

Scrofula, vapour baths, &c; : a letter to His Royal Highness the Duke of York, the vice presidents, and committee, of the Asylum for Scrofula, &c.; / by Charles Whitlaw.

Contributors

Whitlaw, Charles.
Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library

Publication/Creation

London : Printed by F. Warr, [1826]

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/gtzezn79>

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by the Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library at Yale University, through the Medical Heritage Library. The original may be consulted at the Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library at Yale University. where the originals may be consulted.

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.

**wellcome
collection**

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

SCROFULA
VAPOUR BATHS, &c.

A LETTER
TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE DUKE OF YORK,
THE
VICE PRESIDENTS,
AND
COMMITTEE,
OF THE
ASYLUM FOR SCROFULA, &c.
BY
CHARLES WHITLAW.

T. 571
R. 256

REVISED

BY H. B. SWIFT

A LETTER

TO

LONDON:

Printed by F. WARR,
Red Lion Passage, Holborn.

VICE PRESIDENTS

COMMITTEE

ASTORIA, OREGON, 1894

CH. B. SWIFT



19th
cent
RM 822
V2
W56
1-2

A
L E T T E R

*To His Royal Highness the DUKE OF YORK, Patron, the
VICE-PRESIDENTS, and the COMMITTEE, of the Asylum
for the cure of Scrofula and Glandular Diseases.*

May it please your Royal Highness,—my Lords, and
Gentlemen :—

Permit me, on my return from the United States of America, to address you on the result of my exertions to complete the system, which I have so long and earnestly recommended to the attention of the British nation, for the preservation of health, and for the removal of those maladies which arise from indulgence in improper food, and other causes of virulent diseases or debility.

During sixteen years of diligent pursuit, I travelled through the United States, Canada, and the West Indian Islands, as a practical botanist; my attention being principally engaged in the application of botany to the purposes of human life, as they relate to food or medicine.

Pursuing the system of Linnæus, and finding from numerous practical experiments that the opinions of that great and eminent naturalist were generally well founded, I was at a loss to account for the opposition presented to his opinions by so eminent a man as Dr. Cullen, in his lecture on the *Materia Medica*, delivered in the University of Edinburgh. The doctor and some others commenced an attack on the aphorisms of Linnæus, on the following important points.

Linnæus declares his opinion in the humoral pathology; the mechanical operations of nature; the necessity of selecting our food; and that all diseases arise from the following causes: First, impure water; secondly, improper food; thirdly, acid ferments; fourthly, putrid ferments; fifthly, from animalculi; sixthly, impure air. He has pointed out a plain and natural guide to mankind in the selection of food and the use of medicine. First, from the class; secondly, the order; thirdly, the natural order or physiognomy of

plants; fourthly, the smell; fifthly, the taste; sixthly, the colour; seventhly, the locality; eighthly, their chemical affinity.

The editors of Dr. Cullen's lectures say, that "Our professor attempted a *plan entirely new and original*, and executed the same in a manner which gained universal approbation;" and add, that the substance of that performance is now offered to the public, which had been much desired by the faculty. I shall, however, in a few months, present to the public such reasons for differing from that learned professor as I trust will prove satisfactory.

For upwards of twenty years I have followed the principles of Linnæus, both in England and America, with remarkable success in the healing art; and have added to my former experiments many new ones, during my late visit to America; which, in every instance, tend to confirm the correctness of the observations of Linnæus.

That our health is deeply concerned in the care which we take in the selection of food, and even in circumstances generally overlooked by mankind, I have often stated. In my observations on the nature and properties of grasses being deteriorated by weeds, particularly the butter-cup, I have been wisely asked, "What becomes of the butter-cup after it has passed through the stomach of the cow?" Many facts, however, have confirmed me in my opinion of the danger proceeding from poisonous herbs; and among others I may present the following letter from Dr. Renwick to His Excellency Governor De Witt Clinton, directly bearing on the point; and those who ignorantly inquire what effects are produced by the species of food which passes through the stomach of a cow, may be referred to every dairymaid in the country on the effects of the turnip, and the different flavours of cheese varying in almost every county.

Copy of a Letter to His Excellency the Hon. De Witt Clinton, &c. &c. &c.; enclosing a specimen of a poisonous plant.

Sir,

This vine or weed, whatever it may be called, generally grows in low moist land, or round the edge of swamps, and perhaps is the most poisonous vegetable that grows; horses, cattle and sheep feed on it in the fall; it very often proves fatal in a few hours. The first symptom is a trembling and weakness in the limbs. The cow that gives milk is not af-

fectured with it so long as she is regularly milked, but the milk is certain death to any animal, human or brute, that uses it to any extent; and the flesh of any animal that dies with it also becomes fatal to the dog, the wolf, the eagle, or buzzard, that takes a full meal of it. The use of the milk has proved fatal to a great number of people living in the section of Country called the Barrons, in this State, which lies between the Scioto and Bigmiami. It would be very gratifying to them to know whether there could not be some antidote discovered against its poisonous effects.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

Chillicothe,
25th July, 1825.

FELIX RENICK.

His Excellency informed me, that, on a tour through the state of Ohio, he had learnt that the most dreadful effects were produced on many persons who used the milk of cattle which had fed on this plant. He requested me to ascertain its name and properties, that endeavours might be made to prevent its fatal effects. It proved to be the *Rhus toxicodendron*; and on further enquiries in journeying from Albany to the Falls of Niagara, and in Upper Canada, I was informed, that infants on the breast had been poisoned through their mothers using the milk of cattle which had fed on the *Rhus*, while the mothers themselves received no injury.

If I have trespassed too long in the preceding remarks, the importance of the subject will, I trust, plead my apology. My system must stand or fall on the principles which I have adopted; and I trust the following account of my proceedings in America during a year commencing November, 1824, in addition to the success of my system for several years in this country, will be admitted as confirmatory of my opinions.

Previous to my leaving London in 1824, I addressed a letter to the Committee for conducting the Asylum at Bayswater for the cure of Scrofula, stating my intention of revisiting America for the following purposes:—

“ To insure a supply of the requisite medicinal herbs
“ adequate to the increasing demand of the Public, and to
“ point out the situation, not easily communicated by writing,
“ where they may be gathered in the greatest abundance,
“ and in the highest perfection.

“ Also to finish those practical experiments on the
“ aphorisms of Linnæus, upon which I had for many years
“ been engaged, and the completion of which will prove of
“ the utmost importance to the human race.”

With such views and intentions I arrived in New York early in November, and was not a little surprised to find that the medical gentlemen of this metropolis had already stimulated their brethren on the other side of the Atlantic to a determined opposition to my plans. Had their motives been pure and disinterested, these gentlemen, who consider themselves as the only legitimate judges, and the guardians of public health, would have candidly investigated the merits of my remedies, and in the event of approval, would have hailed the discovery as a blessing to mankind. Instead of which great pains were taken to circulate an inaugural address of Dr. David Hossack, President of the Medical Society of the city and county of New York, delivered on July 12th, 1824; in which a very illiberal and libellous attack was made upon my character.

“The existing laws of the State, regulating the practice
“of physic and surgery, the statutes of our University, and
“the by-laws of this Society, I believe contain certain pro-
“visions, which, if properly regarded, will in a great degree
“lead to the suppression of every species of quackery and
“imposition in our profession. In all ages our calling has
“been disgraced by the arts of the selfish and designing;
“and it is mortifying to observe in our city continued
“and most flagrant evidences of the successful career of
“charlatanery. I earnestly hope you will omit no effort
“within the legitimate reach of your authority to discour-
“tenance and suppress the whole tribe of nostrum-venders,
“and specific-mongers; and if upon experience you shall
“find that the present system of regulation is inadequate,
“that it will be deemed meet to supercede it by obtaining
“from our legislature, a code of greater efficiency and
“vigour.

“Many years since, the medical faculty of London ex-
“pelled from their communion even the distinguished and
“learned Dr. James; who, disregarding the obligations due
“to his profession, and to society, became the vender of a
“secret febrifuge powder. In like manner, the most
“learned society of Europe erased from their list the cele-
“brated Lower, who had been convicted of venal practices;
“and, within a few months, as we are informed by Dr.
“Johnston,* the name of Dr. Thornton, once highly respect-
“able, has been in a similar manner disgraced, by being
“struck from the list of the Royal College of Physicians,
“because of his association with an itinerant quack or

* Medico Chirurgical Journal, Dec. 1823—edited by Dr. Johnson.

“vender of American herbs in London. The spirited journalist goes on to remark, that in his opinion, Dr. Thornton’s conduct, in aiding the Whitlaw imposition on public credulity, richly deserved this mark of disapprobation; and adds his hope, that immoral as well as unprofessional conduct shall be often served in this way in future. A similar course of decisive and vigorous conduct on our part, would probably be productive of similar beneficial results, in preserving the respectability of the healing art in the United States.”

Dr. Coventry, President of the Medical Society of the western district, in the state of New York, in his inaugural address, attacked me, and also the motives of the Committee, in the same illiberal and ungentlemanly manner; and added, “What a poor simpleton John Bull was, to be imposed on by such a set of men.” A copy of his address may be seen in Dr. Beck’s Medical Journal of New York. No sooner had I set my foot on the American shores, than some of my friends said, something must be done to prove to the American people I was not deserving those vile aspersions which had been cast upon my character by the two inaugural addresses above alluded to. I stated that my treatment of the afflicted would soon convince them how unjust were their malignant remarks. I accordingly offered to divide with Dr. Hossack a hundred patients, and try who could cure them the soonest; which offer he refused more than once. I went to Utica, about two hundred and sixty miles from New York, and made Dr. Coventry the same offer, which he likewise rejected, though the gentlemen who accompanied me used every argument in their power to induce him to accept the challenge. We found the doctor was determined to abide by the old Roman maxim,—“To guard the honour he had got.” No sooner did the American people see the value of my discoveries, than they passed the highest eulogiums upon the Committee for their laudable zeal and indefatigable investigation,—their only motive being the cause of humanity.

These addresses was put into the hands of my most intimate friends,—in reading-rooms, and places of public resort,—and every endeavour made to disparage my practice.

In this state of matters I proceeded to Washington, where I obtained a patent for my discoveries, and set about curing such patients as presented themselves, and succeeded in several desperate cases. The unexpected cures which I had the satisfaction to effect, attracted the attention of the president, and a considerable number of the members of the

Senate and Congress,—and some of them became my patients. Their favour and support, entitle those gentlemen to my warmest gratitude.

In the city of Washington a Committee was formed who purchased my patent right in the Bath, for the use of the public; of their first report the following is an extract.

WHITLAW'S VAPOUR BATH.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE, appointed by the Subscribers for the purchase and use of Charles Whitlaw's Medicated Vapour Bath, at a general meeting of Stockholders, convened at the Museum in Washington city, April 26, 1825, S. B. BARRELL in the Chair.

The Committee appointed by the Subscribers for purchasing Mr. Charles Whitlaw's Medicated Vapour Bath, to superintend the use of the same in this city, conceive that the time is arrived when they ought to report more fully to the public, what they have now learned from experience and observation, during the last two months, of the real use and efficacy of the Bath. They will detail nothing but facts that have come within their own knowledge, which, with some general observations on the nature of Warm or Vapour Baths in general, and of the specific difference of this from other Baths, and the regulations which have been adopted for its use in this city, will comprise all that they wish to say, until further experiments shall have extended their knowledge of its powers and utility.

Since the Bath was opened on the 10th of March, it has been used by fifty persons, of all ages from 7 years to 70, one hundred and twenty-four times. We believe that in all these cases it has been useful, but the most numerous class of cases in which it has afforded almost immediate relief, and, in several, complete cure, are those of recent colds, rheumatism, inflamed eyes, eruptions on the skin, scrofulous swellings, and general debility.

A considerable number of patients whose eyes were so diseased that they had been completely laid aside from their usual avocations for many weeks, and suffered intense pain so as to deprive them of sleep, and who had been subjected to the usual course of bleeding, blistering, and depletion by cathartics, in vain, have been effectually cured by the Bath: in some cases, by three times using it, in others six or eight times. Some of these persons are citizens of great respectability, to whom a personal reference can be made. Dyspepsia, nervous irritability, and general debility, have

been greatly relieved by it. Its efficacy in cases of irregular arterial action, whether it has been too rapid or too slow, has been strongly marked in several instances. In the former the pulse has been reduced, and in the latter increased; and in all cases a great equalization of the circulation, and a lessening the tendency of the blood to the head, has been the speedy result of using the Bath a very few times. It has a remarkable effect of clearing the skin from troublesome eruptions, and giving it a softness and freshness that is a striking indication of improved health. We have heard persons express their fears lest, in a state of great debility, it might prove injurious and dangerous. We can safely state that, to our knowledge, the weakest persons who have used the Bath, have been strengthened by it; and we have not known a single instance in which the repeated use of it has not increased the vigour and activity of the patients. It doubtless requires some continued experience in giving of the Bath, to prevent the possibility of its being misused; and that experience we are daily acquiring.

Thus far we can speak from our own knowledge, and several of the medical gentlemen of this city, who have advised their patients to use the Bath, can vouch for the truth of some of these representations.

It is said, in the printed reports of the institution in London, where this practice originated, that the treatment with the Bath, combined with vegetable decoctions, and a prescribed regimen, has been eminently successful in curing the most inveterate scrofulous ulcerations, diseases of the liver, dangerous quinsies, and croup, with many other formidable diseases. We doubt not that this may be the case, in the hands of skilful practitioners, and with a greater knowledge of vegetable remedies than we at present possess.

We pledge ourselves for nothing that we do not know; we are satisfied that we have conferred a substantial benefit on the city of Washington, by purchasing the patent right to use this mode of administering to the relief of human beings suffering under some grievous diseases. And we invite every regular practitioner of medicine in the city, to make use of our Bath under their own superintendence, upon such of their patients as they please, and to exercise their own judgment in the selection, and further experiment, of such herbs as they may judge most suitable to the diseases for which they are treated. We affect no mystery, nor aim at any monopoly, or opposition to regular practice. We have procured, at a considerable expense, an additional means of applying well-known medicines, and producing certain results, in what we believe a safer, more direct, and certainly

a more agreeable way, than is usual. We only ask such a moderate remuneration for the use of the Bath as will pay the expenses of its establishment, and gradually replace the capital we have advanced.

The use of Warm, and even Vapour Baths, is nothing new. The practice has prevailed in all nations, and in all ages. The universality of this practice as a daily luxury among the Romans, and the Asiatics, is known to every reader of history. Throughout Asia, and the northern coasts of Africa, the vapours of herbs and spices are applied as the most delicious gratification, as well as the means of health. The most celebrated physicians concur in stating the vast benefit of this practice, in raising the spirits, mending the pulse and appetite, and invigorating the whole frame. This has been experienced by thousands after severe fatigue, in old age, in tonic gout, and many other conditions of the human frame.

Vapour Baths in this country have usually been the mere exposure of the body (except the head) to sulphureous exhalations, with a view to relieve rheumatic affections; or else the application of vapour, produced by a spirit lamp, to a patient in his bed, so as produce profuse perspiration. But this latter mode has been found exceedingly inconvenient, and, in some instances, highly dangerous, from the excessive damp imparted to the bed-clothes by the operation. Besides, it is evident that no other object can be effected in this way, than merely exciting perspiration, and that without due regulation.

Mr. Whitlaw's Vapour Bath has not only decided advantages in these respects, but it attains other ends. Every one knows that various plants possess highly important medical virtues, and hence they are used in various infusions in all countries, for purposes in which experience has pointed out their efficacy. In this Bath, these herbs, properly prepared and preserved, are combined according to the object they are intended to effect. They are enclosed in a condensing box beneath the tent in which the patient sits, and steam, at a high temperature, being forced upon them from an adjacent boiler, their essential oils are carried up in the form of vapour, and fill the interior of the tent; which vapour not only acts upon the skin, but is inhaled by the lungs, and produces a grateful, but powerful effect on the whole system. During the fifteen or twenty minutes which the patient remains in this fragrant atmosphere, the perspiration usually flows copiously, and by constant wiping of the body the pores are opened and cleansed. After coming out of the Bath it is necessary to use the aid of an assistant to wipe the body perfectly dry, with as much friction as possible;

and, after dressing, to take the refreshment of a cup of coffee, remaining in the house half an hour or more, and then, in fine weather, a good brisk walk in the open air, will not be attended with any danger, provided he be in sufficient health to enjoy it. Nothing more is necessary than to avoid a sudden chill from a cold draft of wind, or a damp atmosphere.

It has been doubted by professional men whether any effect could be produced on the viscera by the combination of the medicinal virtues of herbs with the blood, in its passage through the lungs, in the act of respiration. It is, however, known, that important effects have been produced by vapour from mercury, sulphur, and other minerals; and we see no reason to doubt but persons possessed of medical science may, by a similar use of herbs, produce beneficial results in far more numerous and obstinate diseases, than we are at present prepared to speak of. In the first access of bilious fever, it may prove eminently useful. We request our physicians to make such experiments, and if they succeed in reaching some latent diseases by a method hitherto unknown or neglected, we are sure they will not reject the agent, because it has not hitherto been in the regular course of practice. To give full effect to such experiments, the committee recommend, that a small portable Bath should be constructed, which will admit of its being conveyed to a sick chamber, at any hour, for patients whose disease is too violent to admit of their being brought out, and that such Bath be at the disposal of any physician in the city, to be used for the benefit of his own patients, and immediately returned to the place appointed, for which a charge will be made, not exceeding what is paid for the use of the public Bath; and such remuneration as may be necessary for the agency of the male or female attendants who have been instructed in the mode of using the Bath.

This explanation of the nature and present state of the Medicated Vapour Bath Institution, in the city of Washington, is respectfully submitted to the consideration of the stockholders, by

THE COMMITTEE.

I leave the preceding report to speak for itself, and pass on to notice my visit to Charleston, in South Carolina, where I spent some time, and have particularly to acknowledge the kind and liberal reception I met with from several gentlemen of the faculty, and many other respectable persons. Here also it was my happiness to succeed in the cure of a number of persons, and the alleviation of others. In this city a company was formed, including five medical

gentlemen, who purchased the patent use of my Bath, and have established it on a very extensive plan. The following is a copy of their first report, to which I have annexed copies of letters I have received from Drs. Holbrook and Shecut.

At a quarterly meeting of the Medicated Vapour Bath Company, it was unanimously resolved, that the following Report be published in the Gazettes of the city.

Extract from the Minutes.

REPORT

Of the Physicians to the Medicated Vapour Bath Dispensary.

In conformity with the request of the Board of Directors, the physicians to the Medicated Vapour Bath Dispensary, with much pleasure, have drawn up a summary report, which they respectfully submit to the attention of the stockholders.

The important results from the application of simple as well as medicated vapour, in the treatment of certain chronic affections, having been attested by experience, within the United States since its introduction, the following statement is intended to strengthen the confidence reposed.

The remarks submitted are the result of the observation of the medical Directors, which includes the short period of scarce three months since its establishment. That no unqualified opinions may be promulgated on the treatment pursued in the Dispensary, it is desirable it should be distinctly understood, that many of the cases enumerated were treated with internal remedies, and general directions given with regard to regimen, etc.; and all anomalous cases which obtained the use of the Bath, have been excluded from this report; particularly certain acute diseases, in which decided advantage was derived. Such, whose cases were not permanent, must be attributed to the want of perseverance, and the unfrequency of its application, many having acknowledged relief from only three trials. During the period of eleven weeks, 236 persons were received in the Bath, 120 of which were patients of the Dispensary; of the latter number, there were—of rheumatism 48, scrofula 6, debility 3, cutaneous eruptions 19, chronic hepatites 2, jaundice 1, dyspepsia 3, pulmonary affection 8, catarrh 7, dropsy 3, asthma 4, hæmoptosis 2, ulcers 4, leucorrhæa 1, intermittent fever 2, paralysis 3, hydrothorax 1, cynanche tonsylaris 3—Total 120. Cured 36, relieved 68, no relief 16—120. The remaining number, 16, includes anom-

alous cases, those yet under treatment, or those who came for pleasure.*

In no instance was it brought to the knowledge of the physicians that injury resulted from the use of the Bath; and it is due to truth to state, that where no good was expected, invalids were apprised of its probable inefficacy.

The general diary or register of cases, contains a statement of those who resorted to the Bath as a preservation of health, by having removed from the surface of the body those depositions from free exhalations, and that are productive of derangement, particularly in the cuticular functions. It will not be a digression to mention, as information to those unacquainted with the fact, the sympathy existing between the functions of the surface and the internal organs. On general principles, the medical Directors are warranted in the assertion, that the judicious application of vapour is a good preservative of health, as well as a modifier of the violence of some troublesome affections.

From this statement a judgment may be formed, whether or not the support of the establishment will benefit the community. The encouragement already extended augurs in its favour—its success rests on its utility; should that fail, it can never be attributed to injury inflicted.

The medical Directors are happy in communicating, that the generally received opinion still prevails that the Institution has certainly been beneficial, thereby reflecting considerable credit on the exertions of those who united to bestow its benefits on the afflicted.

Copy of Dr. Holbrook's Letter to Mr. Whitlaw.

Charleston, April 23rd, 1825.

Dear Sir,

Having attentively examined the effects of the *Medicated Vapour Bath* upon your patients, I feel it an act of justice to state, that whatever may have been my previous opinions, or, if you will, my prejudices, upon the subject of Baths as a means of curing disease, I am constrained to allow, that the great and unexpected relief which has been experienced in a short time by the suffering and afflicted under your guidance, has gained my entire confidence: I have, in two days time, literally seen "the lame his crutch forego." The complete cures of long protracted cases of chronic disease, which now have every appearance of continuing, will render your invention highly acceptable to the medical profession,

* A case of country fever of seven days was cured by these applications of the Bath during the present week, the patient being now convalescent.

by removing from their hands a class of patients of which they in general would be gladly freed. I have also been surprised at the sudden cures of several severely *acute* diseases, which you have effected during your residence in this city. Your new application of a long catalogue of remedies, heretofore neglected, has commenced a new era in the practice of medicine, and will hand your name down to future generations in the long list of worthies who have benefited the cause of humanity.

I am, with respect and esteem,

Your sincere friend,

MOSES HOLBROOK, M.D.

To Mr. Charles Whitlaw.

S. M. C. A. Socius.

J. H. DUNCAN, M.D., concurs in the above opinions.

Copy of Dr. Shecut's Letter to Professor Mitchell.

Charleston, April 21st, 1825.

Dear Sir,

It has been my good fortune to be made acquainted with Mr. Charles Whitlaw, whose talents as a botanist are generally well known and appreciated in this country. I have also had an opportunity of investigating the principles, and, in several instances, of witnessing the effects of his invaluable Medicated Vapour Bath; and I am confident that those principles require no more than a candid and unprejudiced examination to render his practice acceptable to the scientific and humane, and adopted and used in the particular practice of physicians. The *modus operandi* of the process, and its effects in the particular diseases for which it is used, are no less rational than they are truly scientific; and as the vegetable kingdom affords to our *Materia Medica* an extensive choice in the different classes of their medical virtues, that have been tested by ages of experience,—if to convert the essential properties of those simples into vapour, and thus to cause the inhalation of those vapours to effect the relief or cure of individuals labouring under disease, be an innovation upon the science of medicine, so also must every recent chemical product, and every new formula offered as a remedy, be deemed likewise an innovation.

I am aware, my dear Sir, of the important necessity of guarding against imposition in the practice of medicine; but I am qualified to say, that an acquaintance with Mr. Whitlaw, and an accurate investigation of the principles of his discovery, and the rationale of his practice, must

eventuate in the decided approbation of every liberal practitioner, and of every friend to humanity; and with myself I am inclined to believe, they will cheerfully hail him as among the greatest benefactors of our country.

As this gentleman is on the eve of his departure for your city, I have availed myself of the opportunity of addressing you on the subject, conscious of the very great pleasure you experience in facilitating the views and promoting the designs of the humane and benevolent; and as the encouragement of this practice promises the greatest possible advantage to afflicted mortals, I cannot do otherwise than respectfully to urge to your attentive consideration the merits of this gentleman and his important invention. Permit me, at the same time, to apprise you of an advantage likely to result to our tropical cities from the use of this simple and elegant invention,—the prevention and cure of that fatal scourge to our population, the yellow fever.

Should the event justify the prediction, (and from the very nature of its application and effects it appears next to impossible to fail, if timely and judiciously resorted to and applied), shall we not have abundant reasons to class this indefatigable friend to science and humanity with the immortal and lamented HOWARD, VALLI, and other renowned benefactors of men.

It is my design to urge the adoption of this Bath in the medical treatment of yellow fever; and I very sincerely believe, that with judicious management, it will be found capable of effecting the reduction of the first stages of that disease. I should also urge the propriety of alternating Electrical friction, sparks and modified shocks, with the Bath: in both cases, however, the stomach and bowels are to be previously evacuated.

Be pleased, my dear Sir, to pardon the length of this letter; the importance of the subject, however, will, I am certain, be its best apology with you. At the same time I must entreat your forgiveness for the great lapse of time that has passed since I last wrote to you. Incessantly occupied with Electrical practice, and the formation of a new system of Electricity, reducing it to a regular science, demanding almost every spare moment, will, with you, plead strongly in extenuation of my seeming neglect. I need not I presume say more to convince you of the sentiments of esteem and regard I have ever entertained for you, and pray you to accept the cordial salutation of,

My dear Sir, your's most respectfully,

R. E. W. S. SHECUT.

*To Professor Samuel L. Mitchell,
New York.*

Copy of Dr. Shecut's Letter to Mr. Whitlaw.

Dear Sir, Charleston, June 27th, 1825.

Your friendly letter of the 4th instant has been received, and has afforded me sincere pleasure in communicating to me your very flattering prospects in the great metropolis of infant America. Of this I have never suffered myself to entertain a doubt, from the moment you did me the pleasure of explaining the principles of your Bath, and of permitting me to investigate the grounds of your practice.

In this city the friends of "Whitlaw's Medicated Vapour Bath" are increasing daily: prejudices are fast yielding to stubborn facts; and I now distinguish, among its well wishers and its patrons, those who not long since condemned it as "a mere catch-penny juggle." I regret that I cannot furnish you with an official account of the success of the Dispensary in this city; the medical Directors are at this time preparing to lay before the company such an account: it would therefore be premature to attempt to furnish such a document before it has been officially examined and approved by the board. I am qualified to say to you, however, that it has lost none of the reputation you annexed to it, and promises much permanent good to the citizens, who are becoming more and more convinced of its safety and its utility.

Upwards of three hundred cases have been submitted to the operation of the Bath; and many of these cases have been directed to it by the most eminent of the profession, and I think have already considerably lessened their prejudice. I am happy in finding such liberality: because it is a principle which ought to be inseparable from men of science. You will doubtless soon see the report of the medical board in its official form, and I should have delayed this until I could have forwarded it to you, but as my particular friend, Mr. Martin, has politely tendered to deliver you a letter from me, I have availed myself of the liberty, and take leave to introduce him to you on his tour through the northern states. Be pleased, my dear Sir, to accept for yourself and for your good lady, the assurance of my very sincere esteem, together with my best wishes for your success and happiness.

Your's very respectfully,

To Mr. Charles Whitlaw.

R. E. W. S. SHECUT.

P.S. Drs. Holbrook and De la Motta have requested to be mentioned to you: the former gentleman would have written, but has so many engagements at present as to deprive him of that pleasure.

From Charleston I returned to New York, where I found the public opinion not only changed, but that many respectable persons appeared much interested in the accounts they had received of my success in the cities of Washington and Charleston; and so great was the desire for making trial of my remedies, that within three weeks time, two hundred and twenty-four patients were introduced to my attention. A Bath company was here also formed; His Excellency Governor De Witt Clinton (who had received personal benefit from the Bath), was the first to subscribe, and was followed by Judge Herttell, and many other respectable persons, with seven doctors.

I was equally successful in the establishment of Baths in Albany, where His Excellency the Governor again headed the subscription, and was followed by General Van Ranselier and Judge Spencer the Mayor. Here also six gentlemen of the faculty united with them. Baths were also established at Hudson, New Lebanon, and Wetervleit, and preparations for the same purpose are making in Troy and Lansingburgh, in the state of New York.

Copy of Letter from Drs. Lawrence and Henrickson.

New Lebanon, May 21st, 1825.

Worthy Friend,

Having made a thorough trial of the Medicated Vapour Bath for four months past, in our societies in New Lebanon and Watervliet, we think it but justice to state, that we consider it an invaluable improvement in the healing art. Its power in reducing both chronic and acute inflammation, also in removing spasm, is certainly very great. In cases of obstructed perspiration, it is unquestionably the safest and best remedy that we have ever seen. Several persons in our society, who were scarcely free from a catarrhal affection during most of the winter months for several years past, have found permanent relief by using the Bath a few times, and the predisposition to take cold, as it is commonly termed, seems to be wholly removed. Obstructed perspiration is certainly, in our changeable climate, one of the most fruitful sources of disease; and any remedy that is capable of removing the predisposition to it, must be considered a great blessing to mankind; and as such we do not hesitate to recommend the Medicated Vapour Bath, when used according to your directions, as a scientific and rational

remedy in various diseases. Accept the assurances of our best wishes for your welfare.

GARRET K. LAWRENCE, M.D.

ABRAM HENRICKSON, M.D.

*To Mr. Charles Whitlaw,
New York.*

Previous to my leaving New York, the Committee of the Vapour Bath Company requested the seven doctors who superintended the Bath, to send in a report of their respective cases for the quarter ending 1st October, 1825, the number, and the various diseases with which they were afflicted.

The following is a copy of Dr. William Ireland's cases.

Out of the number of cases submitted to the Bath, 227 have been cured; and it is but justice to state, that in acute and chronic inflammation, more benefit has been derived from the use of the Medicated Vapour Bath in twenty-four hours, than I have ever witnessed in a month's most successful practice.

The following is a list of the disorders included in the above 227 cases.

Obstinate visceral obstruction.

Acute and chronic affections of the liver.

Scorbutic diseases of the skin.

Scabies and old inveterate cutaneous disease.

Scald-head, salt-rhuems, ring-worms, &c. &c.

Jaundice, lumbago, sciatica.

Acute and chronic rheumatism.

Asthmatic diseases, spitting of blood.

Palpitations of the heart, attended with weak small intermitting pulse.

Obstinate diarrhœa.

Erysipelatous inflammations, ophthalmia.

Obstinate glandular and scrofulous diseases.

Obstructions of urine and menses.

Strangury, spasmodic strictures, &c. &c.

Syphilitic sore throat, eruptions of the skin.

Nodes, ulcers, &c. &c.

Tic douloureux, and nervous irritability.

In addition to the long catalogue of diseases enumerated by the medical practitioners, permit me to name a few more which came immediately under my own peculiar treatment, and wherein no instance of death occurred,—on the contrary, I left them either perfectly cured or convalescent. The disorders I allude to are the following :—atony of the

muscles, atonic gout, elephantiasis, cholera morbus, cholera spasmodica, quinsy, croup, hooping cough, measles, and gout.

In Philadelphia, the Baths were established under the superintendence of four highly respectable medical gentlemen; and my most grateful acknowledgements are due to Mr. Watson the mayor, Mr. Haines, and other gentlemen, to whose kindness and liberality I am greatly indebted.

I paid a short visit to the City of Boston, where my system was most favourably received; Dr. Ingalls received me with the kindness of former friendship, and introduced me to Doctors Reynolds and Jeffries.

From the length of this letter some apology may be due for trespassing so long on your attention. There are many incidents, however, which I have purposely omitted, and the account of the various cities which I visited is abridged as much as possible for the present. Yet I trust the result will be as satisfactory to my friends in England as to those in the western world. Every experiment I have been able to make has confirmed my opinion that scrofula may be eradicated from the kingdom altogether, and that dyspepsia with its long train of disorders will be alleviated and cured by pursuing my system of medicine, regimen, and the Vapour Bath; and that the greatest benefit may be derived from due attention to the aphorisms of Linnæus.

Having returned by the blessing of God to this metropolis once more, with a degree of prosperity and success which has exceeded my expectation, and with an abundant supply of plants for the purposes of medicine and medicating the Baths, prepared and packed in a peculiar manner calculated to retain their full physical powers unimpaired for a considerable length of time, samples of which I have ready for your inspection, I trust that my system will prove of essential benefit to the British nation, by relieving the afflicted; and, in a great degree, tend to prevent those formidable diseases that are eating like a gangrene into the very vitals of the community.

To your Royal Highness, and those gentlemen who have patronized the Asylum, I beg to present my most heartfelt gratitude, and with the greatest respect, to subscribe myself

Your most humble Servant,

No. 23, Finsbury Circus;

CHARLES WHITLAW.

Jan. 1, 1826.

muscles, atonic gout, elephantiasis, cholera morbus, cholera
spasmodica, dysentery, dropsy, hæmorrhoids, piles, and
gout.

In Philadelphia, the Baths were established under the
superintendence of four highly respectable medical gentle-
men; and my most grateful acknowledgments are due to
Mr. Watson the mayor, Mr. Haines, and other gentlemen, to
whose kindness and liberality I am greatly indebted.
I paid a short visit to the City of Boston, where my
affairs were most graciously received; Dr. Russell re-
ceived me with the kindness of former friendship, and
introduced me to Doctor Henshaw and Jelliffe.
From the length of this letter some apology may be due
for trespassing so long on your attention. I have so many
incidents, however, which I have purposely omitted, and
the account of the various cases which I visited is abridged
as much as possible for the present. Yet I trust the result
will be as satisfactory to my friends in England as to those
in the western world. Every experiment I have been able
to make has confirmed my opinion that scrofula may be
eradicated from the human system, and that dyspepsia
with its long train of disorders will be alleviated and cured
by pursuing my system of medicine, regimen, and the
Vapor Bath; and that the greatest benefit may be derived
from due attention to the operations of Nature.
Having returned by the blessing of God to this metro-
polis once more, with a degree of prosperity and success
which has exceeded my expectation, and with an abundant
supply of plants for the purposes of medicine and exhi-
biting the baths, prepared and packed in a peculiar manner
calculated to retain their full physical power unimpaired
for a considerable length of time, snippets of which I have
ready for your inspection, I trust that my system will prove
of essential benefit to the British nation, by relieving the
afflicted; and, in a great degree, tend to prevent those for-
midable diseases that are eating like a canker into the
very vitals of the community.
To your Royal Highness, and those gentlemen who
have patronized the Asylum, I beg to present my most
heartfelt gratitude, and with the greatest respect, to sub-
scribe myself

Your most humble servant,
CHARLES WHITLAW.

