjustly, and he is almost distracted.” Matthews answered that he would, and was on the point of doing so, when Stirn commenced an appeal to the company, and in his vehemence said things that provoked Matthews to curse him for a scoundrel, and bid him return to his countrymen: This provoked the unhappy wretch to that degree, that he began to rave like a lunatic; upon which the company inhumanly cried out “You are mad! You are mad! and ought to be confined.” His nature could bear no more, and rushing up to Matthews he discharged a pistol, which extended him a corpse on the spot, and almost at the same moment placed the muzzle of another pistol to his forehead, he pulled the trigger: but it missed fire, and he was disarmed.

It would detain the reader too long to detail the exquisite mental sufferings of this unhappy man previous to his trial, which terminated in his condemnation to the death of the gallows, an ignominy which he resolved to avert by sui-

cide. Nothing can set the inconsistencies of the human heart in a stronger light than the fact of Stirn's repeatedly falling on his knees and thanking God, in the most fervent manner for his escape from suicide, when his pistol missed fire, when directed against himself, and his determined resolution of avoiding a public death by suicide. As he avowed his intention, he was narrowly watched, and before his trial a piece of glass, three inches long, and exceeding sharp, was found concealed in his hair; and with this he owned he could have opened any vein at pleasure. After this, but still before his trial, he resolved to starve himself to death, and refused all solid food for several days with an unrelenting obstinacy; until the Sheriff caused him to be told that if he did evade a public death in this manner, his memory should not escape disgrace, but that a monument should be erected, detailing his name and crimes at length to perpetuate his infamy.—This, though mentioned with all the gentleness the subject would allow, drove him almost to phrenzy, "will they," said he "let, them if they dare," and rolling his eyes seemed to meditate some desperate attempt.—It was supposed that Opium was brought to him about this time, as he began to eat, saying, I never

would have eaten if I had not some comfort brought me. His trial came on, he was found guilty, and sentence of death feelingly and impressively pronounced. He petitioned to be allowed to go to Tyburn in a coach, to screen him from observation, this was refused, and might probably render him more desperate.—On the evening of that day a foreign minister desired to be admitted to him: the moment he entered, Stirn roughly desired every body else to quit the room, which was complied with—when the following conversation is recorded as having taken place.

Stirn (rising eagerly.) My best friend, have you the drug.

Minister. I have, but would to God you could resolve not to use it.

Stirn. Give it me, give it me, I am resolved (*takes it from the minister*) thanks my best friend, my preserver from a death of infamy.

Minister. Stirn, before you swallow that fatal drug, that may destroy the soul as well as the life of one I have always loved, hear me; the tender remembrance of our boyish friendship commenced in the happy days of childhood and cemented, in riper years, swayed me to pledge a rash oath of granting your last request,

and made me subservient to your destruction. Oh! my friend, before it is too late, pause, and reflect: self-murder is the worst of crimes.—Let not the estimation of a contemptible world impel you to despise the laws of your God.—Think of your aged and respectable mother, think of your innocent sisters; think of their grief, their agony, when they learn of your having perished in a foreign land: add not, I conjure you, a hundred-fold to their woe, by joining to it a fear of your soul's salvation.

Stirn. No more, my friend, no more! I am resolved. God is infinitely good and merciful, and will pardon me for my good intention: I must die: 'tis hard so young, so full of health, to perish: but my death is inevitable, and I hope I do not greatly transgress, if I chuse my own way of death.—For my dear relations, the very mention of whom rends my heart: comfort, support, bless them from me: say my last thoughts were of them. They are good, and God will keep them, for he is merciful beyond the short ideas and circumscribed views of man:—but for me, what will become of me! 'O my best friend! my companion in this dreadful hour! when I think on having sent Matthews unprepared, and in the midst of passion, to his awful audit, my soul

shrinks at it—Oh, horror! horror!’ Here the unhappy youth threw himself on the floor of his cell in an agony of despair—but after a few minutes his friend’s consolations calmed him, and throwing himself on his breast, he wept in silence: then hearing a distant noise in the prison, he started from him: “alas!” said he, “I may be interrupted and searched. I must be quick, oh, Jesus Christ, receive the spirit of a penitent!” with these words the wretched Stirn swallowed part of the Opium, and laid the rest on his table where it was afterwards found. He then fell on his knees, and prayed fervently for a short time, and gave and received a last blessing and agonized embrace from his friend, who fearing his bringing the poison might be known, hurried, with a bursting heart, from the dreadful scene. I will hasten to terminate this affecting story with the effects the Opium had on the unhappy Stirn. He took it about six in the evening—a deep stupor came on in half an hour; and the people about him suspecting the truth, a surgeon was sent for: he gave him an emetic, but in vain; instead of throwing up the poison, he only foamed at the mouth; and his face grew black; his pulse became full, heavy, and slow,

his eyes glassy and relaxed, and his lips black. He was urged to say if he had taken poison, but in vain. Every attempt to relieve him was in vain; stupor and relaxation increased every moment, and the pulsations gradually grew more faint, and one hour before midnight, five hours after he had taken the fatal potion, this wretched young man expired, and was soon after dissected and buried with disgrace, a terrific warning to teach us the controul of our headstrong passions, even from our earliest youth.



CHAPTER V.

Explanation of contrary Symptoms continued.

5. **T**HAT a lavish use of Opium injures the memory, I have too surely experienced in my own case; this is one of the evils it has brought upon me; and it is no trifling one. When not under the opiotic influence, my memory, that was once excellent, is now so uncertain, that I dare no longer trust to it. Things that I resolve to do one day are utterly erased from my mind before the next, and recur, perhaps, not at all. This I attribute to the continual relaxation of the brain, which diminishes its retentive power. On the other hand, during its operation, the forgotten ideas croud back into the mind, which more than recovers all its strength; and when I have any arduous task to perform, in the way of writing, either in prose or verse, I always find I succeed better after a large dose of the opiate, and this strongly proves that its effect cannot be justly compared to intoxication, (as some people have called it) as vinous influence always confuses and embarrasses the mental faculties.

6. Opium warms the whole frame when

taken in winter, partly by perspiration; and as extreme cold is a kind of pain, the Opium by causing pleasure, destroys it. In summer it always enables me to endure the most sultry weather with ease. I always find it necessary to take more in hot weather than in cold.—Sometimes, when the weather changes, or is about to change, with an increase of cold, I find my spirits rise considerably, and am enabled to do with about half the quantity I should have taken had it continued warm. In short, cold weather, strong tonics, or any thing that braces the nerves, will, in some degree, supply the place of Opium for a short time, which is the more extraordinary, as Opium RELAXES in a great degree.

7. It will frequently cause heat and thirst in the morning when a large dose has been taken the previous night: yet I have known it relieve the parching thirst and heat of a fever; as thirst, being a disagreeable sensation, cannot exist at the same time with the agreeable sensations of the Opium, as pleasure and pain cannot exist together.

8. This drug causes pleasure, quietude, and calmness of mind in an eminent degree. The opium-taker, after a full dose, feels for eight, ten, or twelve hours, that ovation or triumph

of spirits which is similar to the strong excitement of joy caused by unexpected and very excellent news. This effect is so strong, that it is hardly possible to vex or distress the person feeling it, for it throws a kind of enchantment over all his perceptions, and draws out the sting from the greatest afflictions; and though a habit of taking Opium, when it is confirmed by long practice, is very prejudicial, yet in one case I think I could venture to recommend the temporary use of it. When a man's misfortunes rise upon him in overwhelming misery, to that pitch that he finds his natural resources of fortitude no longer adequate to support him under the agonizing burthen that presses so hard upon his mind, it is far better to seek relief from a drug which is sure to give it, than, as but too many have done, to sink beneath the storm. I do not doubt that many men, who have been dragged along to the irretrievable and eternal ruin of self-slaughter by their miseries, would have escaped that horrid consummation had they tried the remedy of Opium.

I, myself, was present when a solicitor of the first eminence prescribed the panacea to a gentleman of reputation in the mercantile world whose affairs, though afterwards hap-

pily re-established, were at that time in great perplexity. It appeared singular to see a man who was the ornament of the law, acting as a member of the physical body, and attend to the support of the mind as well as the affairs of his client. But unfortunately, it is not every body who can benefit by the exhilarating qualities of Opium, as some persons (though few in number) cannot take the smallest quantity of either Opium or Laudanum, without effects of a most injurious nature. One of these persons, (a gentleman in the prime of life,) has assured me, that when the physicians have given him (as a composing draught) a mixture containing only eight or ten drops of laudanum, a short time after he has taken it he finds himself greatly distressed, he starts up in his bed, is full of uneasiness, has spontaneous and rather convulsive motions, and is oppressed with terror and melancholy. Another person, a friend of mine, not twenty-five years of age, was driven into a state of raving delirium by five drops of Laudanum, and remained for some hours in a state requiring personal coercion. Sometimes it will cause death, even when not in very large quantities, as was the case with the French poet, M. de Voltaire, who, unable to procure sleep, took

a dose of Opium, which proving too much for his enfeebled state, sent him to that sleep from which he professed to believe he should never awake.

9. Though a long and lavish indulgence in the use of Opium does certainly bring on relaxation and weakness, languor, and disinclination to motion, on which results I shall enlarge in a future chapter; yet it is equally certain that it will enable the human frame to support labour, and make exertions which it could not by any means accomplish without that drug; and it is also certain that persons may, by its help, perform the most incredible undertakings with very little food, either liquid or solid. The couriers, who, in many parts of Turkey, travel on foot, make journeys of immense length in a very short time by the assistance of Opium. This quality is one the most extraordinary appertaining to that singular drug, which relaxes exceedingly, and yet gives almost super-human strength. A singular adventure, which occurred during a journey I made not very long ago, will place the wonderful powers of Opium in a striking point of view; and though the story is not wholly connected with the subject I am treat-

ing of, yet it is so much in the style of romance, that I cannot resist the temptation I feel to "*parler Roman*," and present my readers with a detail of a circumstance, which, as a truth, may afford some instruction, and I hope some amusement also.



CHAPTER VI.

Detail of a singular Incident.

IN the middle of the month of December, in the year 182—, pressing business compelled me to quit a most hospitable house, in a lonely part of one of our most northern counties. I could procure no vehicle in less than a day, and for that time I could not wait. I set forth therefore on foot, and alone, about eight in the evening; the road, for the most part, being through narrow lanes, ankle deep in mud; and in addition to this, before I had proceeded ten miles, I was overtaken by a most tremendous storm of “thunder, lightning, and rain.”—Unused to long walks, even in the day, and in fine weather, it may be supposed I was soon inclined to seek a shelter. I believe I had very much mistaken my way, for several miles I never saw a human habitation. At last, I was rejoiced by the sight of a light, which seemed to proceed from a spot about a furlong distant from the road; all I had heard of Will-o'-the-wisps, quagmires, and green mantled pools, immediately came into my imagination, but the increasing violence of the storm cut short consideration,

and scrambling over a deep ditch, of which my clothes long retained the savour, I contrived to reach a small cottage, or kind of hut, which was embosomed among some bushes at the bottom of the dell. The door was opened upon my knocking, by a woman of mean appearance, who answered my request of shelter, by admitting me into a small room paved with flags, which presented a scene that reminded me of the hospitable robber in Lewis's romance. Round a rude grate fixed to the wall, in which blazed a large fire, there sat five men of a physiognomy that gave me very little satisfaction. Two of them were muffled in large wrapping coats, and evidently sought to shun my observation, though at the same time they eyed me with a very particular stare, and whispered together suspiciously, while one of the others scowled at me with a look of savage hatred. A round table stood near, well furnished for a carouse, and though they were in full conversation when I entered, a gloomy silence followed my appearance. But little satisfaction as I derived from their behaviour, I felt a very different sensation in contemplating a sight which no man, not even a Stoic, could look upon with indifference.

Men may attempt to describe a beautiful

woman, and produce a number of flowery sentences of lilies, roses, diamond, pearl, ivory, and the like; but it gives no idea of one woman any more than of another. I shall therefore attempt no description, as no description could do justice to the beauty of the young female I saw in that cottage. She sat at a corner apart, and appeared in deep grief, and her eyes red with weeping, though no sorrow could obscure her attractions. Her dress was plain, and seemed to shew that she was at home, I observed her start as I entered, and a sudden joy seemed to irradiate her features as she looked at me; a circumstance that I thought infinitely mysterious. However I had little opportunity to observe her, as my attention was drawn by the behaviour of the two men who were muffled in coats, one of whom took out a paper, and pretending to read in it, examined me narrowly from head to foot, whispering his companion, while one of the others began to ask a number of questions, as to where I came from? where I was going? and the similar demands. An impertinence to which I returned as rough answers as I thought was prudent, under the circumstances. As their conduct was so suspicious, I thought it best to retire as soon as possible, and, as they said

they could furnish me with a bed, I hastily quitted the room, requesting the woman who admitted me, and who was sitting with the Venus of the cottage, to light me to my room. The house, I believe, consisted but of four chambers, two on the ground and two above. I was conducted into a bed room that I concluded to belong to the owner of the house, as various articles of a man's dress were lying about. That he should abandon his bed to a stranger increased my surprize. I resolved to question my conductor, and prepared my interrogatories by slipping half-a-crown into her hand, first demanding to know who that young girl was? She very coolly thrust the coin into a large pouch under her gown, that seemed but little less than a coal-sack; grumbled out that the person I spoke of was her master's niece, and adding, that her master would be angry if she staid any longer, vanished in a moment.—Impelled by curiosity and apprehension, I did what nothing but the doubts I entertained of my safety could justify, I opened my room-door and creeping softly to the stair-head, endeavoured to overhear the conversation of the party below.

The stairs were so few, that by descending three or four, I could, though their door was

closed, overhear discourse that gave me very little satisfaction. I could distinguish the words, "*Go up at once!—Seize him!—Fire if he resists!*" Then another voice replied, "*No, no, we shall gain more by taking him alive!*"—Then, after a few indistinct words, I heard the same person say, "*Wait till he is asleep, and then he can make no resistance.*" Then followed another speech which I knew not what to think of, "*Niece, I insist—(upon your telling me I supposed followed) is that the man?*"—no female voice answered. "*So you won't tell—but it must, from——description, and he shan't escape us.*" Though I could not comprehend all I heard, I had heard enough to convince me that I had, by my own want of caution, placed myself at the mercy of a band of desperadoes. Fortunately, I had weapons, as I hardly ever travel without a pair of pistols; but I determined not to use them if I could possibly avoid it.*

* I will pause here a moment to dwell on the terrible sensations experienced at the prospect of a violent death. The idea of the awful change of state, and where a few minutes may carry you is terrible. Blair finely paints that terror.—

"The frighten'd soul runs raving up and down
Its clay-built tenement, and shrieks for help."

hastened back to the bed-room, secured the door as well as I could, and tried the window, and, to my great joy, I found that it opened easily ; and was very near the ground.—Thinking every moment an age till I had commenced my retreat from so dangerous a neighbourhood, I leaped from the window, the ground below was soft, I believe a flower-bed, and I alighted in safety on my feet. Expecting to be instantly pursued, I unbolted and cocked my pistols, which I had bolted before I leaped down from the window, lest they should “go off of their own heads,” as Acres says.—This done, I began my inglorious retreat, in double

And Farquhar, in the *Inconstant*, gives a fine portrait of a similar distress.—Mirabel has overheard four bravoës, who had entrapped him, resolve his death : he says, “Bloody villains, I overheard you ! was not I two hours ago the happy, gay, rejoicing Mirabel ? How did I plume my hopes in a fair-coming prospect of a long scene of years ! Life courted me with all the charms of vigour, youth, and fortune, and to be torn away from all my promised joys is more than death,” But just when the bravoës are about to dispatch him, his mistress, in disguise, under the pretence of bringing in wine, introduces his friend and six soldiers to his rescue ; then he exclaims, “The wine, the wine, youth, pleasure, fortune, days, and years, are now my own again !” And then, improved by the lesson, he resolves to use those blessings wisely for the future.

quick-time. To regain the road it was necessary to cross two or three fields. I had just arrived at a high gate which separated the last of these from the main road, when, at the very moment that I was climbing over the gate, and in the awkward posture of stepping backwards from one of the bars of it, I was not a little startled at feeling my collar seized by a rough grasp, with the peremptory injunction of "STAND," an exhortation which I with some difficulty obeyed. I hope this anecdote may operate upon all who read it, as a warning against precipitation, which then was within an ace of urging me to commit an irreparable mischief. The hand that held me shook so violently, that I easily freed myself from his grasp, and was on the very point of discharging a pistol into the breast of one who eventually proved an innocent man. I have strong reasons to be thankful that I was spared the commission of an act, that would have been a source of perpetual regret and remorse. The fatal trigger had certainly been drawn, had I not observed the man's obvious terror, and a backwardness in approaching, that did not bespeak the robber. This held my hand, and bidding him stand off, I demanded an explanation of his attack. At this moment I

perceived he had a companion with him, who, however, kept at a respectful distance. Upon my repeating my demand of knowing who my assailant was, &c, he replied that he was farmer G——. I soon discovered that he had mistaken me for some other person, and my enquiry respecting that person cleared up the mystery of the cottage. As I was, notwithstanding, very desirous to leave the vicinity of a place I had some reason to think dangerous, I walked briskly forward, and the farmer accompanied me, with his friend, and gave me, as we proceeded, an account of his story; but as the good countryman was most insufferably prolix, I shall give the substance of his tale, which, when embodied with some information I collected afterwards, at Y——, will explain a circumstance that gave me some alarm, and may give the reader some instruction. It appears that a gentleman who held a confidential situation in London, in a large house not 100 miles from the Monument, and whom we will here call Z——, had committed extensive forgeries and embezzlements on his principals. Detection followed, but not before Z—— had contrived to effect his escape from town; and he absconded while his friends arranged his departure from the British do-

minions. About a year previous to this discovery, Z—— had been on a visit to a friend in a northern county; and at a village-dance met with a rustic beauty, of whom he became enamoured. I need hardly say, that this was the fair vision of the cottage. She was the daughter of a substantial farmer in the neighbourhood, who had contracted to unite her to a young countryman, a kinsman of his; but the London gentleman, with his showy appearance, naturally pleased the eye of this village Venus better than the plain countryman, as with females of that class the eye, generally guides the heart. Let the fate of Betsey F—— (for that was the young woman's name) warn her sex against her double error. Her first and greatest fault was in disobeying her father's commands, by refusing his choice, and carrying on a secret correspondence with a stranger; the second, in connecting herself with a man of superior rank and education to herself. Many women permit their sanguine expectations to persuade them that love forgets all distinctions, and raises them to the level of the man who addresses them, be his rank what it may, and hence their credulous natures are betrayed.— But, to conclude my story, the unfortunate Z——, compelled to fly from his country, prevailed on Betsey F—— to consent to share

his fortunes. It was arranged, that he was to come down and join her in the neighbourhood of her father's; thence they were to proceed to L——, and from that city embark for America. A cottage belonging to an aged aunt of her father's, a simple, unsuspecting woman, was the place where they used to meet, and here it was fixed that Z—— was to join her, and then proceed to L—— to embark; but his letter to her, detailing the plan, had fallen into the hands of her father; his anger knew no bounds: intent upon marrying his daughter to his kinsman, he resolved to deliver Z—— into the hands of justice, and thereby revenge the seduction of his child. He himself rode over to Y——, and sent the officers of justice to the place of meeting, and dispatched his brother with Betsey to the same place, expecting Z—— to fall into the snare. This was the party that I fell into; they were on the tenter-hooks of expectation for Z—— when I entered, and the description of his person, with which they were furnished, answering very nearly to mine, which happened singularly to resemble his, they thought themselves sure of their prey. But having been informed that Z—— always went armed, with a resolution never to be taken alive, they deliberated on seizing me in those terms that gave

me so much alarm. The young man who was lurking at the gate of the field, was the young farmer whom Betsey's father had chosen for her husband, he had been acquainted with the whole affair and resolved to watch there to prevent Z—— from escaping. Great part of this account was given me by the young man, who was soon convinced of his mistake in attacking me, as he knew Z—— perfectly. The reader may feel interested to know the final fate of that unfortunate man. He obtained information of the snare that was laid for him in his projected meeting with his fair friend at the cottage, and avoided it. She at last, with great difficulty, effected her escape from her father's, and met her lover at L——, from which city this ill-fated pair embarked in search of a foreign asylum. But the avenging arm of Providence was uplifted to punish his abuse of his patron's confidence, and her undutiful desertion of her aged parents, who both died of a broken heart. These unfortunate lovers never reached the friendly shores they sought:—they were lost at sea, and the deep waves of the Atlantic now glide over the remains of two beings, once gay in youthful hope, who perished the lamented victims of error, and afford a sad but useful example of the fatal consequences of yielding to temptation.

CHAPTER IV.

Account of the Effects of Opium, resumed.

FROM this melancholy story let us turn, gentle reader, to the contemplation of the powerful effect of Opium in stimulating the system to the endurance of labour. On the night when the events detailed in the preceding chapter took place, I began my journey on foot at seven in the evening, and except about an hour I passed in the cottage, I walked during the whole night, taking nothing but Opium. I ought to premise that I am quite unused to great exertion, and a walk of eight or ten miles would always fatigue me. Nothing then can set the strength imparted by Opium in a more conspicuous point of view, than the following detail of the immense fatigue and want of sleep it enabled me to bear. My way lay entirely through narrow lanes, in which, at every step, as there was no path, and I was forced to walk in the middle of the road, I was half-way up my boots in mud; and it rained during almost all my journey. I continued my walk, without stopping, the whole night, and the whole of the next day; on the

evening of which, at eight o'clock, I arrived at Y——, having performed a distance of sixty miles on foot, in the most boisterous weather, in twenty-four hours, without rest, or scarcely any refreshment but a bason of milk, excepting Opium, of which I took, in the night and day, near half an ounce, equal to a quarter of a pint of laudanum. After walking these sixty miles, from which I felt no fatigue, I walked for several hours about the streets of Y——, and transacted some business of consequence. I then, after a very short rest, mounted on the outside of the stage, and travelled two nights and two days without stopping, in the most inclement weather, and in the course of the whole time I took little but Opium, which rendered me insensible to so much fatigue. I have no doubt that a man of the most robust health would have suffered greatly from so long a walk, and then so long a journey on the outside of a coach, in the middle of December; but that a person of delicate health should be able to perform it with ease, by the assistance of Opium only, must be considered a striking proof of the wonderfully-bracing, and invigorating qualities of that powerful medicine.

10. The tenth contrary symptom I have mentioned is, that Opium both enlivens and

deadens the eyes. It brightens them when taken in moderate quantities, but an excessive dose gives the eyes that glassy appearance they assume in the agonies of death. In this place it may not be amiss to give a minute detail, made by an eminent practitioner of physic, of the successive symptoms which he had observed in a person unused to Opium, who had taken an excessive quantity at once. The symptoms were—

1. In about five minutes a heavy weight at the stomach.
2. A glowing heat in the lungs and abdomen.
3. Excessive gaiety of humour at first.
4. Sardonic laughter afterwards.
5. Laxity and debility of all the parts.
6. Alienation of the mind.
7. Loss of memory.
8. Darkness of the eyes.
9. Laxity of the cornea.
10. Appearance of divers colours.
11. Deadness of the eyes.
12. Faltering of the tongue.
13. A sopor and slow wide pulse.
14. A high colour and looseness of the jaw.
15. Intumescence of the lips.
16. Fury and madness.
17. Violent itchings.

- 18. Nauseas and vertigoes.
- 19. Hiccoughs and vomitings.
- 20. Convulsions and cold sweats.
- 21. Faintings and Leipothymies.
- 22. Cold breath.
- 23. Death.

11. The great satisfaction of mind, exuberance of spirits, courage, bravery, and equanimity caused by Opium, Dr. Willis, and other medical men who lived in the last century, attributed to its deadening and stupifying the brain, senses, &c. but this is as palpable a mistake as the ancients made when they supposed that it operated by a cold quality; for so far from deadening the mind it adds the greatest keenness to the perceptions of the sensitive soul, makes the mind more serene and apt for the transaction of any business, be it ever so complicated, and allays and composes all perturbations of the spirits arising from anger, grief, terror, and the like. Yet, on the other hand, it gives birth to a dull and heavy disposition, after a long and lavish use thereof, as I shall mention hereafter.

12. Thus the effect of Opium, if motion is used after it, is greatly to increase activity; yet when taken just before bed-time, it com-

poses the senses into a half slumber or deliquium, which is indescribably pleasing. The mind is soothed and lulled with the most agreeable images, which in sleep are changed into pleasant dreams. Dr. Jones, formerly chancellor of Llandaff, truly called it a heavenly condition; adding, that no worldly pleasure was to be compared with it. Yet, after a long use of it, it will bring on fits of the incubus, commonly called the Night-mare, in a very violent degree, as I shall explain when I come to enumerate the bad effects of Opium. The last effect I have commented on in Chapter 3, is that of promoting perspiration, which Opium does in a wonderful degree, and in that instance is of infinite service. The Turks drink coffee with it, which assists it greatly in its operation, as coffee is a very powerful sudorific. I have now concluded the explanation of the effects of Opium, many of which are so enticing, that it is not to be wondered at if many persons, who are always seeking after something new, should be tempted to make trial of the delightful sensations I have described, but I hope that what I have to say in the next Chapter will deter them from an experiment which, in all probability, would be the destruction of their health and quiet.

CHAPTER V.

Of the ill Effects of a long and lavish Use of Opium.

I WILL describe one of the consequences of a long use of Opium, which few people but Opium-takers have the least idea of, and which is a continual source of danger and uneasiness. It is this, that a person who has long indulged in a lavish use of Opium cannot dispense with it for a single day. It is certain death to discontinue it suddenly. If I were by any accident to be placed in a situation where I could procure no Opium for forty-eight hours, or at most three days, no earthly power could save me from death, and a death rendered a thousand-fold more terrible by the inconceivable agonies that must attend it. It is difficult to describe the pleasures of Opium, but the torments felt by a person in want of it, it is infinitely more difficult to give the faintest idea of. It happened some time ago, that by an unaccountable negligence I forgot to provide myself with any Opium, and never discovered my omission till I was awoke about two or three in the morning by the

want of my accustomed dose. This occurred in the country, and it was impossible to procure a supply before six in the morning, but the agonies I suffered before that hour beggar all description. The first sensation that warns a person that he wants his usual supply of Opium, is a perpetual yawning repeated every half minute. Next, his eyes are filled with water; intolerable distresses follow; the sufferer feels an aching and relaxation; sitting up is out of the question, and in bed he cannot lay in one posture for half a minute at a time. Agonizing heats, oppressive beyond conception, at intervals, seize the whole body. The muscles and nerves are relaxed, tremors, startings, and the most deplorable weakness follows. And a wretched death will soon terminate the pangs of the sufferer, if relief be not speedily obtained from Opium. And yet so wonderful are the powers and properties of this drug, that a person lying in the state described, and apparently in the agonies of death, will, upon taking his usual dose, be restored in one hour to a state of perfect ease, health, and strength. In such a case let Laudanum be given the moment it can be procured, as that operates sooner than Opium, being already dissolved. If a person should

be in distress for want of Opium till that can be obtained, he may, in some small degree, supply its place by large draughts of wine or brandy, but the latter must be used with caution, lest it injure the coat of the stomach.—The reader may form, from this detail, some conception of the risks to which an Opium-taker may be exposed. Suppose him in the service of his country, and made a prisoner; in the hurry of marching and counter marching, and perhaps ignorant of every language but his own, he can procure no Opium, and the dreadful consequences we know. He may take a voyage and be kept at sea weeks, perhaps months longer than he expected, and his stock of Opium may be exhausted. He may be among strangers, and become insensible from illness, those about him, of course, cannot divine his habits of taking Opium, and that his life depends on it, and for want of his accustomed dose, a few hours terminates his existence. In short, a hundred cases may occur in which a man, even if he do not lose his life, may suffer intolerable torments for the want of a drug which habit has made as necessary to him as the air he breathes. For this reason, as well as the consideration of the injury it brings on the health, I most earnestly

recommend all Opium-eaters to leave off the use of this drug, and I will, in a future Chapter, give them full directions how they may easily and safely accomplish so desirable an event.

I think it may be useful to mention, in this place, the following singular fact, viz.—That some time ago, and while I was taking Opium in large quantities, an eminent surgeon prescribed, as a remedy for an illness I was troubled with at that time, *Hemlock* pills. I began with one large pill, increased to two, then to three, and at last to four, till I found the *Hemlock* gaining ground upon me, exactly as the *Opium* had done, and that I soon began to feel uncomfortable at the want of it. Alarmed at being thus threatened with two tyrants and torments instead of one, I resolved never to swallow another grain of *Hemlock*, and happily I kept my resolution, or I doubt not that by this time I should have found my nightly dose of *Hemlock*, a habit not to be easily shaken off.

In addition to the corporeal sufferings that Opium-eaters are so liable to, I may name the injury they sustain in the alienation of their memories by the relaxation of the brain, and in the alleged deadening of the acuteness of

their mental faculties, except during the operation of the Opium.

As no man can be supposed to be an adequate and impartial judge of his own abilities, I cannot pretend to assert that the Opium has, or has not, affected mine. It may, however, be inferred, that what injures the brain in its retentive powers, as it certainly hurts the memory, and may diminish its strength in other respects.



CHAPTER VIII.

*Account of the Quantities of Opium taken from
May 1, 1819, till July 31, 1823.*

I AM induced to present the reader with the following summary, with a view to shew the gradual progress by which, from a few drops of Laudanum, a person may come, in a short period, to take as much Opium daily as would kill twenty men who were unused to it. It would be too tedious to the reader to peruse the account day by day as I kept it, I will therefore state the total of each month, with its daily average.

For the greater convenience of reckoning and comparing one day with another, I always have been used to keep my account in drops of Laudanum. I reckon thirty drops of the common London Laudanum to be equal to one grain of Opium.

The Chemists reckon only 25 drops to the grain, but I am confident that one grain of the best Opium is equal in *narcotic* power to 30 drops of common Laudanum, as I allow five drops for the strength of the spirit, of which the latter is composed. Previous to 1819, I

kept no regular account, but from what follows, it is easy to imagine by what gradations I rose from 10 drops daily in 1815, to the quantity I took in May, 1819.

MONTHLY ACCOUNT.

1819.

| | Drops of Laudanum. | Average per Day. |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|
| May | 4,413 | 143 |
| June | 5,044 | 168 |
| July | 5,832 | 188 |
| August | 9,106 | 293 |
| September | 16,887 | 562 |
| October | 22,446 | 725 |
| November | 41,583 | 1,386 |
| December | 37,801 | 1,219 |

1820.

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------|
| January | 34,408 | 1,109 |
| February | 27,286 | 940 |
| March | 24,133 | 778 |
| April | 22,917 | 763 |
| <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| Total | 251,856 | 690 |

During the summer months the reader will observe, that the quantity increased rapidly, but as the weather became colder, it grew gradually less.

MONTHLY ACCOUNT.

1820.

Drops of Laudanum. Average per Day.

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|-------|
| May | 27,399..... | 884 |
| June | 35,407..... | 1,180 |
| July..... | 37,056..... | 1,195 |
| August | 42,505..... | 1,371 |
| September .. | 41,732..... | 1,392 |
| October | 46,266..... | 1,492 |
| November | 35,448..... | 1,181 |
| December | 44,010..... | 1,420 |

1821.

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------|
| January | 59,595..... | 1,922 |
| February.... | 52,695..... | 1,881 |
| March | 60,840..... | 1,963 |
| April | 58,650..... | 1,955 |

| | | |
|---------|---------|------|
| Total.. | 541,603 | 1484 |
|---------|---------|------|

With what astonishing rapidity the Opium gains ground, the reader will be convinced by the account of the year beginning in May, 1820. Had I not struggled against this in-croaching habit, I am convinced I should soon have required a pint of Laudanum per day, and I know not where it might have stopped. In the next year, the reader will see how gradually I repelled this insidious enemy. At

the period when I took it in the largest quantities, viz.—about 2000 drops per diem, I found a great diminution of appetite, and augmented irritation of the nerves.

100 grains

Still more injurious consequences resulted from my taking Opium in such very large quantities. A most oppressive disorder molested me almost every night, rendered my sleep unrefreshing, and tortured me with the increasing apprehension of sudden dissolution. My sufferings at that time were extremely acute. Almost every night I was visited by this terrible disorder, which from the misery it caused, and the apprehensions of death, made me dread to seek the refreshment of sleep, and poisoned all my comforts. The best description I can give of it is, that after I had slept for three or four hours, I awoke suddenly with a heavy oppression on the breast, difficulty of breathing, cold sweats and a low pulse. I seemed for some minutes to be under the influence of a kind of night mare, or incubus, as a weight of several hundred pounds, seemed to press upon my breast; and though I was awake and perfectly sensible of my situation, I was unable to speak, stir, or move a muscle, though I exerted myself to agony to rise. After I had lain in this state

for some time, suffering indescribable pains and apprehensions, I used to find myself gradually growing insensible, and in spite of all my struggles and efforts to the contrary, my brain seemed to whirl and I grew giddy, as if I was sinking into an unfathomable pit, till my thoughts left me, and I became quite senseless. How long I continued in that state I have no means of ascertaining, but I should think it was not above a few minutes; as when I next became sensible I always started up in a paroxysm of terror, with every nerve glowing with the heat of fire. But terrible as this disorder was from the corporeal sufferings it gave birth to, it was still more terrible as it alarmed me with the continual apprehension of sudden death, taking place during one of those fits of insensibility. I became now effectually roused to exertion, as I saw still more dreadful consequences might be anticipated if I permitted the Opium to gain ground on me, as it had done during the previous year.

In addition to the nightly miseries I have described, I used to wake up every morning with such an extreme langour as made rising from bed, or any motion, the most severe punishment. Ennui, listlessness, and indisposi-

tion to move, speak, and almost to think, were daily increasing on me to an inconceivable degree. Add to this great nervousness, loss of appetite, and extreme weakness, and the reader will easily believe what I was fully assured of, that my death would be inevitable if I persisted in taking such enormous quantities of that seducing and pernicious drug.

MONTHLY ACCOUNT.

1821.

Drops of Laudanum. Average per Day.

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------|-------|
| May | 66,030..... | 2,130 |
| June | 56,250..... | 1,875 |
| July..... | 34,350..... | 1,108 |
| August | 44,910..... | 1,448 |
| September | 41,940..... | 1,398 |
| October..... | 47,016..... | 1,516 |
| November .. | 26,985..... | 899 |
| December | 29,550..... | 953 |

1822.

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|-----|
| January | 19,200..... | 619 |
| February..... | 17,880..... | 637 |
| March | 17,220..... | 555 |
| April | 16,620..... | 554 |

| | | |
|---------|---------|-------|
| Total.. | 417,951 | 1,145 |
|---------|---------|-------|

The reader will observe, that during this year I gradually diminished my daily quantity, from 2,130 drops as low as 554 per day. The means by which I accomplished this diminution I shall explain when I give my rules for leaving off Opium. In the mean time the most happy consequences resulted from it, as I was wholly freed from that terrible nocturnal disorder described in page —.

It is certainly one of the most singular properties of Opium, that though in itself it is highly relaxing, yet any thing bracing will, in some degree, supply its place, as clearly appears from the account of the foregoing year, when in August, September, and October, I took in each month above 40,000 drops, and in November, when it began to grow cold, was able to sink at once to 26,000.



MONTHLY ACCOUNT.

1822.

Drops of Laudanum. Average per Day.

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------|-------|-----|
| May | 15,780 | ..... | 509 |
| June | 13,921 | ..... | 464 |
| July | 11,430 | ..... | 368 |
| August | 9,197 | ..... | 296 |
| September | 6,080 | ..... | 202 |
| October | 5,548 | ..... | 179 |
| November | 9,284 | ..... | 309 |
| December | 11,244 | ..... | 362 |

1823.

| | | | |
|----------------|--------|-------|-----|
| January | 10,426 | ..... | 336 |
| February | 14,224 | ..... | 508 |
| March | 16,089 | ..... | 519 |
| April | 18,478 | ..... | 615 |

| | | | |
|----------|---------|--|-----|
| Total .. | 141,701 | | 388 |
|----------|---------|--|-----|

1823.

| | | | |
|------------|--------|-------|-----|
| May | 17,248 | ..... | 556 |
| June | 19,318 | ..... | 643 |
| July | 24,018 | ..... | 774 |

| | | | |
|--|--------|--|-----|
| | 60,584 | | 658 |
|--|--------|--|-----|

Thus I have brought the account down to the present time, by which the reader will see

that in last October I had brought myself gradually down to 179 drops per day, and I have no doubt I could have entirely subdued this injurious habit, but unfortunately, at that time I had some very arduous business to transact, and to obtain the energy necessary to go through with it, I was obliged to have recourse to increased doses of Opium. But when an interval of leisure gives me an opportunity, I have no doubt of entirely subduing this prejudicial habit. The astonishing rapidity with which it gains ground is placed in a striking point of view, by the preceding account, from which it appears, that I took nearly a million and a half of drops of Laudanum in fifty-one months.



CHAPTER IX.

Full Directions for leaving off the Opium.

AS every Opium-eater must be fully sensible of the benefit he would derive from a discontinuance of so pernicious a habit, I trust the following recommendations will be received with the attention they deserve. In an attempt to conquer a habit of this nature, it must be considered that NATURE is slow and gradual in all her operations, and therefore any sudden and violent change must be extremely injurious. A habit that has been gradually acquired, must be gradually left off; and this is more particularly the case with Opium-taking. When a person first begins to take this narcotic, he would die by taking a quantity, which afterwards, when he is used to it, he would die if he did not take. To leave Opium off *suddenly*, is, as I have observed before, certain death, and death attended with tortures too dreadful for description. A Doctor Jones, an eminent physician, writes as follows:—
“ The effects of suddenly leaving off the use of Opium, after a long and lavish use thereof, are great, agonizing, and even intolerable dis-

tresses, anxieties, and depressions of spirits, which, in a few days, commonly end in a most miserable death, attended with strange agonies, unless men return to the use of Opium, which soon raises them again, and certainly restores them if it has time to operate before they die, which it soon does in a liquid form; or, if they have not Opium, or will not take it, they must use wine very plentifully, and often, as a substitute to Opium, though it doth not perform half so well as Opium. A sudden leaving it off also causes a return of all diseases, pains, and disasters, that were palliated by the taking of Opium; also dangerous loosenesses and death follows the sudden leaving it off, after a long and lavish use thereof."

This is the opinion of Dr. Jones, which my own experience has fully proved to be perfectly true and correct. The reader will also observe, that these terrible miseries attendant on the sudden leaving it off, are greater or less in proportion to the time and quantity that it has been used in. By practising the following rules I am confident that any Opium-eater, of tolerable health and strength, may bring himself entirely to dispense with that powerful and injurious narcotic.

1. Let the Opium-eater who resolves to be-

gin a regimen with a firm resolution to conquer that habit, commence, if possible, in the cold season. The cold, which greatly braces the fibres, will, in some measure, supply the place of Opium.

2. The Opium-eater should, if possible, dismiss all business from his mind, and keep himself free from all irritation and uneasiness; if his circumstances allow of it, he had better retire into the country when he begins his regimen for leaving it off, and in some quiet sequestered place furnish himself with plenty of amusing books, and keep his mind continually employed on pleasing subjects.

3. I will suppose the person about to adopt these rules, to be in the habit of taking about 1,000 drops per day. Any person who takes more or less can easily regulate his doses upon this scale. Let him then, for the first four days take 1,000 drops each day; then let him diminish his daily dose to 990, and take that quantity for four days more.

I will suppose that he commences his regimen on the 1st of November, let him proceed thus:

| Nov. | Drops. | Nov. | Drops. |
|------|--------|------|--------|
| 1... | 1,000 | 3... | 1,000 |
| 2... | 1,000 | 4... | 1,000 |

| Nov. | Drops. | Nov. | Drops, |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 5.... | 990 | 18.... | 970 |
| 6.... | 990 | 19.... | 960 |
| 7.... | 990 | 20.... | 950 |
| 8.... | 990 | 21.... | 980 |
| 9.... | 980 | 22.... | 960 |
| 10.... | 980 | 23.... | 950 |
| 11.... | 980 | 24.... | 940 |
| 12.... | 1,000 | 25.... | 950 |
| 13.... | 980 | 26.... | 940 |
| 14.... | 970 | 27.... | 940 |
| 15.... | 970 | 28.... | 940 |
| 16.... | 970 | 29.... | 940 |
| 17.... | 990 | 30.... | 940 |

During this regimen the Opium-eater should live well, and take five or six glasses of claret or port after dinner. If he be used to wine, he may take double that quantity. As he will frequently feel a lassitude and languor, he may recline every now and then upon a sofa; and if he feel faint, he may take a glass of wine at times, whenever a sensation of faintishness comes on. Every night at bed-time a strong glass of brandy and water may be taken with advantage, and porter (which is narcotic in a small degree,) should be the beverage at meals. The next month let him proceed as follows:—

| Dec. | Drops. | Dec. | Drops. |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 1..... | 930 | 17..... | 905 |
| 2..... | 930 | 18..... | 905 |
| 3..... | 930 | 19..... | 900 |
| 4..... | 920 | 20..... | 900 |
| 5..... | 940 | 21..... | 905 |
| 6..... | 920 | 22..... | 900 |
| 7..... | 920 | 23..... | 920 |
| 8..... | 915 | 24..... | 910 |
| 9..... | 915 | 25..... | 900 |
| 10..... | 910 | 26..... | 900 |
| 11..... | 910 | 27..... | 900 |
| 12..... | 915 | 28..... | 890 |
| 13..... | 910 | 29..... | 896 |
| 14..... | 915 | 30..... | 890 |
| 15..... | 910 | 31..... | 890 |
| 16..... | 910 | | |

The regimentalist will now with pleasure contemplate his gradual, but at the same certain approaching conquest over this terrible enemy. In two months he will have brought himself down above a tenth of his usual dose, and being done so gradually, his comfort will not suffer much, and his health not at all. If he feels any tightness or contraction at the breast, let him use white wines instead of red, and be careful to avoid all strong acids as

much as possible. I should recommend a dose of Epsom salts once in three weeks, which is a stimulant, and a dose of the best Peruvian bark, or vinum Ferri, about once or twice in ten days, if much weakness be felt; and about once in eight or nine days it will be better to take rather a larger dose for one day, and then diminish again. The Opium-taker during this regimen, will frequently feel a sudden flush of heat run over his whole body; this is occasioned by the want of the usual stimulant of the Opium, and when it is felt frequently, the patient should go into the open air, keep himself lightly clad, wash in cold water, both his face and hands, and take a glass of wine, or spirits and water without acid. The next month he should proceed as follows:—

| Jan. | Drops. | Jan. | Drops. |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 1..... | 880 | 11..... | 860 |
| 2..... | 880 | 12..... | 850 |
| 3..... | 880 | 13..... | 850 |
| 4..... | 870 | 14..... | 840 |
| 5..... | 865 | 15..... | 840 |
| 6..... | 865 | 16..... | 840 |
| 7.... | 865 | 17..... | 860 |
| 8..... | 860 | 18..... | 840 |
| 9..... | 875 | 19..... | 840 |
| 10..... | 860 | 20..... | 840 |

| Jan. | Drops. | Jan. | Drops. |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 21..... | 830 | 27..... | 830 |
| 22..... | 830 | 28..... | 830 |
| 23..... | 835 | 29..... | 830 |
| 24..... | 830 | 30..... | 820 |
| 25..... | 850 | 31..... | 820 |
| 26..... | 835 | | |

From these scales the Opium-eater may easily proceed, gradually diminishing his quantity in the manner here pointed out. He ought to arrange his doses so as to diminish 10 drops each week, by which means, though the quantity he takes be ever so large, in a few months it will be entirely reduced. The greatest difficulty is at the last, when the quantity is reduced so low that the next step downwards is to take none at all. I should advise the continuing the lowest quantity, supposing it 15 or 20 drops for 30 or 40 days, then go without it for a day, then take 20, then miss a day again, then take 15, then miss, then take 10 drops for seven or eight days, then miss for two days, if possible, and so leave it off altogether, as the strength will bear it.

It cannot be supposed that a habit of this nature can be conquered without some exertion, and some resolution of endurance; but

by the means I have pointed out, it may be done without any very great inconvenience or suffering. As it will be advisable in this regimen to take a considerable quantity of wine and tonics, a habit of taking them may be contracted in some degree; but this may be left off five or six months after the Opium, with little trouble. But upon consideration, I should think that a person who has been in the habit of taking Opium in very large quantities, and then left it off entirely, had better continue for a year or two to take a few glasses of wine daily, and a glass of spirits and water at bed-time. One thing must be particularly observed, that a person should never diminish more than 10 drops at one time, and this diminution ought not to be made oftener than once in four or five days.

I observe in my account that I frequently diminished in much greater quantities than that, but by so doing I suffered very much, and would, by no means, recommend others to reduce their doses so rapidly, as it would probably enfeeble and inconvenience them so much as to compel them to recur to their original quantity, and thereby lose at once all the ground they had gained with so much pains.

CHAPTER IX.

Directions for the choice of Opium.

AS it is of great importance to Opium-eaters to procure their Opium good, I will add some directions which may guide them to advantage in the purchase of this drug. The best Opium is that which comes from Turkey, which is greatly superior to the East-India Opium.— It should be,

1. Hot, bitter, and biting in taste.
2. It should smell rankly of the poppy.
3. It should taste bitter in the mouth for half an hour after it has been swallowed.
4. The redder the tincture that it yields in water or spirit, the better it is.
5. It should have no smell or taste of empyreum or burning.
6. The heavier it is in proportion to its bulk the better it is.

But the very best Turkish Opium the Turks will not allow to be exported in any considerable quantities, but they keep most of it for their own use. The best of all they call Mastack; and some account of the mode in which they gather it may be interesting to the

reader. In the month of June, when the heads of the poppies are turgid with a thick lacteous liquor, of the consistency of thick milk or cream, the Opium-gatherers go early in the morning and make incisions round the heads of the poppies. These incisions are oblique, sloping downwards, so that the milky drops, gathering one upon another, flow down into shells that are placed to receive them. This being done, the juice is left in the shells, where it is inspissated by the solar heat to the consistence of pills, when it changes its colour from white to a kind of reddish-yellow. This sort the Turks keep themselves; and they have a law among them, that makes it death to sell a single ounce of it after the Opium-harvest, until the Grand Seignior is supplied with what he requires for himself, his court, and seraglio. The Opium exported by the Turks, is made by bruising and pounding together the heads, stalks, and leaves of the poppy, and this by forcible pounding, squeezing, and boiling, contracts a black colour externally, and frequently also an empyreum or burning, which is occasioned by its not being stirred properly while it is boiling.

This reminds me to warn the Opium-eater always to use the crude Opium in preference

to what chemists term the Extract of Opium, which has been torrefied, and consequently injured, as the fine volatile salt contained in the Opium loses a part of its penetrating quality, by being exposed to the action of fire.



CHAPTER X.

Conclusion.

BEFORE I conclude this work I wish to make the reader to understand, that though I think Opium, used to excess, is highly prejudicial to the health of the mind and body, yet used in moderation as a medicine, it is one of the greatest blessings bestowed on mankind by a merciful Providence. The ancients held it almost in adoration as a medicine superior to all others.

Paracelsus says, "that whoever thoroughly understands the properties of this wonderful drug, will surpass in knowledge Apollo, Machaon, and Podalirius;" and adds, "that a preparation of Opium has been of wonderful use to him, and effected a cure when every thing else failed." Concluding with this forcible expression—"that Opium dissolves diseases as fire does snow."

Platerus, an eminent physician, speaks of this drug with equal approbation. He says, "with a preparation of Opium I could repair the broken wheel of life."

Etmuller also affirms, that Opium may justly

be termed a general remedy; and in that learned and perspicuous tract, written by him, and entitled "De parvis morborum initiis," he shews how the volatile oily salt of Opium, sal volatile Oleosum, may, in small quantities, cure our diseases. It would be an endless task to detail the striking encomiums passed on this powerful medicine by the authors who have written on it. Amongst others, it is justly praised by Bacchini, Bellonius, Erastus, Georg. Andrea, Camerarius, Wedelius, Willis, Helmont, Le Fevre, Boerhaave, Jones, Sylvius, Dioscorides, and Ægineta. The latter speaking of its power on the body, remarks, "Ὁσμη τούτου φαρμάκου δι' όλου τοῦ σώματος ἐκ δίδοντας. And Helmont, who was perhaps better acquainted with its properties than any man, except Boerhaave, breaks out into a kind of rapture, at the thoughts of its virtues, and exclaims, "Happy is the sick man whose physician knows how to use Opium." Thus we have every reason to be grateful for the benefits we may derive from Opium, as a medicine, though, like all other blessings, if abused, it is turned into a curse. As I have mentioned it as a panacea against pain of every kind, I will give a scale which will enable any person to administer it with safety.

1. The doses for a *strong man* are these: in Laudanum a low dose 20 drops, a moderate dose 30 drops, a high dose 40 drops. In Opium, a low dose $\frac{2}{3}$ of a grain, a moderate dose one grain, a high dose $1\frac{1}{3}$ grain.

2. To *middling men and strong women*; in Laudanum, a low dose 16 drops, a moderate dose 25 drops, a high dose 30 drops. In Opium, a low dose $\frac{1}{2}$ grain, a moderate dose one grain, a high dose $1\frac{1}{4}$ grain.

3. To *weak men and middling women*, in Laudanum, a low dose 12 drops, a moderate dose 18 drops, a high dose 24 drops. In Opium, a low dose $\frac{2}{3}$ grain, a moderate dose $\frac{1}{2}$ grain, a high dose $\frac{7}{8}$ grain.

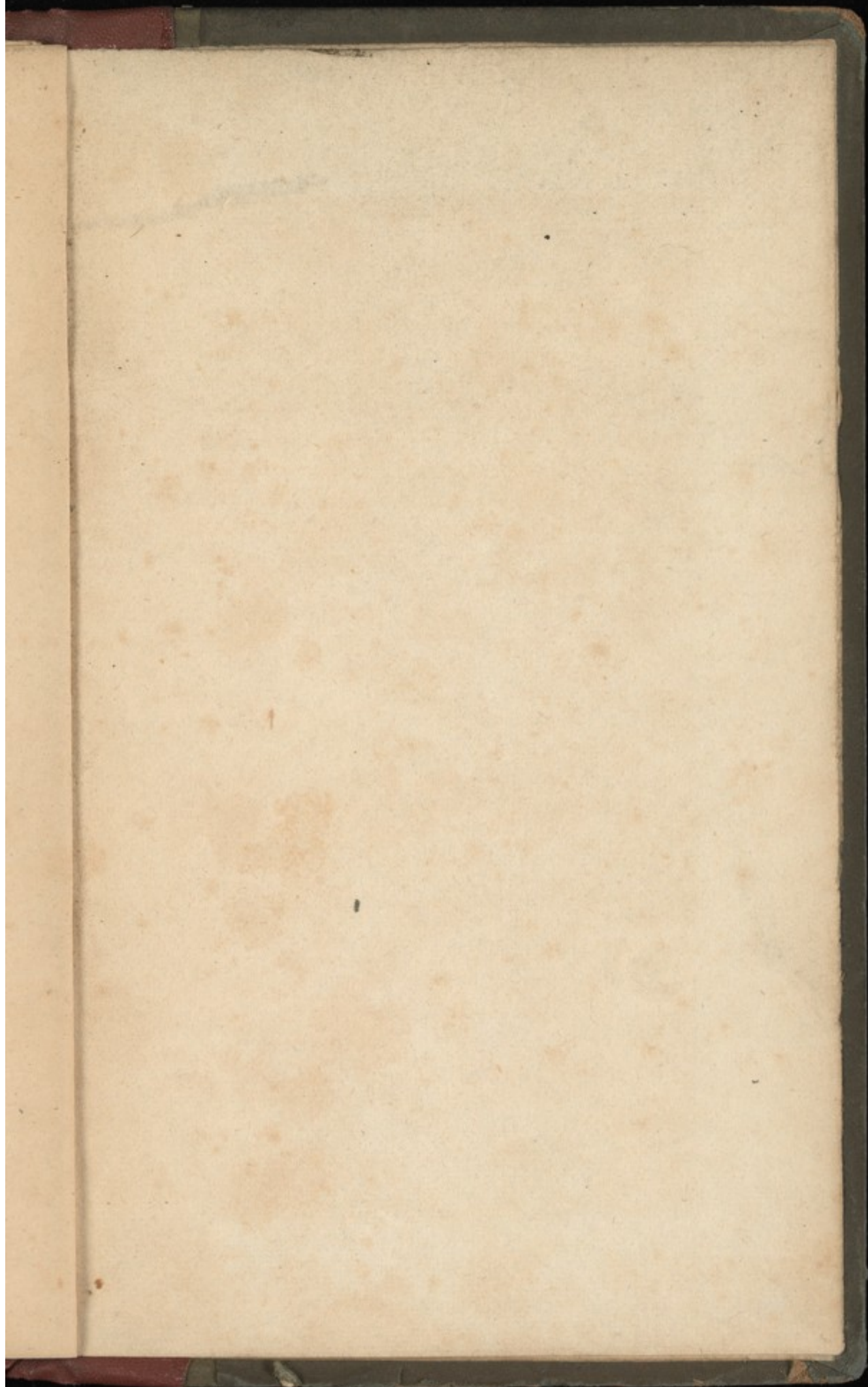
4. To *weak women*; in Laudanum, a low dose 10 drops, a moderate dose 15 drops, a high dose 20 drops. In Opium, a low dose $\frac{1}{3}$ grain, a moderate dose $\frac{1}{2}$ grain, a high dose $\frac{2}{3}$ grain.

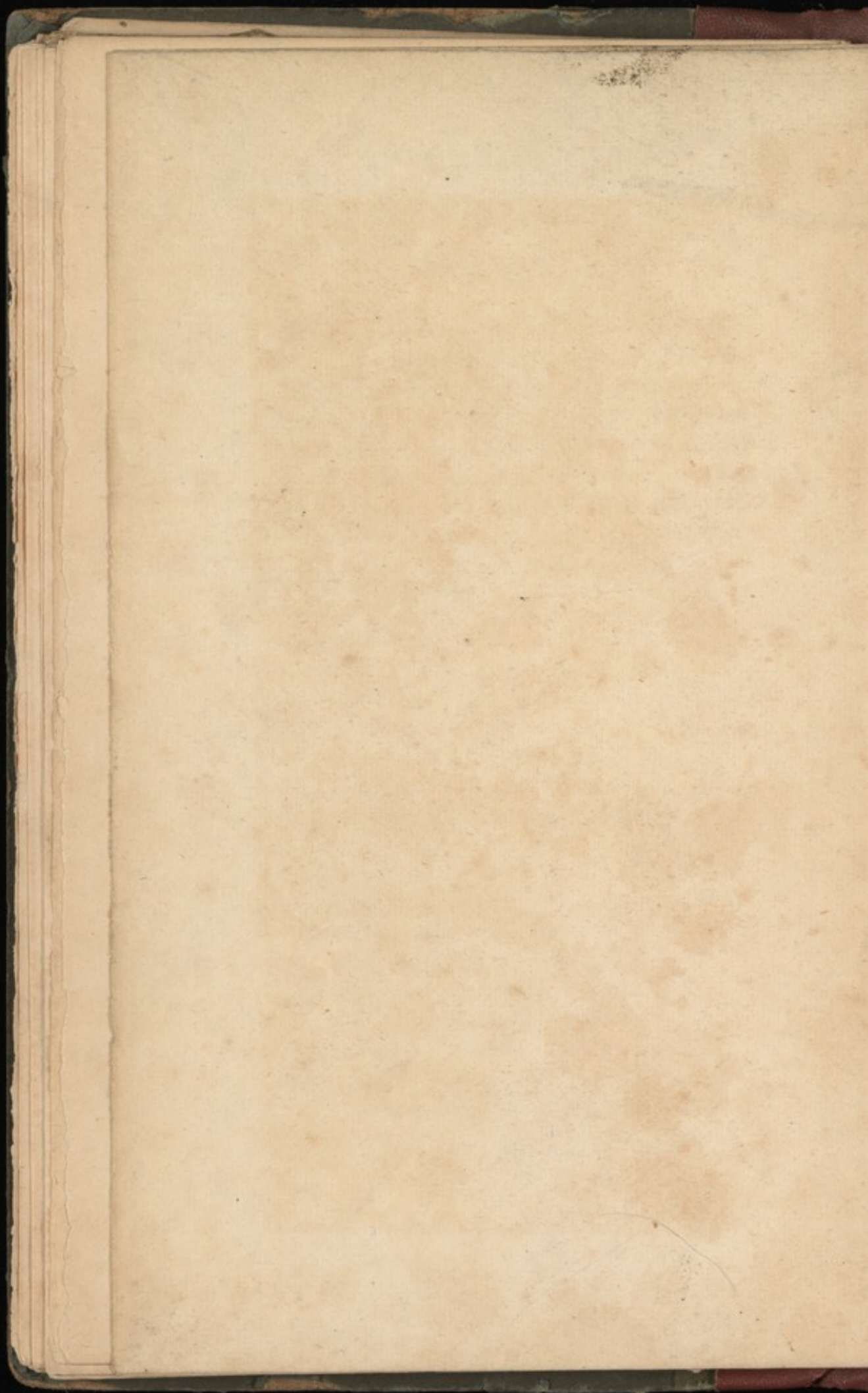
I have particularly specified the preceding doses, lest, upon my recommendation, any person might have taken a larger dose than would be consistent with his safety; as in some instances where Opium disagrees with the constitution, I have known 50 or 60 drops make a person extremely ill: and some authors relate, that a small quantity of crude Opium put in a hollow tooth has caused death.

I will now take leave of the reader, with a sincere hope, that if he has contracted a custom of taking this powerful drug, he may be influenced by the contents of the preceding pages, to employ his most strenuous endeavours to conquer it: and that the rules I have given will enable him to succeed in subduing a habit, which, if long persisted in, will prove so destructive to his comfort, and so injurious to his health.

FINIS.

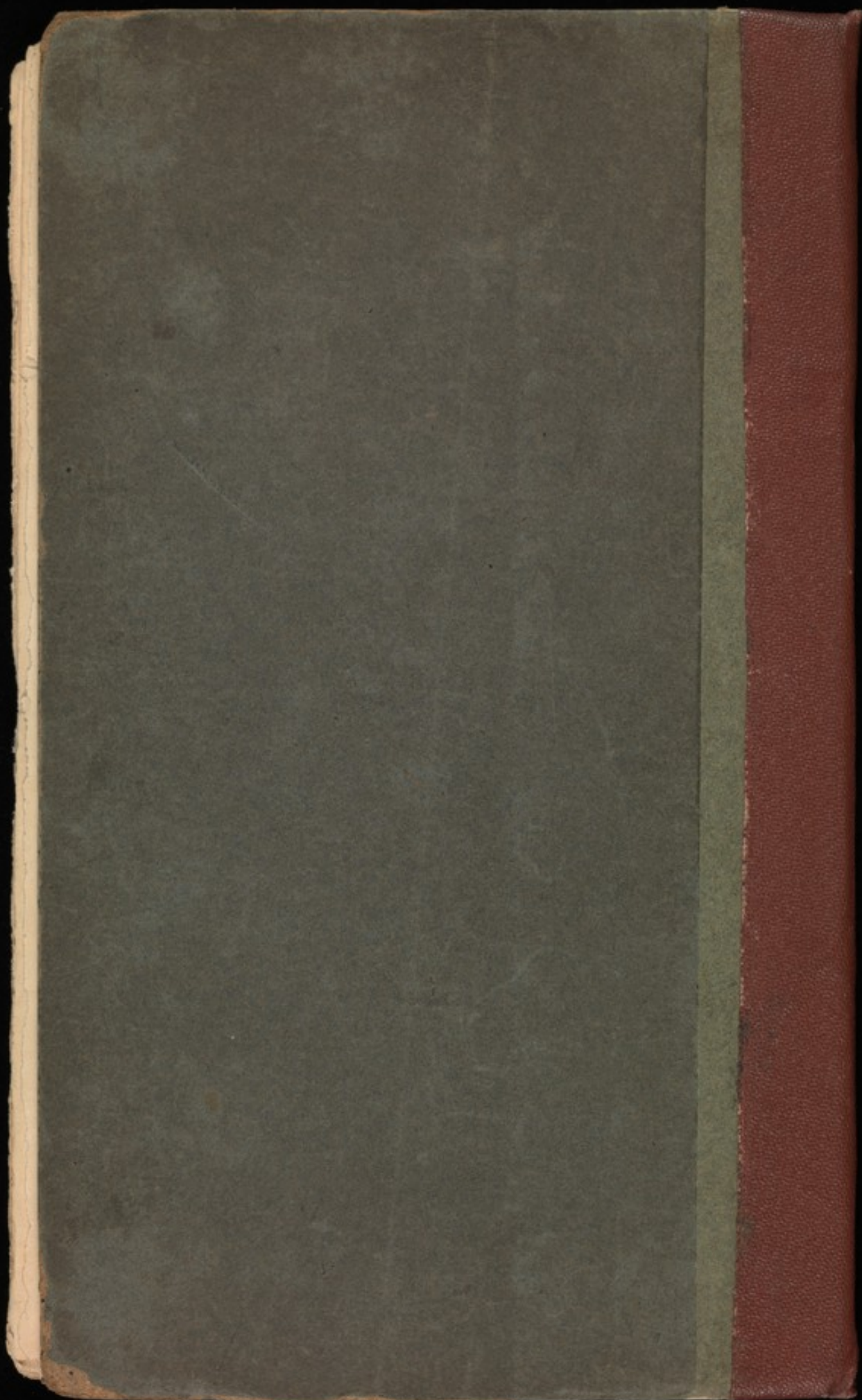
I will not take leave of the reader with
sincere hope, that if he has consulted a con-
tom or having this pleasant day, he may be
influenced by the example of the preceding
pages to employ his mind in some other
task to connect it: and that the reader I have
given will be able to succeed in obtaining
a great deal of good, and will improve
no doubt be to his health and to his
to his health.





Open only.

31-



ADVICE TO OPIUM EATERS — 1823

furnish me with a bed, I hastily
room, requesting the woman who
e, and who was sitting with the
cottage, to light me to my room.
I believe, consisted but of four
room on the ground and two above. I
ed into a bed room that I con-
long to the owner of the house.

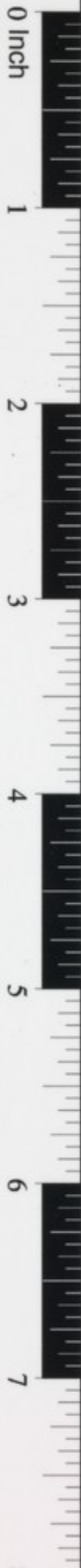
article
he
ease
cond
by
st de
as?
arge
ttle
the
e, an
gry if
nome
sion,
rtain
d my
stair-
ersat
were
I cou



closed, overhear discourse that gave me very
little satisfaction. I could distinguish the
words, "*Go up at once!—Seize him!—Fire if
he resists!*" Then another voice replied, "*No,
no, we shall gain more by taking him alive!*"—
Then, after a few indistinct words, I heard the
same person say, "*Wait till he is asleep, and
then he can make no resistance.*" Then followed
another speech which I knew not what to
think of, "*Niece, I insist—(upon your telling
me I supposed followed) is that the man?*"—no
female voice answered. "*So you won't tell—
but it must, from — description, and he shan't
escape us.*" Though I could not comprehend
all I heard, I had heard enough to convince
me that I had, by my own want of caution,
placed myself at the mercy of a band of des-
peradoes. Fortunately, I had weapons, as I
hardly ever travel without a pair of pistols;
but I determined not to use them if I could
possibly avoid it.*

* I will pause here a moment to dwell on the terrible
sensations experienced at the prospect of a violent death.
The idea of the awful change of state, and where a few
minutes may carry you is terrible. Blair finely paints
that terror.—

"The frighten'd soul runs raving up and down
Its clay-built tenement, and shrieks for help."



The Wellcome Library