

**Cursory remarks on corpulence / by a member of the Royal College of Surgeons.**

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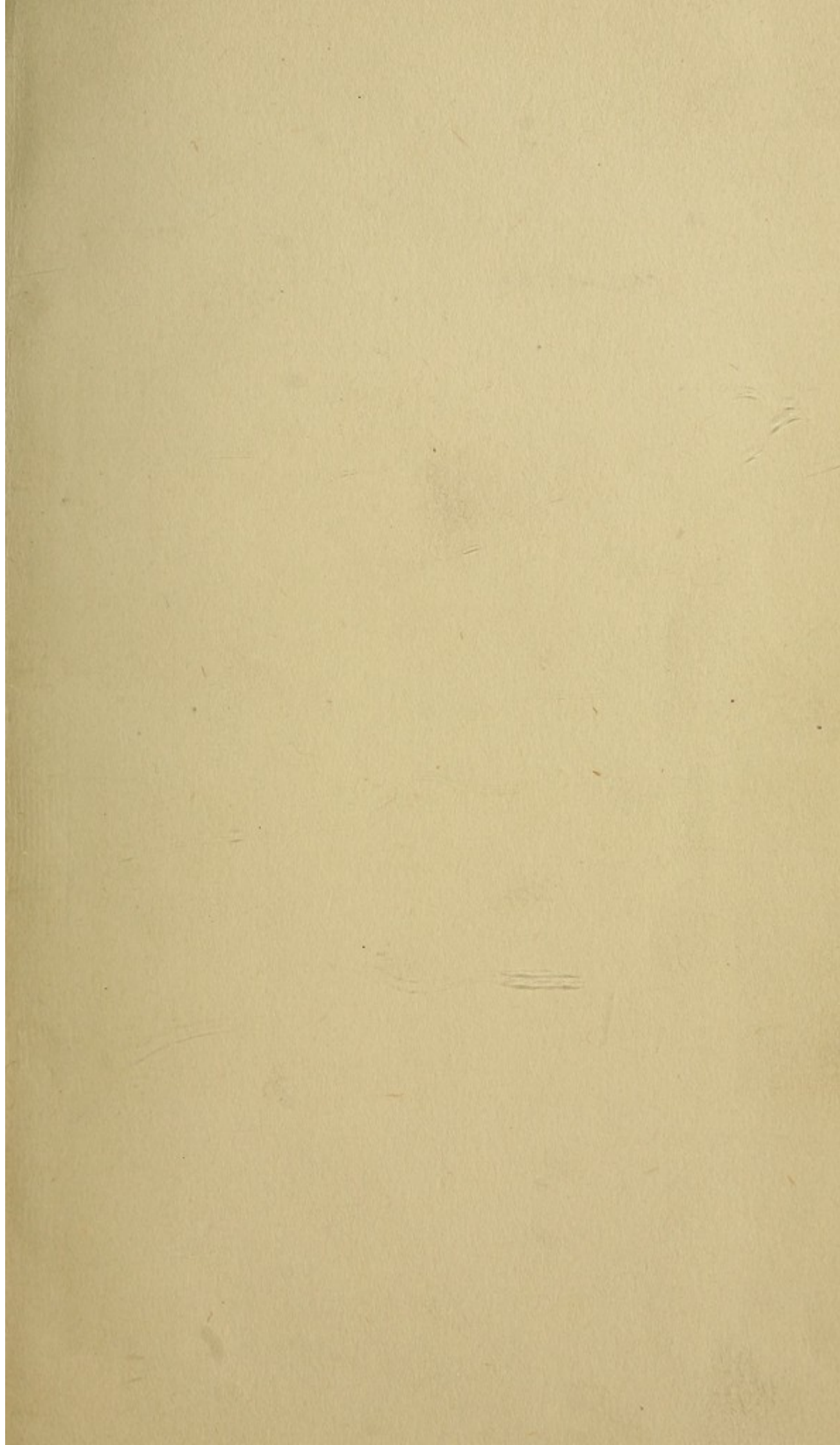


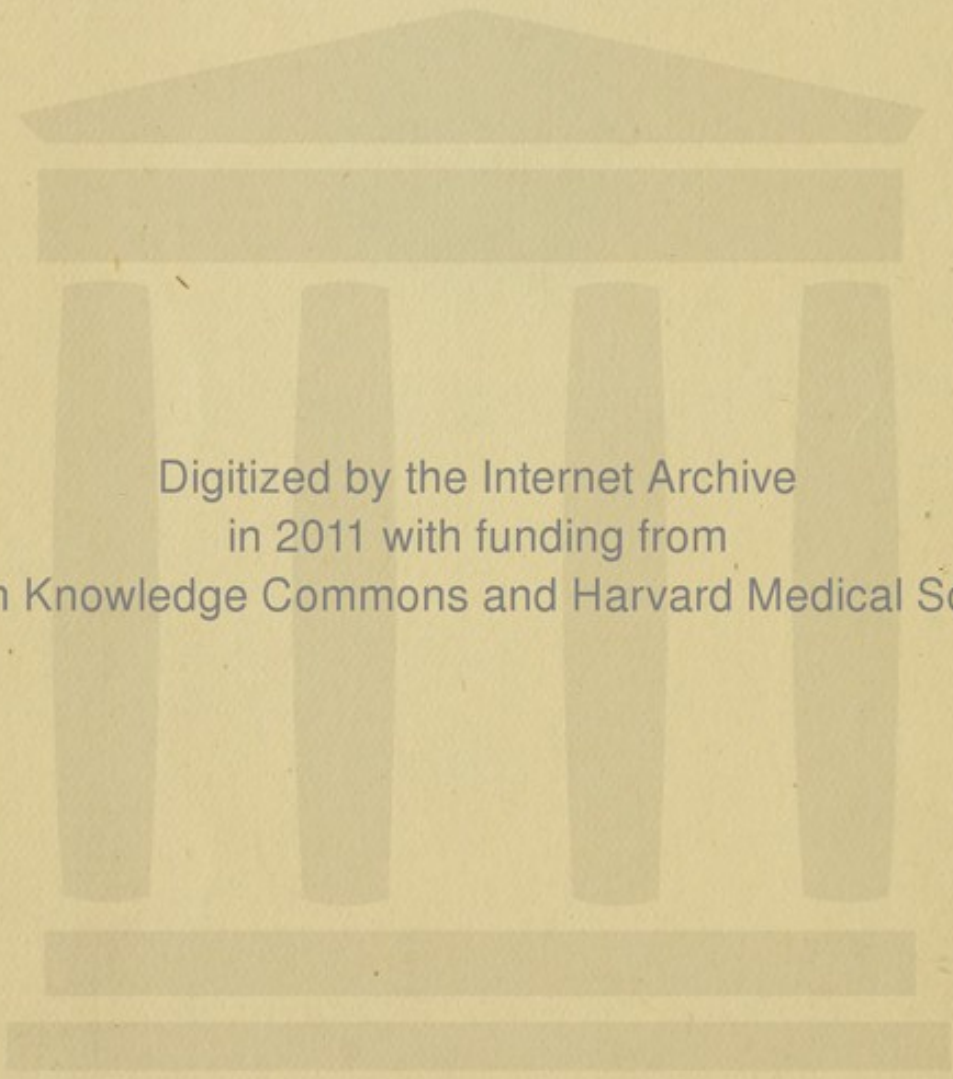
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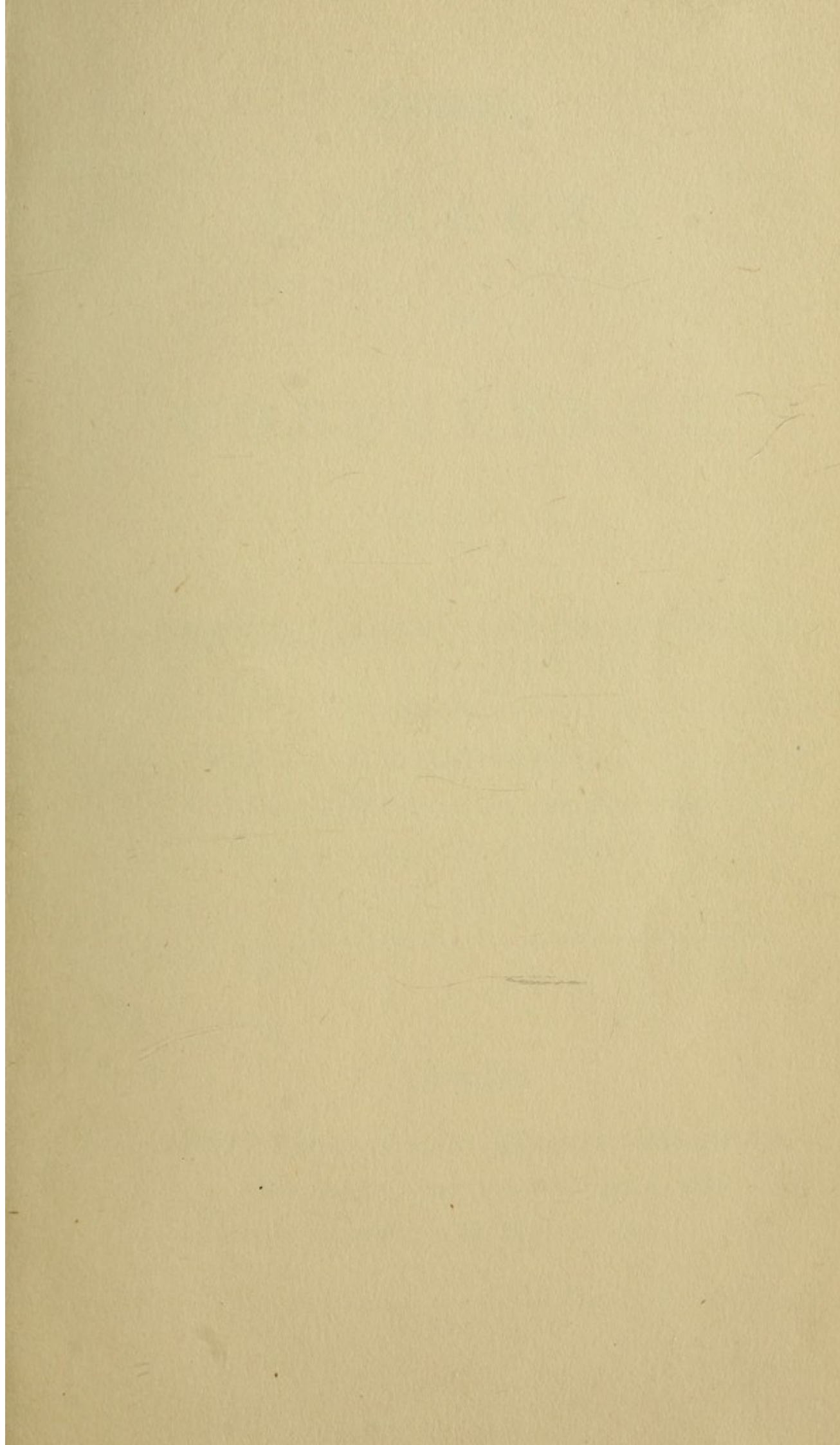
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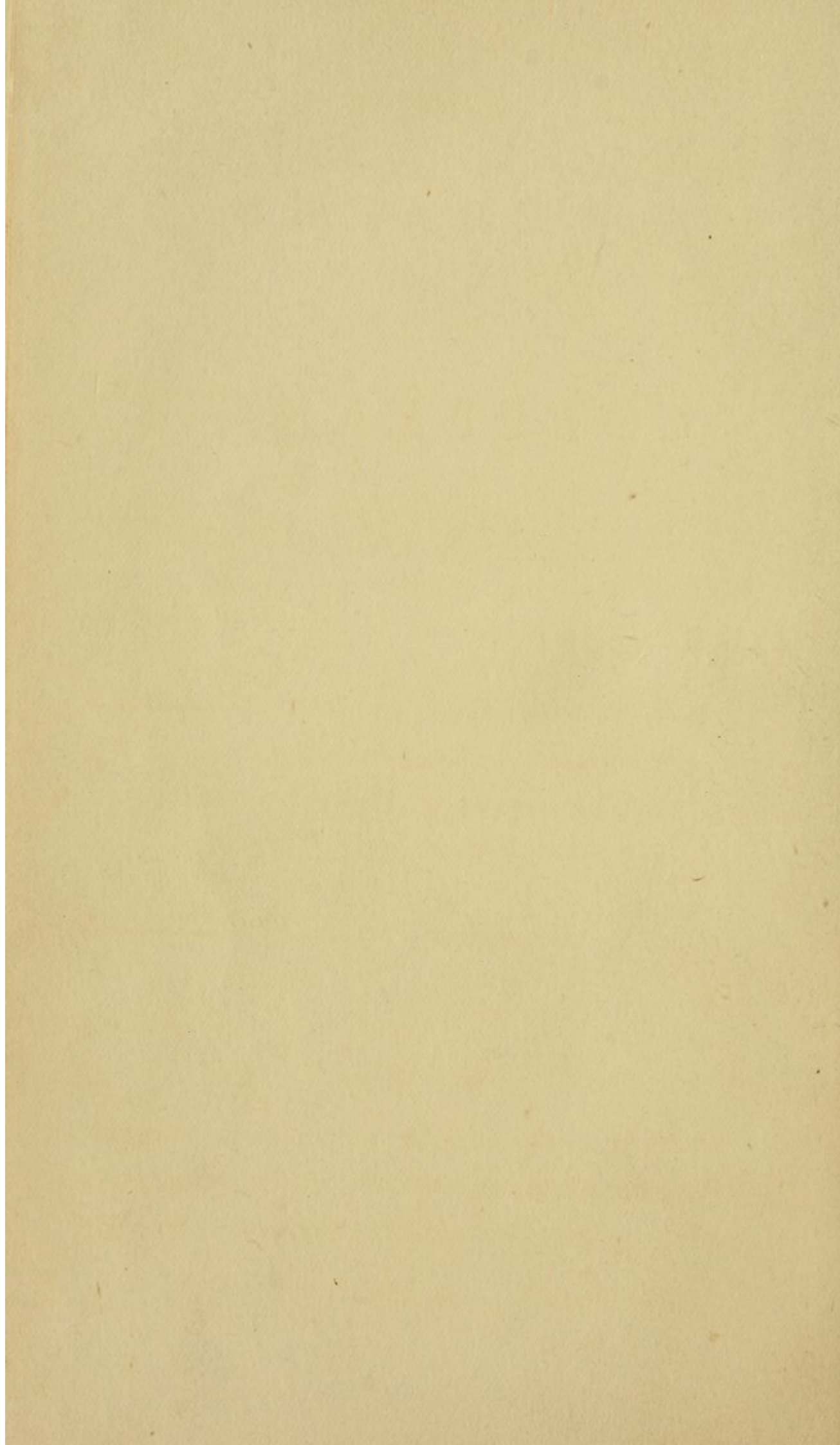
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Cursory

REMARKS

ON

CORPULENCE:

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BY

A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

*William Wadd*

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Think not, ye candidates for health,  
That ought can gain the wish'd-for prize;  
(Or pill or potion, power or wealth,)   
But temperance and exercise.

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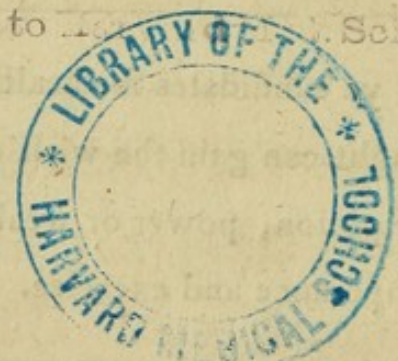
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## INTRODUCTION.

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A GENTLEMAN with whom I was in the habit of having frequent discussions on professional subjects, had often introduced his tendency to corpulence, expressing his fears, lest his pursuits, which were sedentary, should increase, what he already felt a growing inconvenience. On this account he addressed a letter, earnestly requesting my reference, to such authors as might satisfy his curiosity, or give him some information, on a subject which so much engrossed his thoughts. At the same time he stated, some circumstances of his life connected with, and illustrative of his com-

plaints; with observations on the effect vegetable diet had on them.

He had approached his thirtieth year before he experienced any great inconvenience from his increase of bulk. From this period his mind was deeply impressed with the apprehension of becoming corpulent. Inactivity, somnolency, depression of spirits, that train of symptoms usually called nervous, and an inaptitude for study, were symptoms which could not but produce much anxiety. By an abstemious mode of living, and a vegetable diet, he became lighter, more capable of mental exertion, and in every respect improved in health—but whenever he resumed his former course of living, his complaints returned in full force.

The variation in this gentleman's health and feelings, from an alternate change in

his regimen, was not less decided and remarkable, than the alteration the declining strength of Cornaro experienced, when the return of the vintage enabled him to take his usual quantity of new wine.

I employed a few leisure hours in bringing together the opinions of different writers, on what appears to me not only an interesting subject, but one which has been most neglected, when from circumstances, it most required attention. As it is probable, that the following pages may chiefly attract the attention of those whose "em bon point" appearance denotes good temper, no apology need be made for offering a few observations to their consideration. The rules by which Cornaro repaired his constitution, greatly injured by an irregular course of life, until he was forty years old, were successfully adopted by the celebrated Miller of Billericay;

and should I be fortunate enough to lead a single individual, labouring under similar infirmities, to attempt the restoration of his health, by the same means, I shall feel amply gratified.

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## CURSORY REMARKS,

&c. &c. &c.

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IF the increase of wealth and the refinement of modern times, have tended to banish plague and pestilence from our cities, they have probably introduced to us the whole train of nervous disorders, and increased the frequency of corpulence.

Hollingshed, who lived in Queen Elizabeth's reign, speaking of the increase of luxury in those days, notices, "the multitude of chimnies lately erected; whereas in the sound remembrance of some old men, there were not above two or three, if so many, in most uplandish towns of the realm."\*

\* Hume's Hist. v. IV. p. 497.

How far corpulence has kept pace with the number of chimnies, I pretend not to determine; certain it is that Hollingshed and his cotemporaries, furnish no account of the front of a house, or the windows, being taken away, to let out, to an untimely grave, some unfortunate victim, too ponderous to be brought down the staircase.

The English nation has at all times been as famous for beef, as her sons have been celebrated for bravery; and that they understood good living, even in the earliest ages, we may learn from Cæsar, who, speaking of the diet of the Britons, says, “*Lacte et carne vivunt.*”

It has been conjectured by some, that for one fat person in France or Spain, there are an hundred in England. I shall leave to others to determine the fairness of such a calculation.

That we may however approach, or even exceed it, no one will doubt, who reflects on the increasing improvements in the art of grazing, and the condescension of some modern physicians, who have added the culinary department to the practice of physic. And it ought not to be omitted, amongst the great events of the present æra, that the combined efforts, of art and nature, produced, in the jubilee year 1809 the fattest ox, and the most corpulent man, ever heard of in the history of the world.

It is undoubtedly a singular circumstance, that a disease which had been thought characteristic of the inhabitants of this island, should have been so little attended to. Dr. Thomas Short, in 1727, published a discourse on Corpulency; which, with a small pamphlet by Dr. Flemyng, and some occasional remarks in a few systematic works, will, I believe, be found to

comprise all that has been said by the physicians of this country, on what Dr. Fothergill termed, “ a most singular disease.”

In answer to this, we may be told that sufficient has been written, for any man to be his own physician in this complaint, and that “ *le régime maigre*,” and Dr. Radcliffe’s advice, of keeping “ the eyes open, and the mouth shut,” contains the whole secret of the cure.

That Lewis Cornaro and Thomas Wood, believed in this doctrine, and acted up to its principles, by a rigid perseverance in temperance, undoubtedly is true ; and it is equally true, that the one emerged from a state of constant torment, and the other from the oppression of a load of fat.

There may be others, and probably many, in private life, who have had good

sense and courage enough to adopt this line of conduct; but the instances on record are rare.

To account for this is difficult; since from the days of Hippocrates downwards, dietetics, and the efficacy of abstinence, have been the constant theme of physicians and moralists.

The history of persons who have been brought to a premature death by the excessive accumulation of fat, in general, does little more than excite our astonishment at the trespass nature has endured: but an accurate account of those who have succeeded in opposing, and conquering this disease, would form a very useful and interesting narrative.

The extraordinary case of the late Mr. Lambert is a forcible example in point.

From the detail of his life, it does not appear, that any decided attempt was made, to arrest the progress of a disease, which from an early period seemed rapidly to increase.

Whether this arose from his ignorance of the fatality of it, or from the common prejudice, that the complaint is so connected and interwoven with the constitution, as to be irremediable, is matter of conjecture; and we are only left to wonder that this prodigy of clogged machinery, should continue to move so many years.

It may be useful to some of my readers to be informed of a few circumstances relative to the anatomy and physiology of the parts concerned, and of the nature and properties of the substance, the encreased deposit of which, is so injurious to the

functions of life. This I shall do as concisely as possible.

The manner in which fat is distributed over the body, is now generally understood to be by the texture of the cellular membrane. Formerly it was supposed, that it merely adhered in clusters or lumps to the parts where it was found.

This membrane is thicker in some parts than in others, and is composed of a number of cells communicating with each other. Some have thought that the fat was contained in cells peculiar to itself; on which account, the name of adipose has been given to that part of the membrane in which it is found. The other has been called reticular cellular substance, and is considered as the universal connecting medium between the larger and smaller parts, extending itself to inconceivable minute-

ness, and constituting, according to the opinion of Dr. Hunter, one half of the whole body.

That celebrated anatomist, in his lectures, always described the fat as contained in little bags of its own, not communicating with each other. He observed, that if pressure was made on the adipose membrane, the oil did not recede into the surrounding cells, as water did in anasarca—and that water was often seen in parts of the membrane where fat was never found. An instance is mentioned, however, by Mons. Lorry, in “*Memoires de l’Academie de Medicine*,”\* of the fat falling down to the foot and forming a tumor.

\* In this paper Mons. Lorry gives an account of diseases he supposed were produced by fat, from its mixture with various other substances, as milk, pus, &c. He contends, there is a reciprocity of action between fat and bile, by which, he endeavours to account for many of the appearances met with in bilious diseases.

There is another membrane which ought also to be noticed, namely, a duplicature of the peritoneum, called the omentum,\* situated in the front of the abdomen, immediately before the intestines. This is generally known by the term caul, and is a conspicuous receptacle of fat in elderly people. In a healthy state it seldoms weighs more than half-a-pound, but it has been found increased to many pounds. Boerhaave mentions a case of a man whose belly grew so large, that he was obliged to have it supported by a sash; and had a piece of the table cut out to enable him to reach it with his hands. After death the omentum weighed thirty pounds.

\* A great many fanciful conjectures have been entertained concerning the uses of the omentum. Some have questioned whether it was not the common root of fat, having an undiscovered communication with the *membrana adiposa*. Others have thought it subservient to the liver, and that it co-operated in the formation of the bile, &c. Perhaps there was as much probability in such notions, as in some modern opinions concerning the spleen.

A preternatural accumulation of fat in this part, cannot fail to impede the free exercise of the animal functions. Respiration is performed imperfectly, and with difficulty; and the power of taking exercise is almost lost—added to which, from the general pressure on the large blood vessels, the circulation through them is obstructed, and consequently the accumulation of blood is encreas'd in those parts, where there is no fat, as the brain, lungs, &c. Hence we find the pulse of fat people weaker than in others, and from these circumstances also, we may easily understand how the corpulent grow dull, sleepy, and indolent.

The quantity and quality of fat varies according to the age, and the parts in which it is deposited. It is firmer and higher coloured in old persons, than in young ones. It is also more condensed and

solid in parts liable to compression, than what is found in the omentum, about the heart, stomach, and intestines. In children the fat is distributed over the surface of the body, but as they grow up, it is more generally disposed, diminishing on the surface in proportion as it becomes deeper seated.

Malpighi and other anatomists have thought that there was a glandular apparatus superadded to the cellular membrane, to assist in the formation of fat. But this has never been discovered.

The accumulation of fat, or what is commonly called corpulency, and by nosologists denominated *polysarcia*, is a state of body very generally met with in the inhabitants of this country; and though it may exist to a certain degree \* without

\* It is supposed, that a person weighing one hundred and twenty pounds, generally contains twenty pounds of fat.

being deemed worthy of attention, yet when excessive, is not only burthensome, but predisposes to disease, particularly scurvy, \* and is frequently the cause of sudden death.

The predisposition to corpulency varies in different persons. In some it exists to such an extent, that a considerable secretion of fat will take place, notwithstanding strict attention to the habits of life, and undeviating moderation in the gratification of the appetite. Such a disposition is generally connate, very often hereditary; and when accompanied, as it frequently is, with that easy state of mind, denominated “good humour,” which, in the fair sex, Mr. Pope tells us,

..... “teaches charms to last,  
“Still makes new conquests, and maintains the past.”

Or when in men, the temper is cast in

\* Trotter on the Scurvy.

that happy mould, which Mr. Hume so cheerfully congratulates himself upon possessing, and considers as more than equivalent to a thousand a year, “the habit of looking at every thing on its favorable side”—corpulency must ensue.

Where the predisposition exists, the generally exciting causes of corpulency are a free indulgence in rich and nutritious food, which may be considered as the first and principal. On this account it is a disease, with which the lower orders of society, the poor and laborious, are seldom encumbered; it is only among those who have the means of obtaining the comforts of life without labour, that excessive corpulency is met with.

Many other causes have been adduced, as co-operating. Dr. Beddoes has applied the theory of Pneumatic Chemistry to this subject, and attaches great importance, to

deficiency of oxygen. But Dr. B. remained inconveniently fat during his life. Dr. Malcolm Flemyng, lays great stress on the defective evacuation of fat, or oil, through the outlets of the body. The total cessation of any natural discharge—much sleep—and a sedentary life, greatly assist. Thus we find persons who have been long confined to their rooms, from any accident, not interfering with the digestive powers, usually grow corpulent. I lately attended a gentleman, about thirty-five years of age, of a thin spare habit, who had the misfortune to rupture the Tendo Achilles. In the course of three months he increased so much in size, that a coat which sat loosely on him, before he met with his accident, would not meet to button, by nine or ten inches.

Having given this short detail of the nature of the disease, I shall proceed to

make a few remarks on the means of cure; first, taking a slight view of the various medicines, that have at different times, been recommended as specifics.

Coelius Aurelianus, to whose diligence in collecting the opinions of preceding writers, we are much indebted, mentions two ways of curing this complaint; by taking food that has little nutrition in it, or by observing certain rules of exercise. He enjoins the patient to ride on horseback, or take a sea voyage, to read aloud, and to give the limbs motion by walking quickly. He recommends the body to be sprinkled with sand, and rubbed with a coarse dry towel. Sweating is to be produced by the aid of stoves and the warm bath. Sometimes the cold bath is to be used to strengthen and invigorate the body. He orders the patient to be covered with hot sand, and to be put into medicated

waters, after having been in the sweating bath, and then to be sprinkled with salt, or rubbed with pulverised nitre. He is to drink little, and acid wines should be mixed with his liquors. His food is to be chiefly bread made with bran; vegetables of all kinds; a very small quantity of animal food, and that is to be dry and free from fat. He advises very little sleep, and positively forbids it after meals. He condemns the practice of bleeding and particularly objects to vomiting after supper, so much recommended by his predecessors.

Borrelli, recommends chewing tobacco; but this practice is objected to by Etmuller, as he thinks it may lead to consumption. Etmuller asserts, there is not a more efficacious remedy than vinegar of squills.

Few things have been more generally administered in the cure of corpulency than

acids of various kinds. The emaciating properties of acid liquors, particularly vinegar, are very well known. It is said, that the famous Spanish General, Chiapin Vitellis, well known in the time he lived for his enormous size, reduced himself, solely by drinking of vinegar, to such a degree that he could fold his skin round his body. In countries where cyder is drank as a beverage, the inhabitants are leaner than in those where beer is the common liquor.

Soap, is strongly recommended by Dr. Flemyng, on account of its diuretic properties. After making some observations on the quantity and quality of food, and enforcing the necessity of abstinence; he considers what is the most effectual method of increasing the evacuation of animal oil, which, he says, is to be done, with the greatest safety, by diuretics. For this purpose he recommends soap, considering it as

a specific. Purgative medicines, he observes, are dangerous; and little is to be done by perspiration. But where there is no morbid obstruction, mild diuretics, particularly soap, will, he thinks, effect a cure, without inconvenience or danger to the constitution.

“A worthy acquaintance of mine,” says Dr. Flemyng, “a judicious and experienced physician, in his younger days had been very active, and used much exercise, both on foot and on horseback, and for many years seemed as little liable to corpulency as most people. By insensible degrees, as he diminished his daily labours, fatness stole upon him and kept increasing, insomuch, that when I met with him about six years ago, I found him in the greatest distress, through mere corpulency, of any person, not exceeding middle age, I ever knew. He was obliged to ride from house to house to visit his patients in the town

where he practised, being quite unable to walk an hundred yards at a stretch; and was, in no small degree, lethargic. In other respects, he seemed pretty clear of any remarkable disease, except gout, of which he had felt some, not very violent, attacks. I warmly recommended the inward use of soap, in order to reduce his corpulency, as the safe and effectual remedy in his case, and a remedy which he might continue to use the longest; I enforced my advice by the reasonings above urged, of which he was too good a judge not to perceive their full cogency: accordingly he began to take it July 1754, at which time he weighed twenty stone and eleven pounds, jockey weight; a vast load for him to bear, who is little above middle stature, and withal small boned.—He took every night at bed time, a quarter of an ounce of common home-made castile soap, dissolved in a quarter of a pint of soft water;

in about two or three months time he began to feel more freedom, and an increase of activity, which encouraged him to persevere; and that he did with success, that in August 1756 (as he informs me in a letter now lying before me) his bulk was reduced two whole stone weight, and he could walk a mile with pleasure. He had continued the use of the soap all the time between June 1754, and August 1756, with very short interruptions, in the manner and quantity above mentioned; it operated remarkably, without ever producing the least troublesome effect. And now, while I am sending these pages to the press (April 1760) I am certainly informed that he is hearty and well."

The author of "*Zoonomia*" is of opinion, that the eating of much salt, or salted meat, is more efficacious than soap, as it increases perspiration, and produces

thirst, by which, if the patient can bear it, the absorption of his fat will be greatly increased, as in fever. He advises that one entire meal should be omitted, as supper; to drink as little as possible of any fluid, but aërated alkaline water, which he recommends from an idea of its rendering fat more fluid.\*

Dr. Cullen, however, well observes, “ that the inducing a saline and acrid state of the blood,” (which are supposed to be the effect of vinegar and soap) “ may have worse consequences than the corpulency it was intended to correct, and that no person should hazard those while he may have recourse to the more safe and certain means of *abstinence* and *exercise*. The diet,” he adds, “ must be sparing, or rather, what is more admissible, it must be such as affords little nutritious matter; it must

\* Zoonomia, v. II. c. 1. 23.

therefore be chiefly or almost only of vegetable matter, and at the very utmost, milk. Such a diet should be employed and generally ought to precede exercise, for obesity does not easily admit of bodily exercise, which, however, is the only mode that can be very effectual.”\*

The theory of the celebrated Brown, naturally led him to prefer and recommend the free use of animal food in our general diet; but he agrees with Dr. Cullen in the chief points, “ that as animal food is the principal noxious power, the quantity should be reduced, and more exercise taken. These means,” he observes, “ are sufficient for the cure.”

Dr. Fothergill, to whom we are indebted for two curious cases of corpulency, holds the same language. “ A strict vegetable

\* *Prac. of Physic*, v. IV. p. 131.

diet," says the doctor, " reduces exuberant fat more certainly than any other means I know. Perhaps a reasonable use of wine, not a generous one, should here be allowed, lest the strength should be diminished too much in proportion. All the means of increasing the thinner secretions, are evidently pointed out as necessary, if to these we join small doses of chalybeates, or other medicines; and an abstinence from animal food, so far as the patient's health, situation, and manner of life, will admit of it; we are, perhaps, rendering all the reasonable assistance we can, till future discoveries make us better acquainted with the real causes of this singular distemper."\*

The cure of this disease, according to the opinion of the late Dr. Beddoes, consists, in giving to the constitution a greater quantity of oxygen, independent of the

\* Med. Obs. and Inq. v. V. p. 251.

mechanical effects of exercise, which increases absorption. The doctor asks, "may it not also, by introducing more oxygen into the system, by diffusing it more widely, check the formation of a substance containing little oxygen, while the fat, with the other fluids and solids, is absorbed?"\*

Salivation, decoction of guaicum with sweating,† have been proposed; and in cases of enlarged omentum, a bandage has been recommended, that might be tightened and relaxed at pleasure.

These, I believe, are the principal articles that have been resorted to in the medical treatment of this disease; and the person who depends solely on the benefit to be derived from the use of any of them,

\* Observations on Calculus.

† Med. Obs. and Inq. v. III. p. 69.

will, I fear, find himself grievously disappointed.

Soap has been tried, and not answered the expectations Dr. Flemyng's conjectures gave rise to. The emaciating properties of vinegar are well known; but the experiments of modern chemists, particularly Mr. Pilger, are decisive of its highly deleterious effects on the organs of digestion, when taken in sufficient quantity to effect the diminution of fat.

Nor will any of the other medicaments proposed afford better prospects of success. As auxiliaries they may occasionally be useful, but the only certain and permanent relief, is to be sought in a rigid abstemiousness, and a strict and constant attention to diet.

It has been well observed by an expe-

rienced surgeon, that in hereditary diseases,  
 “ more dependance is to be had upon diet  
 than medicine ; and that the whole consti-  
 tution may be changed by a proper choice  
 of aliment.”\*

The truth of this opinion will not, I  
 presume, be doubted, and in no instance is  
 it more applicable than in the present. Un-  
 fortunately however, the continued per-  
 severance necessary to render such a plan  
 effective, makes it one of the most difficult  
 tasks that can be imposed on corpulent  
 persons, whose habits are generally con-  
 nected with great inactivity of body and  
 indecision of mind, and who are conse-  
 quently, little inclined to administer to  
 themselves.

Many would willingly submit to any  
 violent remedy, so that an immediate be-

\* Kirkland's Surgery, v. II. p. 466.

nefit could be produced; but unless the disease speedily gives way, they despair of success; consider it as unalterably connected with their constitution, and of course, return to their former habits. This feeling is too often encouraged by the ill-judged advice of friends, who thereby perhaps, become unthinking accomplices in the destruction of those whom they esteem and regard.

The beneficial alteration capable of being produced in the human body by a strict course of abstemiousness, cannot be more remarkably exemplified than in the history of Mr. Wood's case (the Miller of Bille-ricay) as given by the late Sir George Baker in the Medical Transactions of th Royal College of Physicians.

Mr. Wood had arrived at his forty-fourth year, before his complaints were

sufficiently serious to attract his attention, when the life of Cornaro fortunately suggested to him the salutary course of living he afterwards pursued, by which, to use his own words, “ he was metamorphosed from a monster, to a person of moderate size; from the condition of an unhealthy, decrepit old man, to perfect health, and the vigour and activity of youth.”

He began by using animal food, sparingly, and leaving off malt liquor, and by degrees, he brought himself to do without any liquor whatever, excepting what he took in the form of medicine; and latterly the whole of his diet consisted of a pudding made of sea biscuit; by this plan it is supposed he reduced himself ten or eleven stone weight.

The salutary effect of vegetable diet and rigid abstemiousness, is further corroborated

by Dr. Fothergill, under whose direction a case of obesity, in a person thirty years of age, was completely cured. Another greatly relieved, but afterwards terminated fatally from the interference of friends, who dissuaded the patient from continuing the plan. As they are related in a medical work \* that may not fall in the way of many of my readers, and as the account is short, I will take the liberty of quoting them in this place.

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“ A country tradesman, aged about thirty, of a short stature, and naturally of a fresh sanguine complexion, and very fat, applied to me for assistance. He complained of perpetual drowsiness and inactivity; his countenance was almost livid, and such a degree of somnolency attended him, that he could scarce keep awake

\* Medical Observations and Inquiries.

whilst he described his situation. In other respects he was well."

" I advised him immediately to quit all animal food, to live solely on vegetables, and every thing prepared from them, allowed him a glass of wine or a little beer occasionally, but chiefly to confine himself to water. He pursued the plan very scrupulously, lost his redundant fat, grew active as usual in about six months. I recommended a perseverance for a few months longer, then to allow himself light animal food once or twice a week, and gradually to fall into his usual way of living. He grew well and continued so."

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" A young unmarried woman, about twenty-three years of age, of a low stature, and very fat, applied to me for assistance, in a great difficulty of breathing, somno-

lency, and incapacity for any exercise. It was a hardship to her to be obliged to go up stairs, and at last to cross the floor of her apartment."

"It seemed to me that mere obesity was her principal malady: indeed she had no other complaint, but such as apparently might be accounted for from this supposition. She was ordered to pursue a vegetable diet, and, in the summer, to drink the waters at Scarborough. She conformed to these directions, became more agile, less sleepy, less averse to exercise: she walked up the steps at Scarborough from the Spaw, a task of no little difficulty to people much less incumbered. I urged a continuance of the same diet; she was dissuaded from it by her friends, and died of fat in the twenty-seventh year of her age."

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These cases afford strong evidence of the efficacy of vegetable diet, and at the same time prove the necessity of attending to *quantity*. Some writers however have been of opinion, that the basis of fat was a light nutritious oil, principally extracted from vegetables, and Lorry considers the *abundant* use of succulent vegetable aliment, as an irresistible cause of corpulence.

The following case is a singular instance of the *facility* with which succulent nutritious vegetable matter, will increase bulk.

A few years ago, a man of about forty years of age, hired himself as a labourer, in one of the most considerable Ale-breweries in the City: at this time he was a personable man; stout, active, and not fatter than a moderate sized man in high health should be. His chief occupation

was to superintend the working of the new beer, and occasionally to set up at night to watch the wort, an employment not requiring either activity or labour; of course at these times he had an opportunity of tasting the liquor, of which, it appears, he always availed himself; besides this, he had constant access to the new beer. Thus leading a quiet inactive life, he began to increase in bulk and continued to enlarge, until, in a very short time, he became of such an unwieldy size, as to be unable to move about, and was too big to pass up the brewhouse staircase; if by any accident he fell down, he was unable to get up again without help. The integuments of his face hung down to the shoulders and breast: the fat was not confined to any particular part, but diffused over the whole of his body, arms, legs, &c. making his appearance such as to attract the attention of all who saw him. He left this service to go

into the country, being a burthen to himself, and totally useless to his employers. About two years afterwards he called upon his old masters in very different shape to that above described, being reduced in size nearly half, and weighing little more than ten stone. The account that he gave of himself was, that as soon as he had quitted the brewhouse he went into Bedfordshire, where having soon spent the money he had earned, and being unable to work, he was brought into such a state of poverty, as to be scarcely able to obtain the sustenance of life, often being a whole day without food: he drank very little, and that was generally water. By this mode of living he began to diminish in size, so as to be able to walk about with tolerable ease. He then engaged himself to a farmer, with whom he staid a considerable time, and, in the latter part of his service, was able to go through very hard labour, sometimes being in the

field ploughing and following various agricultural concerns, for a whole day, with no other food than a small pittance of bread and cheese. This was the history he gave of the means by which this extraordinary change was brought about. He added, his health had never been so good as it then was.\*

The approach of most chronic diseases is so gradual, that it is not till they are far advanced that they become an object of

\* There is a remarkable contrast to this case, in the person of a French prisoner of war, who was extremely lean, though the following was his general consumption of one day.

Raw Cow's Udder .. 4 lb.

Raw Beef.....10 lb.

Candles .....2 lb.

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Total.....16 lb.

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Besides Five Bottles of Porter.

Vide Letter from Dr. Johnson to Dr. Blane, Medical and Physical Journal, v. III, p. 211.

attention. This is particularly the case with corpulence. Many even congratulate themselves on their comely appearance, and consequently do not seek a remedy for what they do not consider an evil.

From the account given of Mr. Lambert, it appears, that at the age of twenty-three, he weighed thirty-two stone. At this period it is related that he walked from Woolwich to the Metropolis, with much less apparent fatigue than several middle-sized men who accompanied him. It is clear therefore that he was a strong active man, long after the disease had made great progress ; and I think it may fairly be inferred, that he would not have fallen a sacrifice so early in life, if he had, encouraged by the success of former cases, had fortitude enough to have met the evil, and to have opposed it with determined perseverance.

In private life, I know several persons who are living testimonies of the good effects of an entire and systematic change in the mode of living; and that it may be accomplished with safety, and compatibly with the enjoyment of good health, at any period of life, we have numerous public examples.\*

\* Dr. Benjamin Franklin, in the account of his private life, relates an anecdote of his persuading his master, Keimar, to submit to a vegetable diet, which he did during three months. "A woman in the neighbourhood," says the Doctor, "purchased, cooked, and brought us our victuals; I gave her a list of upwards of forty dishes, which she was to prepare for us at different times, and into the composition of which, neither fish nor flesh was admitted. This fantastical mode of life was the more agreeable to me, at this time, because it was extremely cheap, for the expences of our house-keeping did not exceed eighteen-pence a week."

"I have since," continues Dr. Franklin, "kept *Lent* many times in the same manner, and nearly with the utmost possible strictness, and I have for the most part suddenly substituted this *regimen* to my ordinary food, without experiencing the least inconvenience; this circumstance makes me look upon the advice generally given of accustoming one's self by degrees to change of diet, as a matter of very little importance."

Among them we may enumerate the accomplished and gallant Lord Heathfield, who was perhaps the most abstemious man of the age. He never slept more than four hours at a time, and we are informed by his biographer, that “ he so inured himself to habits of hardiness, that those things which are difficult and painful to other men, were to him his daily practice, and rendered pleasant by use.”

The philanthropic Howard, we are told by Dr. Aiken, “ utterly discarded animal food, as well as all fermented spirituous drinks, from his diet, water and the plainest vegetables sufficing him.” \*

The celebrated John Wesley, in the middle of his life, gave up the use of flesh,

\* An eccentric author (Ritson) not only adopted vegetable diet, but wrote to shew the immorality of eating animal food.

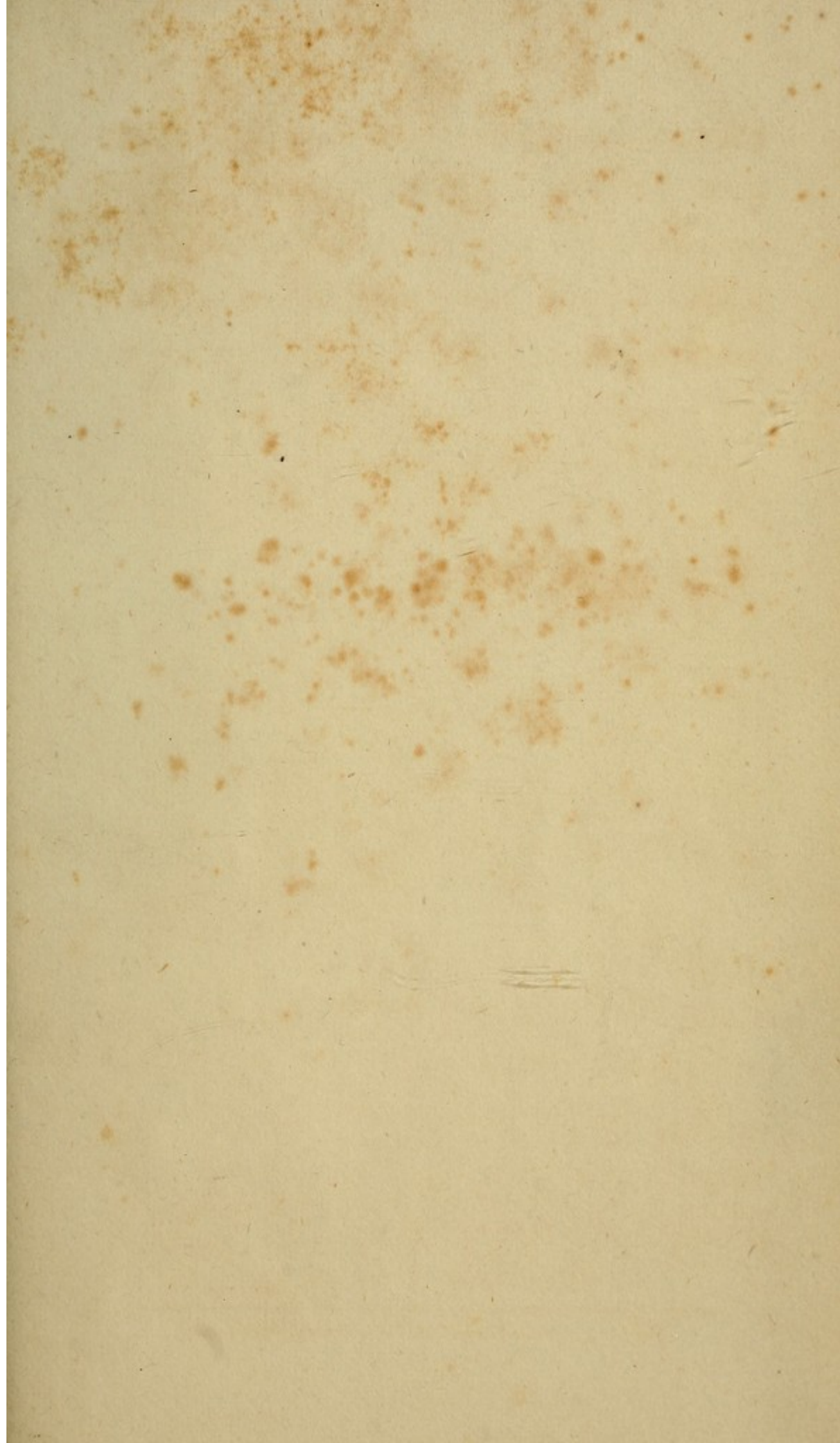
lived upon vegetables alone, and attained the age of eighty-eight.

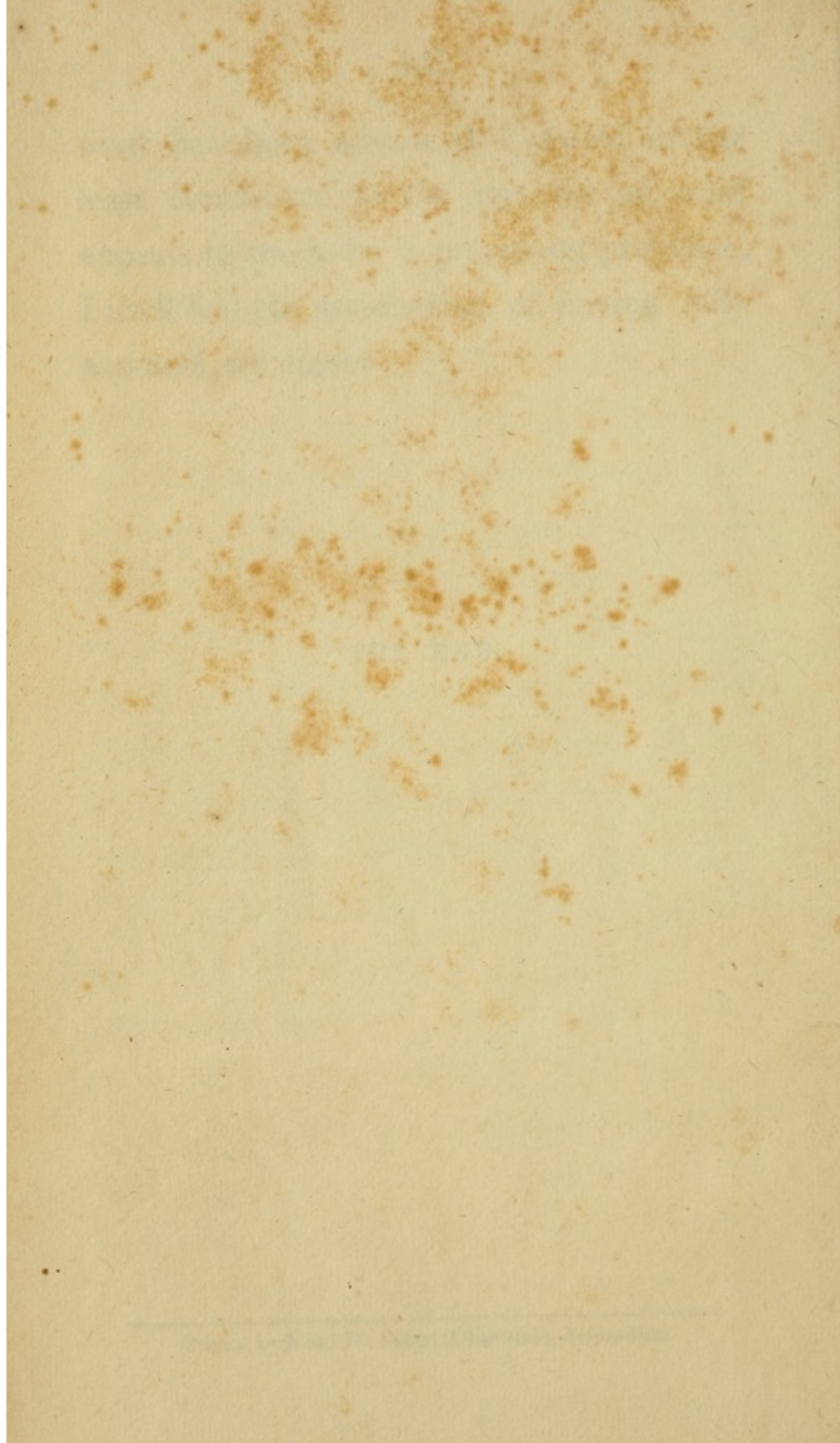
From an accident that endangered the life of the late Duke of Portland, he was, at an early period, led to a necessary abstemiousness, which he continued to his death. By a scrupulous attention to regimen, the excruciating torments of the gout, which he formerly suffered for three months at a time, were greatly alleviated; and he was enabled in the last few years, to bear, with unexampled patience, the miseries of one of the most afflicting diseases incident to human nature.

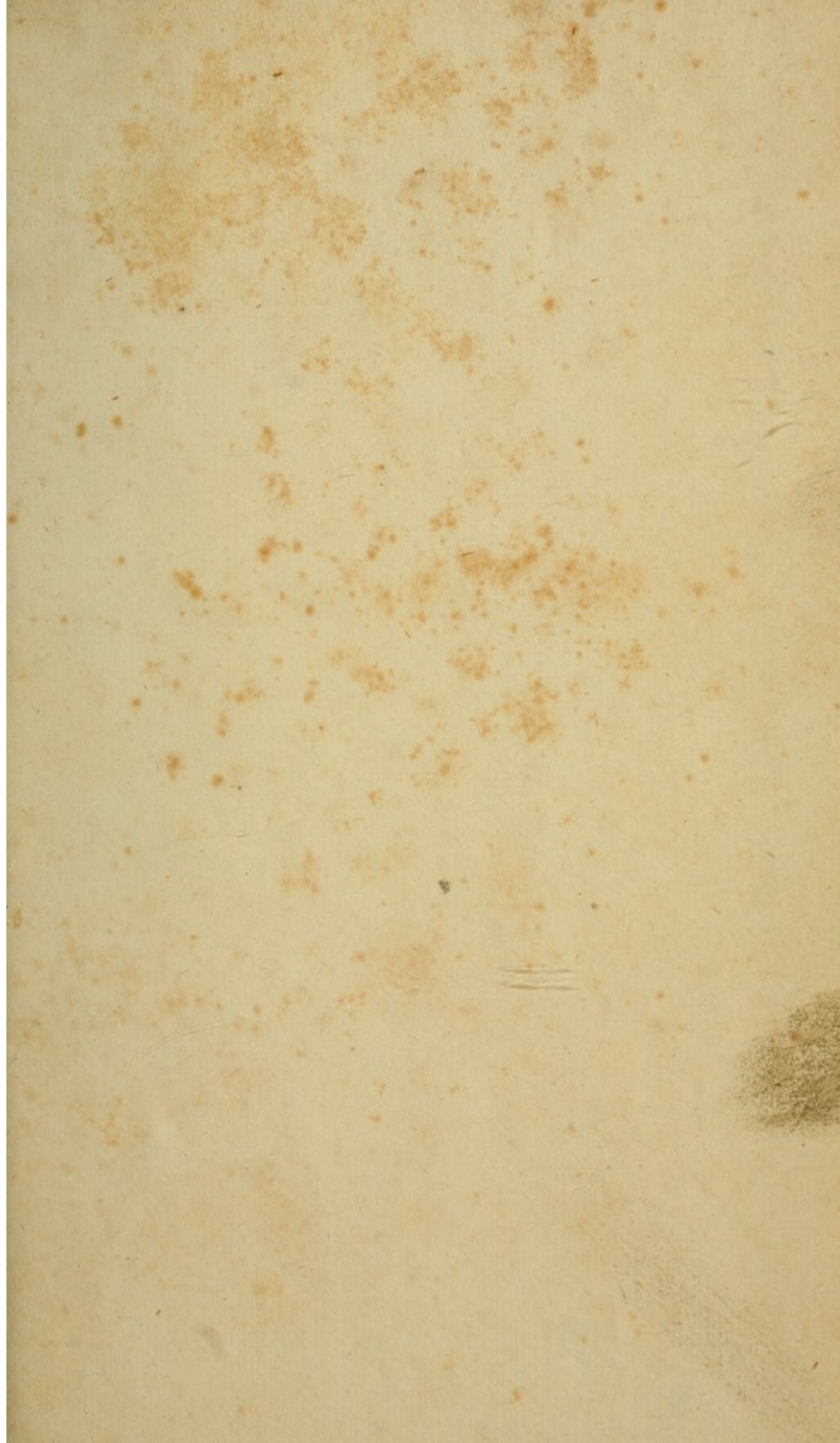
To enlarge on the common advantages of temperance is unnecessary. I am only desirous to shew, by this cursory view, that the diminution of the secretion of fat, when in excess, *may be attempted with safety, and has been attended with success.* If by

what has been advanced I should in the least contribute to the removal of what appears to me to be a prevailing prejudice, I shall feel the satisfaction of having fully attained my object.

THE END.

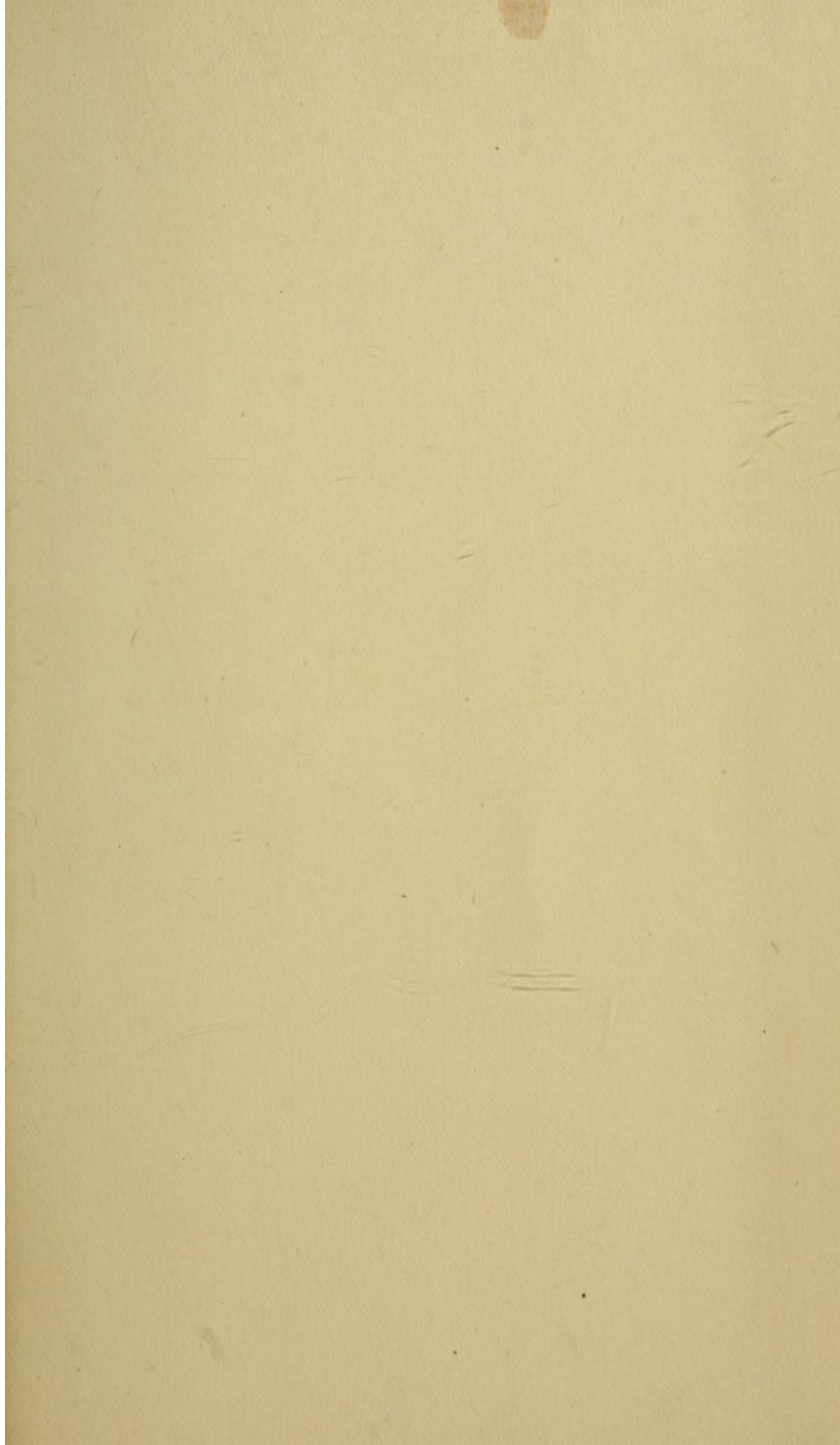


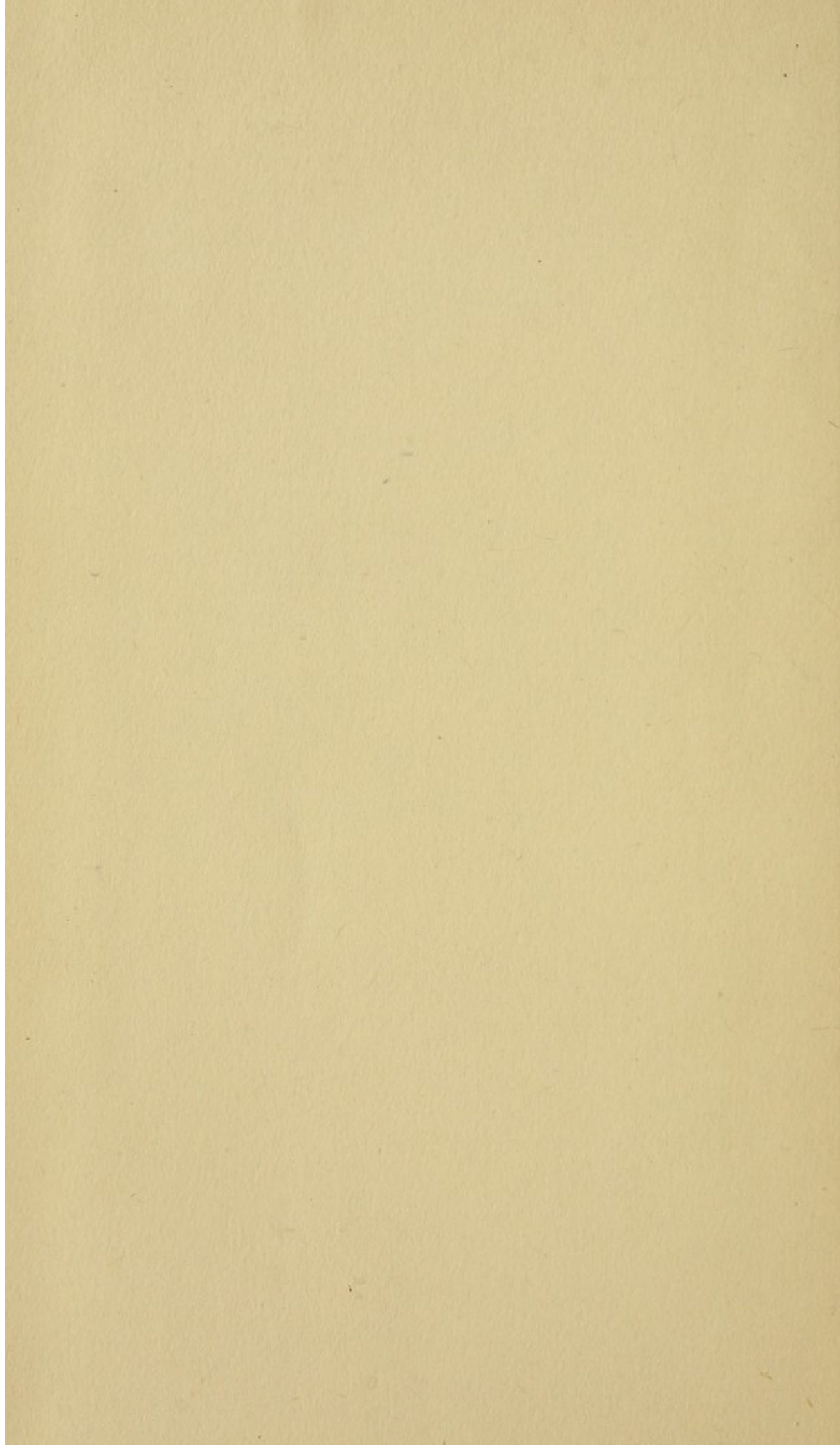


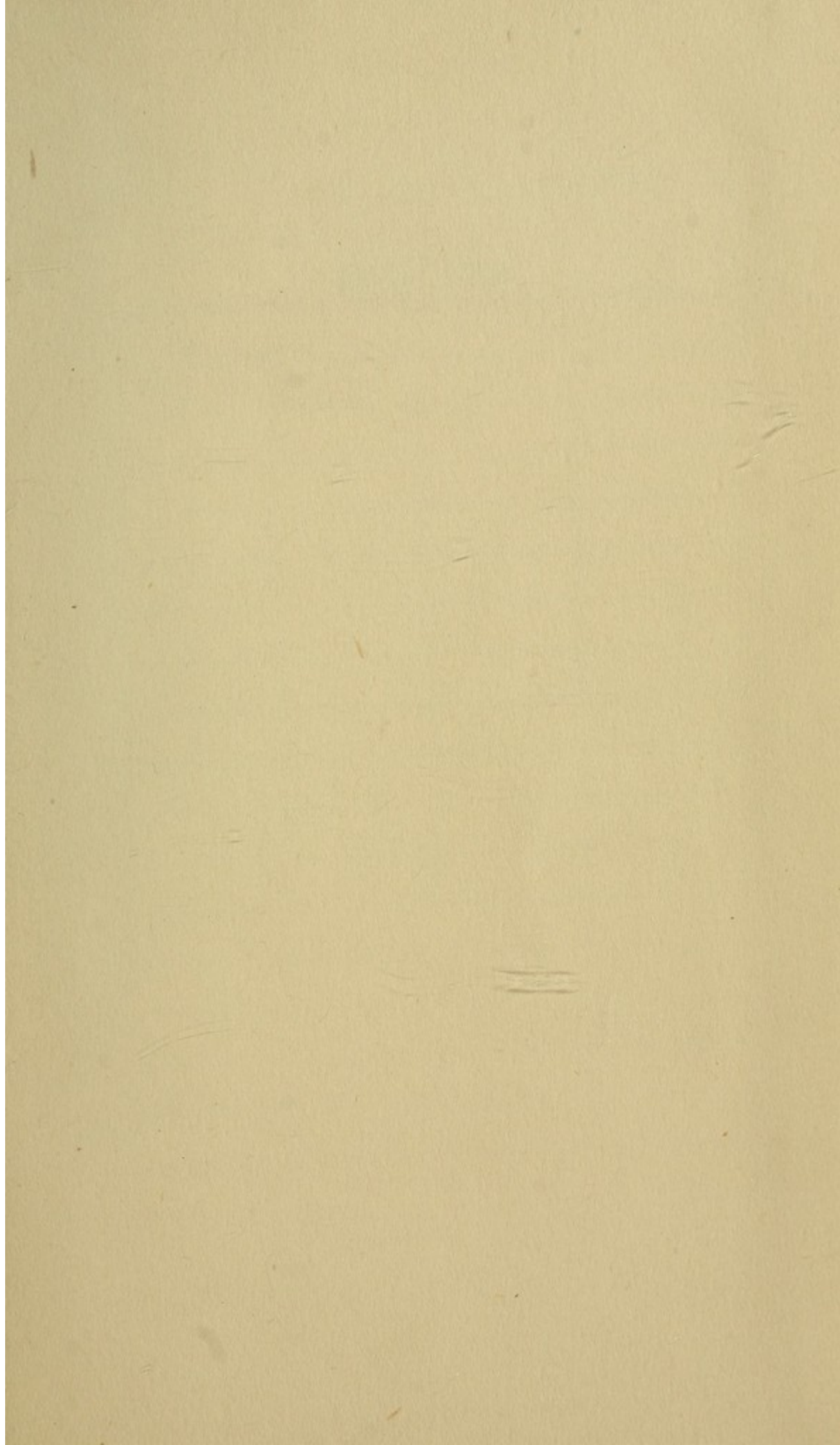


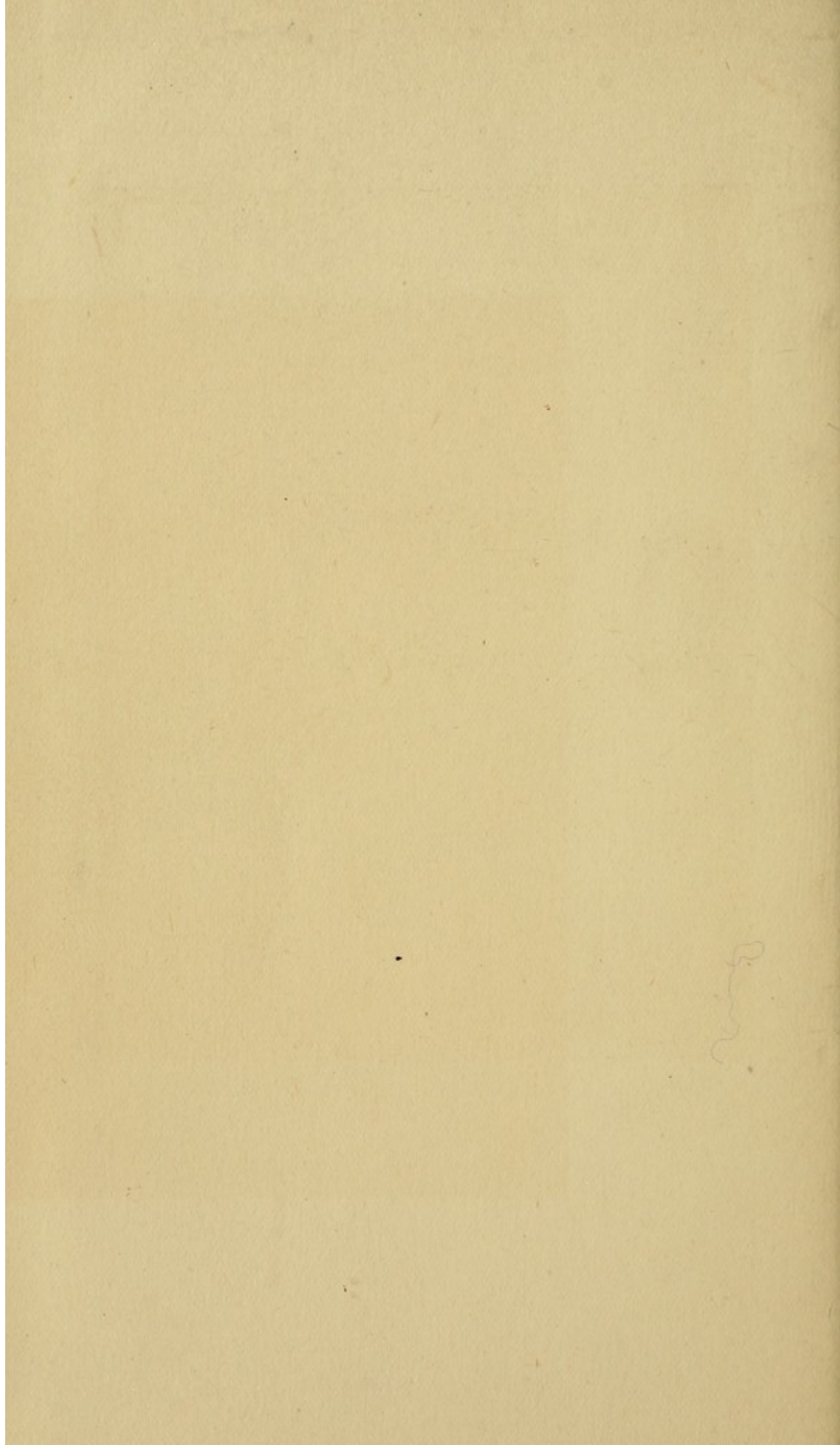
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