

A treatise on desk diseases : containing the best methods of treating the various disorders attendant upon sedentary and studious habits : with a variety of prescriptions adapted to each particular affection / by W.M. Wallace.

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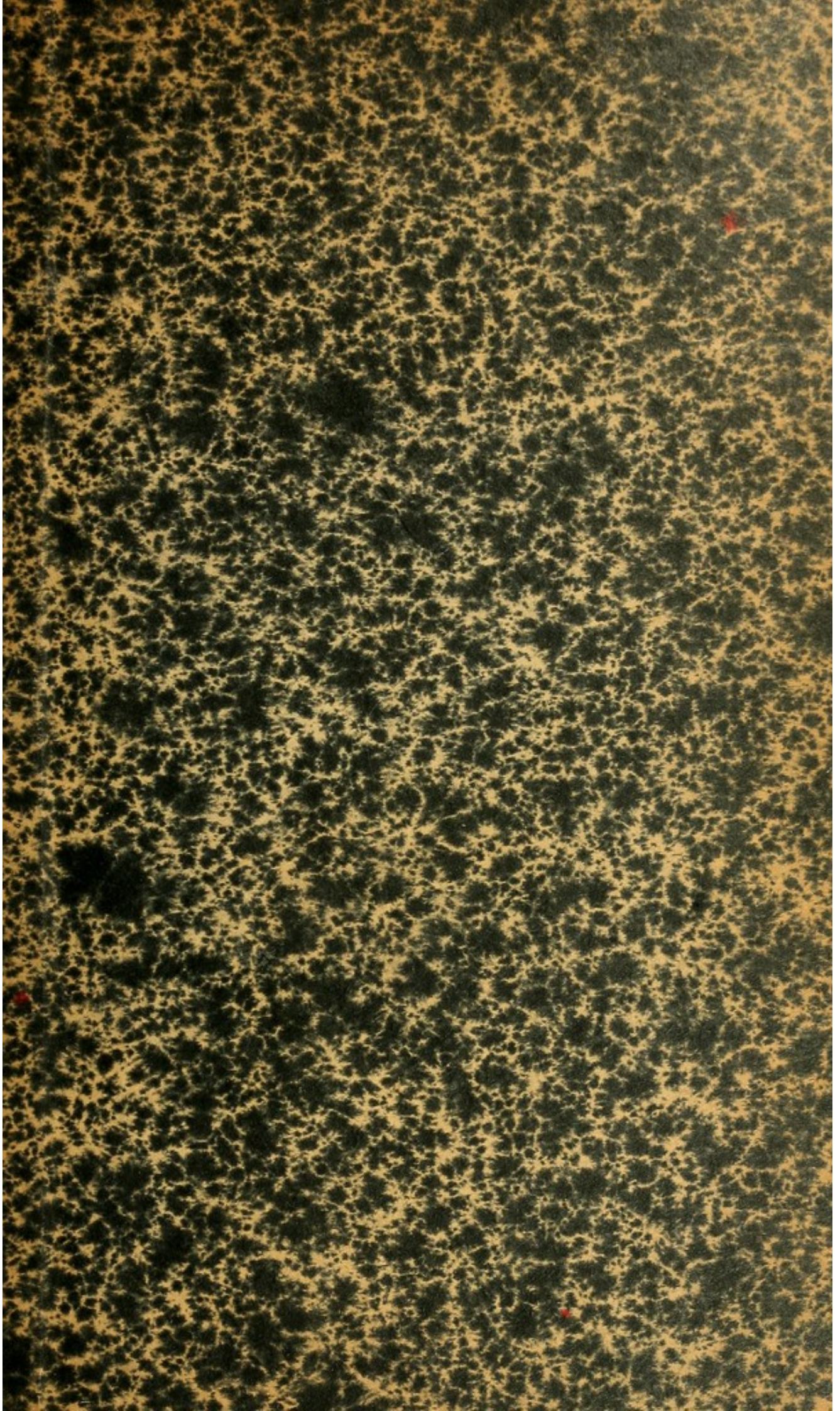
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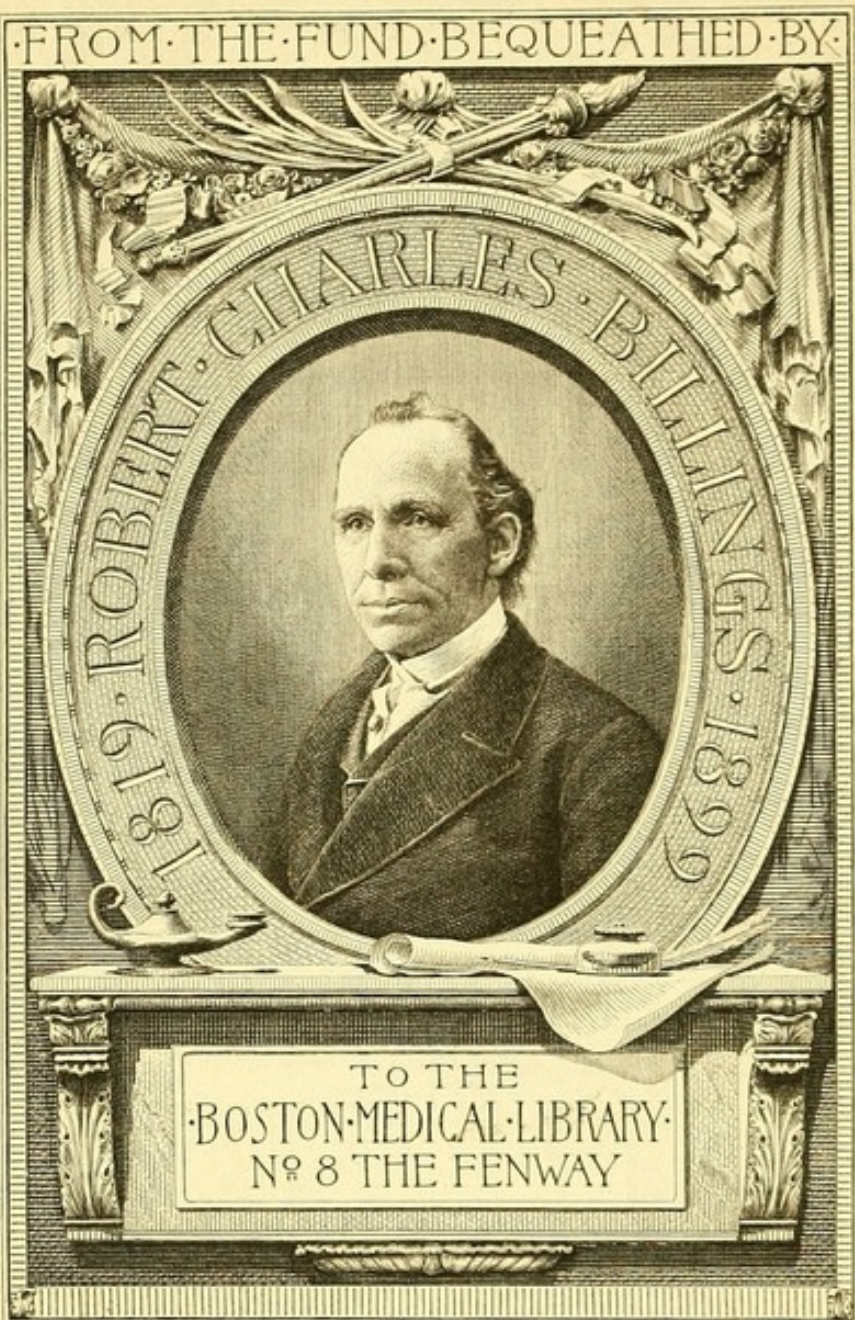
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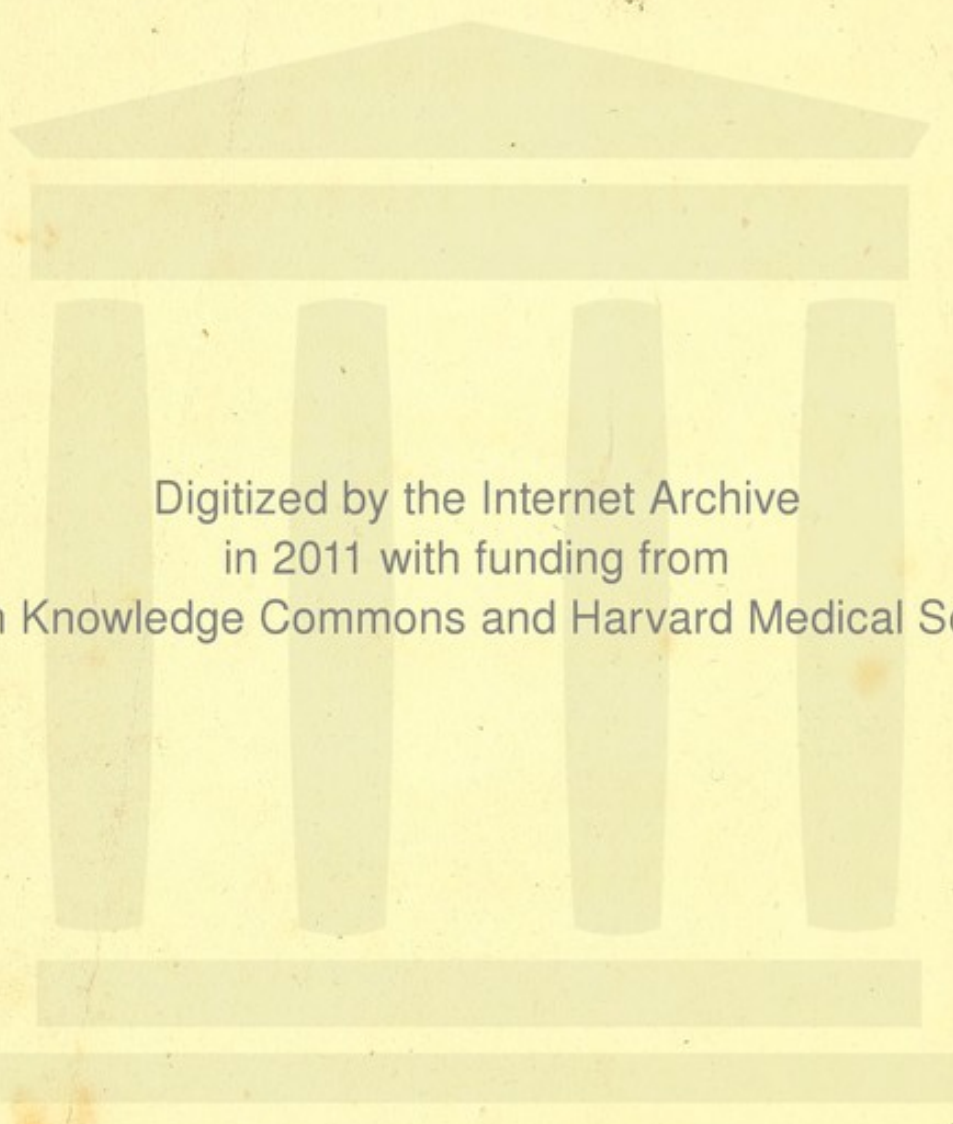


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A TREATISE
ON
DESK DISEASES.

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A TREATISE
ON
DESK DISEASES,

CONTAINING THE
BEST METHODS OF TREATING
THE VARIOUS DISORDERS

ATTENDANT UPON
Sedentary and Studious Habits.

WITH A VARIETY OF PRESCRIPTIONS ADAPTED TO
EACH PARTICULAR AFFECTION.

BY W. M. WALLACE, M.R.C.S.

LONDON:
T. GRIFFITHS, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND.

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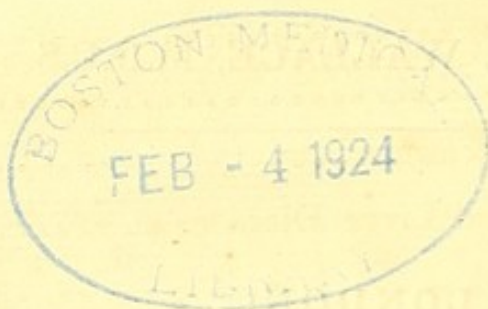
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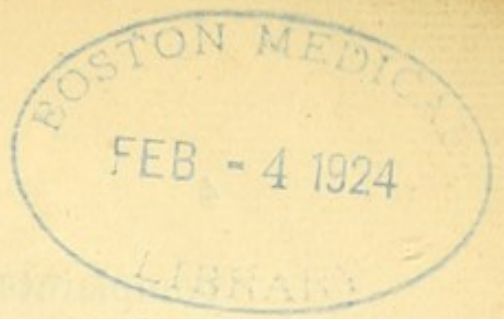
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DESK DISEASES.

UNDER this title may be comprehended a variety of disorders and distressing complaints, presenting every possible difference in their appearances, but agreeing in this one particular, that they are evidently attributable to the constrained and unnatural habits of living of those in whom they occur. The numbers of those who are thus affected, are in most large towns amazingly great, and have doubtless increased rapidly during the last few years, in proportion with the augmented commercial activity of this country, and the more generally diffused state of education and literary acquirement.

The diseases thus produced, and which more particularly deserve attention, are—headache, giddiness, and swimming of the head, weakness of the eyes, spots flitting before them, deafness,

complaints of the stomach and bowels, costiveness, piles, liver complaints, diseases of the bladder and urethra, strictures, &c. We do not mean to assert that these are the only kinds of disease arising from the causes we have mentioned, or that they are all present at one time or in the same person. It is enough to know that they are among the most common of the ill effects produced by habits of business, in which the mind rather than the body is employed; those in short which are distinguished by the term sedentary.

We shall first commence by noticing the affections of the stomach, not only because they are the most common, but also because they are usually the earliest in making their appearance, and in many instances, appear to perform a very considerable part in the production of all the others.

Some dreamers, who chose to dignify themselves by the name of philosophers, Monboddo and Rousseau for instance, have expatiated with much enthusiasm and some ingenuity on the excellencies of what they call "the state of nature," by which they mean a condition wherein man wanders about exposed to the elements, and deprived of all the advantage to be derived from a state of civilization. Every

thing we know of the history of the human race leads to the conclusion that such a state never yet existed; and a very little reflection will serve to convince us, that there is nothing *natural* in a state of society so ill calculated to favour the development of those faculties, both of mind and body, with which mankind has been so beneficently endowed, but which, even in the most favourable circumstances, require for their perfect evolution no small share of cultivation and education.

Whilst, however, we condemn and reject the fanciful speculations of those who would deprive man of his most distinctive and characteristic endowments, and reduce him to the level of the brute creation, every unprejudiced person who fairly reviews our habits of living, will soon discover that a large proportion of mankind depart in an equal degree, though in a different direction, from the golden mean of excellence. Instead of taking exercise in the open air, and using their limbs and muscles in active employments, how many are there who pass the greater part, we might say the whole, of their time in close rooms, in an atmosphere more or less contaminated by being again and again taken into the lungs, and in a state of comparative inaction as far as regards the body?

All this is bad enough ; but as if it were necessary to increase the evils attendant on such a system, the mind is made to compensate by continued exertion, unvaried and uninterrupted, for the inaction of the body.

Is it to be wondered that such a mode of life should produce, in the first instance, uncomfortable feelings and ultimately disease ? That it is perfectly adequate to the effect, any one who is in the practice of taking active exercise out of doors may very readily convince himself ; let him for one day only, confine himself to his house or to his room ; let him employ himself in reading, in writing, or in what he will ; if at the end of the day, or long before, he has not headache ; if his spirits are not low and his temper irritable ; if his tongue be not white and furred ; if his stomach do not feel distended, and his dinner lie there like a lump of lead—why then he is one in ten thousand, whether a lucky or unlucky fellow it would be hard to say ; but at least he may set at defiance Indigestion, Blue Devils, and the Doctors.

But all the world is not thus fortunately organized, and we believe that none but those who know and see the fact would at once credit the amount of suffering of this kind among literary and commercial men, whose habits are

sedentary ; suffering, be it recollected, which is often submitted to form the idea that it does not admit of relief, and that it is not productive of any serious bad consequences. To begin then with the

FIRST SIGNS OF INDIGESTION.

Pressure of the liver, by a stooping position at the desk, produces a series of troublesome bilious and liver complaints, which often render life miserable, and often prove the fore-runners of dropsy and death. The stomach, also, partaking of the same injurious pressure, becomes seriously deranged, and habitual indigestion is often the consequence, with all its harassing train of troubles. To those who are only falling into this state of a disease, so extremely difficult to cure, that it often baffles the skill of the wisest, we think we shall do a favour by sketching the early signs of its coming on ; and, by giving them timely alarm, put them on their guard before it is too late.

Merchants, accountants, or literary men, who have been in previous good health, will at times feel their food lie heavy, like a load, upon the stomach, and this may probably be accompanied with flatulence and belching ; but the inconvenience may only be temporary, and may

go off in a day or two. If such preludes of the disease, however, become rather frequent in their visits, we caution you to be on the alert to ward off the enemy, and save your stomach; for as the stomach is the very source and main-spring of health and vigour—nay, of life itself; if you, through neglect, allow its powers to be weakened beyond repair, all pleasure will be at an end, and existence itself will become a burden.

When these symptoms have begun to recur once a month, or once a week, the complaint, you may be certain, is fast forming into a state of difficult cure. The mouth becomes clammy, the tongue white or brownish; the appetite is impaired; there is considerable thirst; and the feet are apt to be cold, even when the weather is not uncomfortable. The first strongly marked symptom which makes its appearance is depression of strength, or great feebleness and languor, both of body and mind. Thinking becomes oppressive, and exertion painful; while wandering nervous pains all over the body, and most disagreeable belchings and eructations succeed. Sleep is also uncomfortable, and disturbed by dreams, or goes off altogether. At this early period of indigestion, also, the dislike to motion and exertion often induces the patient to forego

all exercise, and to sit when he should walk, which almost to a certainty brings on in the legs a severe fit of that harassing complaint, called the Fidgets.

In this state of things, costiveness is most to be dreaded. The stools are always of an unhealthy appearance, sometimes they are dark, sometimes they are light, sometimes nearly black, sometimes whitish and similar to clay. The urine also may either throw down a sediment of a pink or brick-dust colour, or may be turbid and full of white flakes. If the bowels are loose, the urine will usually be pale and abundant; if costive, the urine will be high coloured and scanty.

The other symptoms of beginning indigestion are almost innumerable. Among others, we may mention flushings in the face, with a florid complexion similar to that of drunkards; or in some a sallow colourless paleness; nervous and sick headaches; dimness of sight and spectral objects floating before the eyes; and ringing and noises in the ears. Pains in several parts of the chest, somewhat like rheumatism, are often felt, or even in the shoulders, the arms, the loins, &c., all depending on the derangement of digestion. The mind becomes also very fretful and irritable.

CURE OF INDIGESTION.

The early stage of this troublesome malady, but too well known among those employed at the desk, does not require medicine so much as regimen. It is unfortunate, however, that the proper regimen is, from circumstances, out of the reach of many who would willingly try it. Such must use medicine, and we shall presently prescribe for them; but we must first impress upon our readers the necessity of complying with regimen as far as they can.

Regimen.—By this term we mean something more than diet; we extend it to the entire regulation of the patient's habits and mode of life, including exercise, clothing, &c. It may seem out of place to mention exercise as one of the best remedies for Desk Diseases, as the reader will probably be inclined to say that it is not in his power to take a sufficiency of exercise to keep him in health. We have often heard the same complaint made, and often have had it in our power to shew that it is not always correct. What we mean to assert is, that there are very few indeed so unfortunately circumstanced as to be absolutely precluded from taking exercise, if they would be content to submit to a little inconvenience for that purpose. When plea-

sure or amusement is in view, there are few, even of the most occupied, who cannot contrive to make a leisure hour in the course of the day; and why, we would ask, should they not do as much for the recovery or preservation of health? Depend upon it that you will gain by abridging your time of sleeping, and devoting an hour in the morning or evening to active exercise in walking, riding, running, or any other bodily employment that may suggest itself. All that is wanting is the resolution to commence, for a short trial will so far satisfy you of the advantage you may obtain, as to induce you to persevere.

As to your mode of life it cannot be too regular, if you have already begun to feel the bad effects of too close confinement and attention to business; and though those who are as yet free from such inconveniences cannot be expected to live altogether by rule, they will do well to recollect that they are constantly in danger, and that some trifling accidental cause will often be adequate (from the peculiar and unnatural circumstances in which they are placed) to reduce them from apparent health to a precarious and dangerous state. Under the term "regular habits of life," are included a variety of minutiae, which it is easier to under-

stand than explain. To mention a few, it is necessary that the hours of rising and of going to bed should be fixed and adhered to with tolerable certainty. Rise early, and go to bed when you will, but take care that you do not devote too much valuable time to mere rest; it will only serve to weaken your body and exhaust your mind. Few people can be satisfied for any length of time with less than eight hours of sleep, and fewer still can require more than ten.

Your hours for taking food should also be regular. Three meals in the day will generally be found sufficient, except under particular circumstances, viz. breakfast, dinner, and a meal in the evening, either substantial tea, or an early light supper, according to your inclination. It is of much consequence to distribute the hours of taking food fairly through that part of the twenty-four hours during which you are active. Sleep will serve for the support of the time that you are at rest. Nothing can be more injudicious than the plan of allowing too long an interval to elapse between breakfast and dinner, as is commonly practised. You keep the mind on the stretch, and of course in an equal degree exhaust the body, without supplying either with the materials necessary to enable them to perform their duties with ease

and without injury. You neglect the natural admonitions of the stomach, demanding its supply of food at the time that it is best capable of discharging its duties; and then when it is reluctant and incapable, you overload it with a quantity disproportioned to its powers. It is needless to say that this should be avoided.

You will of course be anxious to know what kind of food you should take: and here it is worth while to learn that the quantity and the manner of taking it is of infinitely more importance. You should eat meat at least once in the day, and if you will take active exercise, and it agrees with you, there is no doubt that you will be stronger and healthier if you eat meat twice in the day. There can be no greater mistake than in keeping to too low a diet, by way of preserving or recovering health. In acute diseases and whilst convalescent from them such abstinence is not only proper, but absolutely necessary. But to apply the same rule indiscriminately, is as we have already said a very great mistake. Try the experiment of going without meat for a day or two, and be assured that you would feel languid and feverish, as if you confined yourself to your room or your house for the same time. But do not suppose that this is to be understood as a recom-

mendation to adopt a full animal diet in all cases. We do it on the supposition that you are actively engaged either in mental or bodily employment; for it is curious to know that mental labour is quite as exhausting as any other kind, and stands equally in need of being repaired by food and by rest. We must tell you that animal diet is fit only for hard workers, whether of body or mind, and least so in the latter case, because it is more likely to bring on repletion and apoplexy; if you are an idler you have no claim to it: you can scarcely take too little.

So much for regimen, on which we have thought it best to speak pretty fully in the first instance, as what we say here will apply in the treatment of others of the diseases arising from confinement to the desk, &c.

Medicine.—For those who will not submit to regimen, we must prescribe what is next—but very inferior in efficacy—some sort of medicines. The first thing indispensable to be done, is to clear the stomach and bowels, which may be done by taking the whole dose of the prescription which follows:—

Laxative Draught for Disordered Stomach.

Take two drachms of Epsom salts,
half an ounce of infusion of senna,

a little sugar, lemon peel, and powdered ginger.

Mix for a draught to be taken warm.

Then go on with the

Tonic Pills for Indigestion.

Take one drachm of myrrh, and rub it up with half a drachm of subcarbonate of soda, add half a drachm of sulphate of iron, half a drachm of sugar :

Make into a mass in a mortar, and divide into thirty pills; two to be taken thrice a day.

Leeches, to the number of not fewer than twelve, applied over the stomach, and followed by a blister, are very powerful in nervous indigestion.

The bowels should be kept regular for some time by the occasional use of gentle aperients, such as the following draught :—

Take of Epsom salts three drachms,
infusion of roses an ounce and a half,
tincture of cardamoms a drachm.

Or the following pills :—

Take of the pill of aloes and myrrh,
compound extract of colocynth, each a
scruple.

Divide into twelve pills; one or two to be taken at bed-time occasionally.

If the use of such measures with attention to

diet, regimen, &c. relieves, but does not remove the complaint, you will often derive much benefit from the continued use of tonics combined with moderate aperients. If the skin be cool, with a weak languid pulse, and a feeling of sinking at the pit of the stomach, the following will probably be found useful:—

Take of subcarbonate of ammonia, three to five grains,
 infusion of senna, one, two or three drachms,
 compound infusion of gentian, ten drachms.

Make a draught to be taken in the morning, and at noon:—Or,

Take of infusion of senna three drachms,
 tincture of aloes one drachm,
 tincture of capsicum ten drops.

A draught to be taken at bed-time, or in the morning.

If, on the contrary, there be any tendency to fulness or fever, the following will do better:—

Take of tincture of aloes half an ounce,
 infusion of senna ten drachms, or
 infusion of rhubarb an ounce and a half;
 and infusion of calumba, two ounces and a half.

A third part to be taken every morning.

So much of indigestion, as it commonly appears, but it sometimes presents itself in a different shape. We may well talk of “frail humanity,”

when there is no situation in life which is not in some measure productive of disease or disorder. It is a fine thing, some who know no better may think, to sit the live long day in a library, reading pleasant books, or enditing pleasant verses, as the humour may run ; and others may think it no less fine to be dealing with thousands and tens of thousands in the ledger of a great mercantile concern ; but Solomon tells us, and he knew well, that “of making (he might have said reading) many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh.” Wisdom this, and deep wisdom, we assure you on the personal experience of fifty years of hard study, notwithstanding our chosen precepts for the preservation and restoration of health, which, of course, we regularly practice, otherwise we should not have now been in the land of the living, to teach and record them. The most common, and the most complicated, however, of all the diseases produced by confinement at the desk or in the study, is certainly indigestion. We have already given you, from extensive observation and experience, a faithful picture of the earlier symptoms of this most troublesome and baffling complaint, with the method of treatment before it has advanced to any very dangerous length. We shall now

treat more particularly of that part of the complaint, which, however deceptive in appearance, is no less distressing to a patient—we mean

NERVOUS INDIGESTION.

We have already remarked in a general way, that one of the common symptoms of indigestion, is flushing of the face; but we now state more particularly that the species of indigestion usually, though not, perhaps very properly, called nervous, is characterized in most instances by a fresh, florid flushing of the face, very similar to that of health. To those, indeed, who are not experienced in distinguishing diseases, the countenance of a nervous invalid of this species, appears in the best health, though there be a greater degree of emaciation than they can well account for when joined with the fresh glow of the face. This deceptive appearance of health often occasions great uneasiness to the unhappy sufferers, who being often in the hey-day of youth or manhood, are apt to be strongly suspected of dissimulation and feigning when they complain of headaches, sinking, faintness, flatulence, and the other distressing accompaniments of nervous indigestion. To save such from undeserved and galling suspicions of this kind, we shall here give a few marks whereby

both the patient himself, and those who may take upon themselves to pronounce upon his case, may be able with certainty

TO DISTINGUISH NERVOUS FLUSHINGS FROM
THE HUE OF HEALTH.

You will seldom be deceived, if you take the following circumstances into account. The leading distinction between the hue of health and the flush of nervous indigestion is, that the natural red is for the most part confined to the cheeks, and shades off into a clear pale colour about the temples, the eyes, the neck, &c., while the nervous flush is spread over the whole face and often part of the neck; and the temples, which are pale in health, are suffused with red. To those who have only a smattering knowledge of disease, this nervous flush is considered to be hectic, and thus they often raise an unfounded alarm from their own ignorance; for hectic is a fatal symptom, while the nervous flush now described, indicates little or no danger. You may almost always discover the difference by the pulse, the hectic pulse being uniformly 100 or more; the nervous pulse seldom if ever above 85 or 90 beats per minute, and often not more than 70 or 65. The average healthy pulse is 75, but varies much according to age, sex, size, and constitution, as we shall show hereafter.

Another mark of importance is the feelings of the patient with regard to heat and cold. In the case of health, the poets may talk of "the warm glow of Hebe's cheek," but this cannot be felt by Hebe. It is in the unhappy nervous patient, whose stomach is deranged, and who is annoyed with flatulence, fretfulness, and fears of imaginary evil, that uncomfortable heat attends the flushings of the face. The deceptive colour of the cheek, indeed, is always attended by this most disagreeable feeling of heat; and in the coldest weather, such patients will ask you whether you do not feel it sultry and close. It is remarkable, that this unnatural heat is not perceptible externally; for though you put your hand to the cheek or the brow, described by the patient to be burning hot, you can feel no unusual glow, nor elevation of temperature. This proves most satisfactorily, that the feeling of heat is in the enfeebled nerves of the face; that is, the nerves from their weakness magnify small degrees of heat into great degrees, in the same way as the mind, when weak, magnifies small fears into appalling terror—another strong symptom, as we shall presently see, of this very complaint.

In health, the eyes are always clear and bright, and have a steadiness of look and pur-

pose, which is never observed in cases of nervous indigestion. There is, however, a brightness of the eyes, a dark deep brilliance, seemingly kindled up by high health and lively hilarity; but to the more knowing observer, pointing out the irritation of the weakened nerves, which imparts a false vivacity to the eyes, in the same way as it gives a false tint to the cheek.

Along with such symptoms, you will almost uniformly find a chillness or coldness of the feet. Sometimes they will be cold and dry, as if they were exposed to frost; at other times, they will feel as if they were plunged in cold water; and again, they will be drenched in cold perspiration. All this is clearly explicable from the feeble and relaxed state of the nerves, which renders them so feverishly sensible to the slightest changes of heat or cold; and, as we have just said, causes them to magnify those changes tenfold.—Another distressing train of symptoms is

LOW SPIRITS, IRRITATION, AND FEAR.

These arise in cases of nervous indigestion, in the very same way as we have seen flushings, and the feeling of heat or cold produced. The nerves, in fact, when weakened and diseased, may very properly be compared to the state

they are in when laid bare by a wound or a blister. If you blister and remove a portion of the skin, you will find that the nerves which terminate on the raw surface, will magnify every little change or excess in heat or cold to an inconceivable degree, so that you cannot bear a breath of air, or any approach to the fire, so long as the wound is undressed. Have you not also marked that in such cases you become cross and fretful? this is because the nerves communicate with the brain and thence affect the mind. How much more then must the mind be influenced by the general weakness of the nerves throughout the body, when a small wound or a blister, so evidently affects the temper and feelings.

You now understand the matter clearly. The nerves are feeble, weak and irritable, in consequence of indigestion; they are accordingly very liable to be affected by slight causes, and from their close connexion with the mind, through the intervention of the brain, are apt to produce low spirits, agitation, irritation and fear, though, to a bye-stander, there seems nothing adequate to produce these.

In nervous indigestion, therefore, the patient will start violently, and be alarmed at the shutting of doors unexpectedly, even the accidental fall of a piece of money is felt to be disagree-

able; he can scarcely eat his dinner in comfort for the grating sound of carving and removing. The chance breaking of a glass, or the carver's knife grazing on a bone, is felt like a shock of electricity, and often deprives him of all comfort for the rest of his meal. He is even apt to deem it an insult, or a personal injury directly intended against him by those who are concerned in such accidents. The feelings of this kind are sometimes so strong as to approach to temporary madness, so that

The war-steed at the trumpet's sound,
 The lion rous'd by heedless hound,
 The tyrant, wak'd to sudden strife,
 By graze of ill-directed knife,
 Wakes not to more convulsive life

Than the hapless victim of nervous indigestion, whose face will flush, his eyes sparkle, and his whole frame will be thrown into agitation, by the jarring of a door-bolt, or the sudden barking of a dog. We wish we could only say, for the sake of such patients, that we have exaggerated or over-coloured, but unhappily for them they can answer that our sketch is true to the letter, though there must be various shades of aggravation and mildness. So much for the symptoms and marks of this very common distressing disorder—now for the

TREATMENT OF NERVOUS INDIGESTION.

The nervous are usually advised in popular medical works, to strengthen themselves by wine, bark, steel, cordials, and above all, cold bathing. We shall at once demonstrate to you that when any of these are used, it must be with much caution, as they have a greater chance in many cases to do harm than good. The shower bath for example, which is so great a favourite with some, is one of the most certain means of increasing nervous indigestion. We have known it, however, persisted in for months, till the health was completely ruined and the strength gone. The shower bath is without doubt a very powerful instrument; but it is, we conceive, by much too powerful and violent for the weak and nervous, as we shall shew more at length anon. A very useful mode of cold bathing in the present case, is a minor shower bath, keeping it in moderation as the patient can bear it. No nervous patient whom we ever saw, could bear, without injury, the common cold shower bath over his whole body. Tepid and warm bathing are also excellent for nervous indigestion, when not repeated oftener than once every two days, or about twice or thrice a week. When the warm bath cannot be conveniently

procured, as often happens, bathing the feet and legs in warm water, every night at bed-time, is an excellent substitute, which can always be had. Both this and our minor shower bath may be advantageously used at the same time, the one in the morning, and the other in the evening and together, will have more effect than any sort of drugs.

The diet in this case must be more light and palatable than in training; the patient, indeed, may judge pretty well of his improvement by his relish for under-done beef-steaks and ale. So long as he cannot stomach this strong fare, he cannot be said to have wholly recovered, though upon his colour becoming paler, his eyes less sparkling, his temper more equable, his spirits less sunk, and his agitation from the crash of a glass, or the barking of a dog less acute—he may consider himself improving. The less liquid he takes the better. He ought to confine himself to mild ale, and coffee, or good black tea.

As to clothing, while he continues to be so feverishly sensible to cold and heat, he ought to dress by the thermometer, taking care to be protected from sudden cold, particularly at night, and at the same time not to oppress himself in hot weather by too warm clothing, so as

to induce copious perspiration, and waste the substance of the body, already too much reduced. Flannel we consider very bad when worn next to the skin. The irritation indeed of flannel thus worn has often aggravated, if not produced the very disease it has been put on to prevent or to cure. The error which prevails on this subject, is productive also of many incurable cases of skin diseases. We recommend cotton shirts in preference, if linen is thought to be too cold. Flannel; but particularly silk, is invaluable as a safeguard of health. We say the same of exercise as of warm clothing; avoid too much perspiration, though perspiration from exercise is not so bad as from dress.

Of the power of drugs in this disease, we have but an indifferent opinion, though it is absolutely necessary to keep the bowels regularly open, and to destroy acid and flatulence; for unless you do both, it is impossible to strengthen you even by the most rigid training diet. We have repeatedly given prescriptions for this purpose, but we know of nothing better for keeping the bowels open without purging, than

Sir Henry Hallford's Aperient Pills.

Take twenty grains of blue pill,
thirty grains of cathartic extract.

Mix and divide into one dozen pills, one or two for a dose, every second or third night at bed-time, as occasion requires.

Connected also with the subject of indigestion, which is frequently one of its first signs, but may likewise occur without it and cause much trouble and discomfort, is

COSTIVENESS.

It is not always in the invalid or the feeble, that costiveness is found to prevail, as it often afflicts persons of a compact and robust habit, with hearty appetite and strong digestive powers, or who use violent exercise, which heats the blood and throws off an excess of perspiration from the surface. In both the strong and the feeble, however, costiveness may arise from a too stimulant diet, particularly rough port wine, porter, or beer, which is either hard, or very bitter from hops or quassia, but particularly from the bread, which is rendered unnaturally white by alum, in order to please the eye. Salted and high seasoned meats have the same effect. Although, also, violent exercise may be a cause of costiveness, such as too much walking or riding, by carrying off the fluids from the bowels through the skin; yet costiveness will be no less caused by want of exercise which renders the bowels sluggish and torpid. The

absurd custom, also, of wearing flannel, so prevalent among many, to their decided injury, is a very common cause of costiveness, by acting in the same way on the skin as too much exercise, and carrying off more moisture from the body than can be comfortably spared. Nothing, however, tends more to confirm a costive habit than torpor of the liver, and a deficiency of bile. Such being a few of the more common causes of the disorder, we shall next mention some of the attendant symptoms.

A person who is costive feels uncomfortable and uneasy, not only in his bowels but in his whole system. There are pains of a wearied or nervous kind in the back or limbs—distressing attacks of what we have called fidgets, with violent headaches, flatulence, belching, heart-burn, and most troublesome indigestions, every thing which is taken into the stomach being instantly corrupted or converted into vinegar. Palpitations of the heart are also common attendants on costiveness, with fretful temper, low spirits, and all the disorders of hypochondriasis and melancholy. We need scarcely remark that cholic, lumbago, and sciatica, are likewise frequent concomitants of costiveness, and sometimes it leads to epilepsy, apoplexy, and convulsions.

The best remedies for costiveness will next

demand our attention; and that we may give our readers all the information we can procure, we shall state at length the treatment of several eminent physicians, beginning with

DR. JOHNSON'S REMEDIES FOR COSTIVENESS.

As it is certain that every thing which increases the perspiration of the skin, and the action of the numerous absorbent vessels of the bowels, has a strong tendency to produce costiveness, those who are apt to be so affected ought to be cautioned against all violent exercise, and other causes of sweat. The passive exercise of a carriage, gentle though it be, is well known to be a predisposing cause of confinement of the bowels, and even riding on horseback is not quite free from the same objection, but it possesses many counterbalancing good qualities. A warm soft bed is objectionable for the same reason. Much depends on diet in obviating costiveness; but it is impossible to lay down any general rule in this respect, on account of the various and conflicting constitutions of individuals. It is certain, however, that generally speaking, a rather stimulating food is proper in a tendency to costiveness. But every person can judge of the kind of food that suits his constitution. Of laxative medi-

cines, one of the best is sulphur, about a tea spoonful as a dose, especially in form of electuary, with cream of tartar and honey, or molasses; and when a purgative is required, none answers so well as the common seidlitz powder, taken early in the morning, and some warm tea an hour afterwards. It generally produces one loose, watery, and easy motion, with great relief to the bowels, particularly where piles, as they often do, accompany costiveness. A still better remedy for costiveness is obtained by keeping up a regular and due secretion from the liver and other glandular organs in the interior of the body. For this purpose, the infusion or decoction of dandelion, rendered acid with cream of tartar, and taken in the quantity of three or four tea cupfuls a day, is an excellent medicine when continued for a sufficient length of time. Small doses of the blue pill with a quarter of a grain of ipecacuanha, or an eighth of a grain of tartrate of antimony at bed-time, may be at first necessary when commencing the dandelion and cream of tartar.

DR. GOOD'S TREATMENT.

The best opening medicines in costiveness are those which promote the motion of the bowels with the least irritation, such as diluent

drinks sweetened with manna, sugar, or honey; the expressed oils of mild vegetables, as the pistachio, olive, and almond; the oily farina of the cocoa nut in the common form of chocolate; also figs, tamarinds, the pulp of cassia alone, or the compound lenitive electuary; and likewise neutral salts. Dr. Arbuthnot advised the use of butter, marrow, and fat; and it is probable these may have some effect. Dr. Cullen found four ounces of fresh butter, taken in the morning, produce a stool or two more than usual in the day. Nauseating doses of calomel with ipecacuanha, or of calomel and antimonials, will also frequently be found of use.

ABUSE OF PURGATIVES.

Those whose bowels are irregular ought to be dissuaded from an habitual use of purgatives. When persons have too frequent recourse to medicines for preventing costiveness, they seldom fail to ruin their constitution. Purging medicines, too often repeated, weaken the bowels, hurt the digestion, and every dose makes way for another, till at length they become as necessary as daily bread; hence a relaxation of the bowels, loss of appetite, wasting of the strength, and death. Those who are

troubled with costiveness, ought, if possible, rather to remove by diet than by drugs.

BILIOUS AND LIVER DISEASES,

are often confounded with indigestion, to the great injury of the patient, and it is therefore necessary to recollect that though both may, and sometimes do happen at the same time, and in the same person, this is by no means generally the case. We shall, therefore, proceed to give you a general idea of Bilious Complaints, &c., together with the remarks of Mr. Abernethy and Mr. Brodie.

The liver may yield too much or too little bile. The bile may be too acrid or too mild; may be discharged too rapidly or too slowly, or may stagnate in the liver or the gall bladder. The passage of the bile also may be disturbed by disorders of the stomach; or even when the bile is most healthy, the intestines on which it acts as a stimulant, may be too irritable or too sluggish, producing flux in the one case, and costiveness in the other. Hence the gross absurdity, committed daily by apothecaries, of prescribing the same treatment in all diseases of the liver and disordered bile. If you have inflamed liver, you get calomel; if you have indolent liver, you get calomel; if you have bilious

costiveness, you get calomel; and if you have bilious flux, you still get calomel!! This is most melancholy, but it is most true! The drug cannot fail, we think, to prove worse than the disease in the hands of these *legitimate* quacks, who call themselves apothecaries, surgeons, or physicians. Calomel is a valuable medicine, but it is most villanously abused, and sends, we are certain, a greater number of both children and adults annually to their graves, than ever did small-pox in the highest zenith of their terror; not to mention the thousands of shattered nerves and ruined constitutions, which this calomel daily produces. Mr. Abernethy affirms, that he can by a single moderate dose of calomel, derange the liver and the health of the healthiest man or child, and we believe him; yet does he abuse his blue pill as much, perhaps, as others do calomel, though blue pill is not so violent and dangerous in its operations.

The appearance of the natural bile when not disordered, is a very deep yellowish brown, very much like a quantity of rhubarb powder when slightly moistened with a little water. If a single drop of bile of this appearance be put into a pint of water, it will impart to it a bright yellow tinge; so that the brown of the natural bile, like the brown of gamboge, arises from its

intensely deep yellow. It is of some moment to keep these facts in mind, as by attending to the colour of the stools, they will enable us to detect derangement of the bowels and of digestion, almost at its very birth, and will inform us when such derangement has been completely removed.

In a state of health, says Mr. Abernethy, a sufficient quantity of bright yellow bile ought to flow into the bowels, to tinge the motions of the colour just mentioned. When the bile is deficient in quantity from obstructions of the liver, the motions partake very much of the colour of the food of the individual. In children they will be white; in adults, for the most part like a whited-brown paper, as is the case in jaundice. The stools may also be too light a yellow, when only a small quantity of bile is secreted. If the bile is disordered, it is usually changed and unnatural in colour, and the stools partaking of this will appear of a deep olive, of a clay brown, of a blackish brown, or sometimes as black as pitch; all of which indicate some material disorder in the liver.

Mr. Brodie, in order to discover the action of the bile on the digested food as it comes from the stomach, prevented the bile from flowing into the intestine, by tying up in young cats

the pipe or duct which conveys it. This experiment, cruel as it was, proved to him the important fact, that when the bile was thus obstructed, not a single particle of food was ever changed into chyle, which is the source of the blood, and the grand restorative of the body. The bile being therefore indispensable to this process, it must be indispensable to healthy nourishment.

Now, those who are much employed at the *desk*, cannot well avoid pressing externally upon the liver, either by bending the body forwards, or leaning upon the edge of the desk. The consequence is an obstruction of the bile, and hence irritation and inflammation of the liver, wasting of the body for want of nourishment, obstinate costiveness, and sometimes troublesome flux, with all the annoying attendants of hacking cough, loss of appetite, sick headache, wandering pains, and often daily vomiting. The tongue, gums, and teeth, are covered in the morning with viscid mucus, sometimes brownish, and sometimes white; the mouth has also a bitter disagreeable taste, and, during sleep, is apt to become parched and dry. Towards evening, the hands and feet become hot and burning. There is usually great languor, and disinclination to all movement or ex-

ercise, with feeling of weariness on the slightest exertion.

The prevention of these serious ailments must be effected by avoiding as much as possible a stooping position of body, and all pressure on the desk. The diet must be light and nourishing, and all intemperance in eating, drinking, and other sensual indulgences, must be carefully abstained from. Above all other things, late hours, pepper, mustard, hot suppers, wine, spirits, or malt liquors, smoking tobacco, or snuffing, lying late in bed, &c., are very prejudicial to the health of the liver and the proper secretion of the bile. We must also particularize hot rooms, and even too warm clothing, as highly detrimental. It is well known what injurious influence a hot climate, as that of India, produces on the liver; and the same evil is produced by every sort of artificial heat. The wretched epicures on the Continent have philosophy enough to know this, and when they want a nice turkey's liver, enlarged by disease to six times its natural bulk, they nail the poor creature's feet to a board, to prevent it from using any exercise, place it before a large fire, and feed it on grain mixed with hot spices. We may learn something even from this horridly depraved barbarity; for the very

opposite of it will, other things being equal, keep the liver in a healthy state. It is not, however, to be concealed, that many are no less barbarous to themselves than the epicures are to the poor turkeys—exercising their limbs no more than if they were nailed, while they live in hot rooms, keep late hours, and feast on spiced meats and strong liquors. Who can wonder that the livers of such will, like that of the turkey, rapidly enlarge by disease, and bring them at last to oppressive dropsy and a premature grave?

If the liver is indolent, the bile in deficient quantity, or stagnating in its passage, known chiefly by continued costiveness, then the most powerful medicine is some preparation of mercury, kept within the cautious bounds of moderation. Three grains, for example, of the blue pill (almost as well known even out of the profession by the name of *Pilul. Hydrarg.*), every night in a cup of camomile or dandelion tea, will, in a week, be found beneficial without producing any purging, or other very marked effect. If this is found inefficient, the

Alterative Bilious Pills may be tried.

Take one drachm of præcipitated sulphuret of
antimony,

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the same quantity of submuriate of mercury,
two drachms of gum guaiac.

Mix the two first ingredients in a mortar, add the guaiac and mix. Make into a mass with gum arabic mucilage, and divide it into five dozen pills; one or two for a dose at bed-time.

When the bowels, on the other hand, are too open and irritative, we advise, as the best remedy, an occasional small dose of good castor oil, or the

Strengthening Pills for Weak Bowels.

Take five grains of subcarbonate of ammonia,
eight grains of extract of rhubarb.

Make into a mass, and divide into two pills. One, or both, to be taken at bed-time in a cup of camomile or dandelion tea.

No medicine, however, will do any good, without daily exercise in the open air and regular living. One of the most powerful means of restoring the health of the liver, is a rigid course of Gymnastic Training*.

The only plan of arrangement, that we follow in this practical series of papers, is founded

* We have in the Press, a Treatise on "Training, adapted for Invalids from Constitution or Disease," by which the health will be invigorated, and strength restored by diet and exercise alone.—ED.

on utility. We wish to comprehend in them a great body of facts, derived from extensive observation and experience, and to deduce from these a complete collection of directions, which shall be simple and easily followed in practice by those who study them, and who have such a concern for their health and comfort, as to cause them to attend to our rules. Recollect, we can promise you no amendment—no cure, if you only attend to our precepts as it suits your convenience, or your indolent indifference. We must have prompt and implicit obedience, or we write in vain, and you too read in vain. The subject we shall treat of at present is,

DISORDERS OF THE HEAD.

Though we disclaim the impious notion of the body being a mere machine, there are many of its actions which can only be understood on the known principles of mechanical philosophy. The blood, for example, circulates through every part of the body, from the impulse given it by the heart, which, in this point of view, acts somewhat like a forcing pump; but it depends on the position of the body, or its members, whether the blood, juttred thither by the heart, shall return as speedily as it came. If it do not return as speedily as it flows, it

must soon accumulate in the part where the stagnation is, and of course give rise to disorder. To convince yourself of the truth of this, repeat our simple experiment, hold your hand down by your side, and the veins on the back of it will instantly swell with the blood, which finds difficulty in flowing up hill; raise the same hand above your head, and the blood will gush down in a rapid stream, and leave the veins empty and flat.

Now, apply this fact to the usual position of the head at the desk. It is, indeed, impossible to continue writing, without stooping more or less; and, if you do stoop, the blood will stagnate and accumulate in the forehead, and in the fore-part of the brain, and cause many disorders, according to the weakness or strength of the places where it stagnates and presses. If the nerves of the eyes are weak, the blood will load and oppress them, and partial blindness or total loss of sight (called by surgeons *gutta serena*, and *amaurosis*,) will be the dreadful consequence. Or, if the eyelids are tender, it may produce obstinate inflammation of the eyes. Or if the interior of the eye is weak, it may cause a cataract. The treatment of all these will come before us in turn; but in the mean time we shall attend more particularly to

HEADACHES.

It is of great importance in headaches arising from a stooping position, to have the cravat tied loosely, that there may be no pressure on the jugular veins. Care should also be taken not to accustom yourself to hold the head in an oblique position, to look much with the side of the eye, or to lie awry in bed, as the muscles, by these means, are made to compress the veins, and impede the stream of the blood on its return from the head. It would be some alleviation of the evil if these obstructions terminated in simple headache, but they may, according to circumstances, go on to occasion either apoplexy, palsy, or delirium; and though the cause have been temporary, the effect may not be so; for when the veins within the head have become distended by a quantity of stagnating or obstructed blood, they may not so readily return to their natural diameter by the removal of the cause. It will, therefore, be important in all such cases to diminish the quantity of blood in the body, if the general health will bear it, and if the system is weak or nervous, to put half a dozen leeches on each temple, or to take eight or ten ounces of blood by cupping over the temple. If this do not

avail, a brisk purgative of salts and senna may be taken; but beware of mercury, and cephalic or herb snuff, or even the smell of volatile salts. Sponging may be useful in drawing the blood from the interior of the head to the surface where it can do little harm.

Added to the injurious position of stooping is the exertion of mind, almost always necessary in the business of the desk. This, as we have seen in the children at school, often brings on water in the head, and in the clerk, the accountant, or the scholar, may often begin with headache, and end in palsy or mental derangement. Those who dislike our plain way of accounting for this, on the principle of increased circulation and accumulation of the blood, tell us that the nervous fluid is increased. As nobody, however, has ever seen this *nervous fluid*, and as the nerves themselves are solid, and could not, of course, circulate a fluid, this theory must be quite a fancy.

When the complaint resists bleeding, you must have recourse to blisters, or keep up for some time a seton, or a perpetual blister on the neck. Purgatives are sometimes of great advantage, in which case you may try

Mr. Wardrop's Headache Pills.

Take two grains of antimonial powder,

two grains of submuriate of mercury,
four grains of extract of rhubarb.

Make two pills, and take one on going to bed. Take another on the third night. If it does not operate by ten next morning, take salts and senna.

Those who are subject to headaches of this kind, should rise early and go soon to bed, as nothing is more injurious than late hours, particularly when the mind is actively engaged. Long fasting is also extremely hurtful, and a slight repast between meals, provided it can be taken with relish, will frequently accomplish a cure, in recent cases, without further medicine. But it is unfortunate that those who engage deeply in the business of the desk, have usually their meals very irregularly, or at long intervals. We give the following case, in illustration, from a useful little work, entitled, "Popular Directions for the Prevention and Cure of Headaches," from which we have freely borrowed.

CASE OF A MERCHANT.

"Mr. —, a merchant in the city, aged 35, of spare habit, was accustomed to breakfast at eight, attend to his business till four, and to dine at five, and frequently, in pressing cases, to sit up at his ledger till a late hour. From this course, he became afflicted with constantly recurring headaches. He was advised to keep

his bowels regular with tincture of rhubarb, or the compound rhubarb pill, and to take a hot lunch, with a glass or two of wine, between twelve and two o'clock, according to his convenience. By steadily following this advice, and employing an additional clerk, to save him the trouble of being late at his books, he got rid, in a few weeks, of the headaches which had annoyed him for more than a year, and which had baffled all the medicines he had repeatedly taken for the complaint."

CASE OF A LAW STUDENT.

"F. —, Esq. of the Inner Temple, who, from applying too closely to his profession, and from dining irregularly, was afflicted with almost constant headache, and dull pain in the balls of the eyes. He had been cupped and blistered without effect; and had taken country exercise, with evident increase of his symptoms. Regular diet and regular sleep were recommended, with rhubarb, to keep the bowels open, and in five weeks he was completely cured."

In all such cases, we would also most strongly recommend the cold shower bath to be tried, or what is still better, the head should be held over a large bason, and two or three gallons of

the coldest water poured over it from a jug every morning and evening. The cold water is by far the most powerful means of removing the superabundance of blood in the head; and though it is rather a disagreeable, and to some a painful remedy, it is only the affair of a minute, and if persevered in for several weeks, it will have the best effect. Some, who have been troubled for years, with what we may strictly call Desk Headaches, find the cold water so excellent for keeping them at bay, that they continue it regularly all the year round. The bowels should also be carefully kept open as above directed, or by the following:—

Bolus for Stupor or Melancholy.

Take one scruple of powdered bryony root,
three grains of blue pill,
and a sufficient quantity of syrup.

Make a bolus, and follow it in two hours by three drachms of Epsom salts, dissolved in camomile tea, to work it off.—Or,

Decoction for Stupor or Melancholy.

Take two drachms of black hellebore root shredded,
as much tartrate of potass,
half an ounce of senna leaves;

Boil in a pint of water, till reduced to ten ounces strain, and add six drachms of syrup of buckthorn.

Two or three spoonfuls every fourth or sixth hour, till the bowels are opened. His clothing should also be attended to ; and we particularly recommend silk to be used in every part of the dress, as nothing will contribute more to good spirits.

Above all, we should dissuade most strongly from losing blood, those who feel heavy, lifeless, and low spirited, and who are but too apt to fly to blood-letting, under the erroneous notion that it is too much blood weighing down their spirits. In such cases blood-letting will, for the most part, aggravate the melancholy. A single blue pill will often avail much.

CAUSES AND SYMPTOMS OF PILES.

The long continuance in a sitting posture, we have already in many instances seen to be productive of disorders, from its preventing or obstructing the return of the blood from the lower parts of the body to the liver, the heart, and the lungs. This, of course, acts injuriously on all the parts of the body in companionship with these and the stomach ; the head, and the nerves, all suffer in this secondary way. There are besides these secondary disorders, which are often distressing enough, some very troublesome direct complaints, that take their rise immediately from the obstruction of the blood

by the business of the desk. Among these by far the most troublesome are the different sorts of piles, or *hæmorrhoids*, as those who deal in Greek delight to call them. The meaning of this Greek term is "blood-springs," as the piles either discharge blood, in which case they are called the bloody piles, or a consequence of blood stagnating in the vessels, and are then called blind piles. We shall therefore give you a plain account of both.

A large proportion of all the blood in the body is continually jetted by the heart to the bowels, and the lower extremities. Now, unless the whole of this blood return as speedily and freely as it flowed thither, it must perforce stagnate, and accumulate and produce disorder.

A person employed much at the desk, not only obstructs the free return of the blood from the bowels and lower extremities, but he drives too much blood to the parts which are, as we may say, continually exerted and on the stretch, namely, those about the seat and fundament. Now, as the termination of the intestine, absurdly called by surgeons the *rectum*, is the weakest part in the vicinity, it is overpowered by the superabundance of blood, which either swells out the veins, or bursts them. In the latter case the blood which escapes from the

veins frequently does not get through the skin, but is confined, and forms swellings; when it does get through the skin it forms what are called the bleeding piles; and the blood lost in this way is sometimes almost incredible—Lieutenant mentions a person who lost three quarts in about two days; Panaroli tells a more extraordinary story of a Spanish nobleman, who lost a pint of blood from the bleeding piles every day for four years! The bleeding is sometimes fatal, as happened to two celebrated men, Copernicus, the astronomer, and Arius, the founder of the religious sect called Arians, who died from bleeding piles.

You may understand from the principles just laid down, how much riding may occasion piles by the stress on the fundament, causing too great a flow of blood to the rectum; and how much walking will do the same, by sending more blood to the lower extremities than can be freely and fully returned. Aloetic purgatives, such as Anderson's pills, cause piles for the same reason. All obstructive diseases in the liver and bowels will also prevent the return of the blood, and give rise to piles, and hence piles are common with pregnant women; above all, costiveness; for the hardened fæces which collect and accumulate in the bowels

press upon the veins, and obstruct the return of the blood. This evil is increased also by deficiency of bile; for when the liver has not a full supply of blood, it has not sufficient materials from which to manufacture a due portion of bile; and without a sufficient quantity of bile digestion is retarded, and the bowels become costive.

The first sign of piles is a dull, peculiar, and sometimes very distressing pain about the fundament, felt more particularly when at stool, or in case of occasional costiveness. At first you may perhaps take little notice of this, till the pain increase so much in severity and frequency that you are compelled to attend to it. You may now perhaps remark one, or a number of little tumours of various shapes and sizes, from that of a wart, or the end of your finger, to that of an egg. These are caused, as we have said, by obstructed blood swelling out the veins, or escaped from the veins, and swelling out the skin. Sometimes they are discoloured when the blood is near the surface, and shines through the membranes; at other times they are pale when the blood is deeper seated. In some cases they burst from very trifling causes, and discharge great quantities of blood. Besides these symptoms of piles, the head is usually

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affected with pain and giddiness, there is nausea of the stomach, and pains in the loins.

VULGAR ERRORS RESPECTING PILES.

Some physicians—very ignorant themselves, as physicians will often be, and being unable to comprehend the nature of piles, simple as the subject may seem—have concluded that piles, and particularly the bleeding piles, are very beneficial to health, and ought therefore to be borne with, and encouraged rather than cured. As it respects piles, the error proceeds upon a principle which we shall now explain.

In all diseases of long standing, particularly when these are attended by discharges of blood or matter, the constitution becomes accustomed to them, and it is not always safe to break in upon an old habit by any sudden or violent measure. Accordingly it is always unsafe to cure an old sore, or to drive in an eruption suddenly, as this proceeding may bring on colic, cramps in the stomach, palsy, &c. In the same way, if piles are of long standing, and the system has become accustomed to them, and the painful irritation or the discharges have grown into a habit, the cure must not be attempted suddenly but gradually. This, however, is far from establishing the doctrine that piles are

good for the health, and ought not to be interfered with. You might as well say, that a habit of drunkenness is salutary, and ought not to be cured, because the drunkard is for the time in good health, and his stomach craves for liquor, and is uneasy without it. Although, therefore, the system may not be the better for the sudden removal of piles, the painful stimulus or the discharges of which it has become accustomed to, no more than the stomach would be the better for the sudden deprivation of an accustomed potation of strong liquor; yet the cure of what is usually so distressing, and where there are discharges, so weakening a complaint as piles ought to be set about gradually and steadily.

It would be unfair also to the advocates of the vulgar error, that piles are salutary, to mention that a discharge of blood from them has often relieved gout, rheumatism, asthma, colics, and inflammatory fevers, in the same way as cupping or leeching would prove beneficial in the same. But this is a mere accidental occurrence; nay, perhaps the piles may be one of the consequences of the disorder for which they are preposterously said to be beneficial. If the bleeding piles return once a month or so, as is

often the case, it requires still greater caution to stop them.

TREATMENT OF PILES.

The first thing to be done is to discover the cause which has either sent to the fundament an undue quantity of blood, or which has obstructed its return to the heart, or both;—and the causes being discovered, they ought to be removed or avoided. The continual sitting at the desk cannot, of course, be in many cases dispensed with; but the stool or chair ought to be well cushioned, as a hard seat will occasion more pressure, and consequently a greater rush of blood to the parts. At intervals of leisure, lying in a recumbent posture on a sofa will aid the return of the blood. Above all, the bowels ought to be kept regularly open, but no medicine in which there is aloes ought to be taken for that purpose. Dinner pills, Anderson's pills, all quack antibilious pills, &c. are therefore improper. Where there is much costiveness, we recommend the following

Opening Pills for Slow Bowels.

Take twenty grains of the compound rhubarb
pill,
thirty grains of blue pill mass,
ten grains of extract of colocynth.

Mix, and divide into one dozen pills, one or two for a dose, at bed-time, occasionally.

If the costiveness is less obstinate, the best opening medicine which has hitherto been discovered is sulphur. We recommend the sulphur combined as in the

Laxative for Piles.

Take one ounce of flowers of sulphur,
 half an ounce of cream of tartar,
 a sufficient quantity of honey to form an
 electuary.

Mix, and take a tea spoonful thrice a-day. It will very much improve it to add twenty drops of balsam of copaiva to every dose, according to the practice of the celebrated Dr. Cullen.

When the piles are painful and inflamed, add two or three tea spoonfuls of laudanum to a tea cupful of warm milk, soak a sponge with it, and apply it to the parts; or a common poultice, with a tea spoonful of laudanum to it, will give great relief. An excellent remedy for the pain of the piles is the

Emollient Bougie.

Take a roll of cotton the thickness of the finger,
 a quantity of butter of chocolate,
 a very little spermaceti ointment.

Roll the cotton in these, in form of a cone or a cylin-

der, and introduce it into the rectum. It will be found to be exquisitely mild.

In all cases where there is much hardness, inflammatory heat, and irritation, half a dozen or a dozen leeches ought to be applied around the fundament, and followed by a common poultice. After the irritation is allayed, injections of cold water, or a weak solution of sulphate of zinc, will tend to strengthen the parts.

Some surgeons have advised cutting off the tumours by the scissors, or by a ligature, but both these have in many cases produced convulsions, and even death itself.

The diet should chiefly consist of opening and cooling substances, avoiding red meats. After the piles are got under, however, training diet will tend to prevent a relapse.

It may seem strange to mention the management of the eyes after speaking of the treatment of piles, &c., but our readers may be assured that the two complaints are often combined, and that the most effectual way of curing the one, is by relieving the other.

MANAGEMENT OF THE EYES.

A little care and caution would often save us a world of future trouble; but the worst of it is few can be persuaded to take care of their

health till it be lost; and fewer still will do any thing to save their eyes till their sight be injured beyond the repair of all eye-salves, and eye-washes. Well, let the careless suffer; but we shall not leave *our* readers the plea of ignorance; for we feel it our duty, as Mr. Irving has it, to “ring woe and doom” into the ears of all who neglect our precepts, the doom namely of blindness, and the woe of bad eyes in the dreary period of old age, when friends are gone and the world is a blank.

The foundation of bad eyes, says Professor Beer, the Newton of oculists, is most frequently laid in the first weeks and months of infancy, by incautiously exposing the eyes to glaring light, and producing inflammation and all its various train of specks, clouds, cataracts, and total blindness. If you carry an infant into the sunshine, or into bright light, it instantly cries from the irritation of the light on its tender organs; but this tells nothing to the ignorant nurse, who has her nostrums in readiness whenever the poor baby’s eyes are red, swoln, and oozing with humour. The most injurious custom also of holding a candle or a mirror near the infant to see it take notice, as it is called, very often is the cause of severe inflammation, and loss of sight; and if the child escape this, it most proba-

bly has its eyes strained into an incurable squint. In more advanced childhood, the eyes should be cautiously habituated to look at distant objects, in order to avoid the defect of near sightedness, now so common among the upper and middle ranks, from the absurd practice of confining children so much to nurseries and school-rooms, and preventing their getting out into open day.

When children are fit for school, no judicious parent would wish them to be crammed with education, till their minds become as pampered and bloated as the unsightly corpus of a glutton. Yet such seems to be the order of the day, and the eyes of children are strained to very aching with hourly tasks of poring over twenty different sciences, which they may indeed be taught to smatter and parrot, but which it is utterly impossible they can ever learn. Many a fine girl has had her sight in this manner most cruelly sacrificed, by being compelled to strain her eyes for many hours daily in poring over music; while it was denied her to refresh her sight with the "greenery" of nature, except in the absurd funeral-like processions which have very aptly been called the "*walking advertisements*" of boarding-schools. The eyes in youth must never be fatigued, says Beer, till the body

acquires strength. For if children are put to close study when their body is weak, the sight is in the utmost peril of being destroyed, and that before the parents are aware of the danger.

Our rule then amounts to this, that economy of the sight in infancy and youth, is the best guarantee of its strength in manhood and old age. Even in manhood and middle life, we should look forward to the period when the lustre of the eye will be dimmed with years, and endeavour to spare the sight from idle or unnecessary fatigue; or if this has at any time happened, to take means without delay, to restore it to vigour. Of all other means of refreshing the fatigued eye, sleep is the most powerful; and when you have been exposed over night to the glare of gas, or the sparkling of gilded or crystal chandeliers, while at the same time you were robbed of several hours of your accustomed sleep—let no urgency of business (if you value your eye-sight) tempt you to get out of bed till your eyes feel refreshed, and if any stiffness or smarting remain, lave them and the forehead with the coldest *soft* water you can procure, or have some poured over the head as directed above. If the smarting still remains after this, accompanied with a redness

or swelling, and a feeling as if sand had got within the eye-lids, you may try the following

Anodyne Eye-Water.

Put forty drops of the sedative solution of opium into four ounces of elder flower water, and add three drachms of the best acetated liquor ammonia.

Mix, and dip into it a piece of fine linen and apply it to the eye, allowing some of the water to get within the eye-lid, and it will soon relieve you from uneasiness. When this is not at hand, put two tea spoonfuls of brandy or laudanum into a wine glassful of water, and use it in the same way.

APOPLEXY.

We mention this as one of the occasional though less frequent consequences of the neglect of that class of complaints we have endeavoured to describe, under the term Desk Diseases.

The attack of apoplexy is usually so very obvious, that the disease can scarcely be mistaken; but we have, nevertheless, seen it regarded as epilepsy, and fatal effects result from the delay in the employment of means proper for its relief; and from the use of improper applications. We shall, therefore, as briefly as possible, describe the disease as it usually occurs

under two distinct forms, both of which, however, are often modified by the habit of body of the individual who is attacked. In the first, a person apparently in full glow of health, whilst walking in the street, or enjoying himself at the social board, suddenly drops down or falls from his chair, and lies as if overcome with a heavy sleep, which is accompanied with snorting, or, as medical men call it, *stertorous* breathing. The countenance is turgid with blood, and of a reddish purple hue; the eyes are blood-shot, and seem as if starting from their sockets, and their pupils are either greatly dilated or very much contracted, whilst foam or frothy saliva is blown from the mouth with every expiration. If the finger be now placed on the wrist, the pulse will be found hard, full, and bounding; and the skin covered with a clammy perspiration.

In the second form, the attack is preceded by pain in the head, sickness, sometimes arising to vomiting and faintness, and the person falls down, as in a swoon, in which state he dies; or he recovers his sensibility for a short time, but complains of intense headache, and gradually sinks into a state of lethargy, from which he never awakes. In this form of the attack, the pulse is small, the face pale and shrunk; there

is often a slight degree of convulsion; and if the individual survive, one side of the body generally becomes paralytic. It is this form which is most likely to be mistaken for simple fainting, or for epilepsy; and in which stimulants, such as wine, hartshorn, and aromatics, are frequently given to the injury of the patient. It is distinguished from fainting by the previous headache; and from epilepsy, by the absence of violent struggling, convulsions, and rigidity of the limbs.

TREATMENT OF THE FIT.

In both of these forms of apoplexy, the attack is so sudden, that those who witness it almost invariably lose their presence of mind; and many modes of relief, which can be applied by any one, and are of the first importance, if instantly resorted to, are neglected or overlooked. The first thing which should be done is to untie the neckcloth, and to remove every source of pressure from the throat of the sufferer; the next, to carry him into the open air, or a cool spacious room, and to place him in a sitting position, so as to favour the return of the blood from the head; taking care, however, that the head neither falls upon the breast nor is thrown backwards, either of which positions is apt to

place the muscles in such a state as to present an obstacle to the descent of the blood. To divert the blood still more to the lower extremities, and restore its balance over the body, the feet and legs should be placed in very hot water and rubbed with mustard. As soon as a medical practitioner arrives, the case should be given up to his management, and his directions implicitly obeyed; but if professional assistance cannot be very quickly procured, the life of the patient sometimes may be preserved by making an incision with a sharp pen-knife, on the temple, immediately before the upper part of the ear, on a line with the outer angle of the ear, where a pulsation will be readily felt by a finger placed upon the spot. The cut should be made down to the bone, so as to divide the temporal artery; and there need be no fear of too great a loss of blood taking place; for, should the flow of blood be very considerable, it can be easily commanded by pressure on the part, until professional assistance be obtained. No appearances, although they may indicate that death has already taken place, can authorize the not sending for medical aid; for we should never forget, that

“ Death may usurp on nature many hours,
And yet the fire of life kindle again
The overpressed spirits.”

SHAKSPEARE—*Pericles.*

We have been led, as we have already stated, to make these remarks, by reflecting on the generally increasing frequency of this appalling disease. To be satisfied that it has been more common for several years past than it was formerly, we have only to examine the bills of mortality of the metropolis; and that numbers have fallen victims to it this season, is not only within the knowledge of every well employed medical practitioner, but is apparent on looking over the deaths detailed in the public Journals. Were the sufferers the short-necked and the corpulent, the citizen gorged with turtle, the wine-bibber, and the libertine only, we might find a cause for this in the increase of luxury, sloth, over-indulgence, and sensuality; but when we perceive the pale, the spare, the temperate, even the emaciated, among them, we cannot avoid inquiring—To what cause is this augmentation of so alarming an evil to be imputed? This is a question of great importance; and we conceive that we are doing a public benefit in directing to it the attention of our readers.

CAUSES OF APOPLEXY.

In endeavouring to explain the frequency of this formidable disease, let us examine whether there be any increase of that state of habit, which has been generally regarded as predisposing to apoplexy. Short-necked, plethoric individuals have died of apoplexy, in every period of society; but in the present age, it is as common to see the meagre and the pallid struck by the disease, and sink instantly from a state of apparent health into the arms of death, as the gross and the plethoric. In the external condition of the body, therefore, we can perceive no reason for the increase of the disease, and must, consequently, look for it in the internal state of the brain. Anatomy throws little light upon this inquiry; for in many fatal cases of apoplexy, no appearances of disease are discovered, either in the mass of the brain itself, or in its membranes. The histories of the disease, however, authorize us to suppose, that some kinds of intellectual excitement produce a peculiar alteration in the functional state of the brain, in which it is more susceptible of injury, from any sudden irregularity of the circulation within the head, than in its ordinary condition; and that this is the state

which predisposes to apoplexy. The irregularity to which we allude is in that balance, or due adjustment of the arterial and venous circulation within the head, which is essential for maintaining the healthy condition of the brain. Many, for example, are the cases of apoplexy which have followed severe or long continued grief, anxiety arising from pecuniary embarrassments, and the mind being over exerted in business or study; and as these exciting causes, in many individuals, are those also of insanity, so we may observe, that the changes which have necessarily occurred in the structure of society from the advancement of refinement, and even education itself, (blessing as it is,) have been accompanied by an increase of both these diseases.

But admitting that such a state of the brain may be produced by mental excitement, we have still to inquire what are the remote causes which produce that irregularity of the circulation of the blood within the head, which, acting on this state of brain, causes apoplexy? We answer, these are whatever occasions a sudden increased flow of blood to the head! and nothing is more likely to produce this effect, than a hearty meal on an empty stomach, at a late hour of the day; this brings us to the con-

clusion, that one cause, at least, of the increase of apoplexy in the present period, is the very late hour of dining, after fasting from an early breakfast hour, the mind being kept, during the whole time, in a state of over-excitement. It is not necessary, in proof of this, that the attack should occur at the moment in which the diseased effect on the brain is produced, for many hours will intervene after an obvious injury has been sustained by that organ, before its effects are felt. Thus, a woman ruptured a blood-vessel in the brain by a sudden jar, in running down stairs in the middle of the day, but experienced no inconvenience from it until night, when, finding herself a little feverish, she rose to get a glass of water, and fell down in a fit of apoplexy, which terminated fatally before morning.

Intemperance, also, will produce apoplexy, by the alcohol of the wine or spirits being absorbed into the circulation, and directly applied to the brain; and although the present race of men be certainly more temperate than their forefathers, yet after long fasting, as the increased excitability of the stomach produces a more powerful action of the absorbents, a comparatively small quantity of wine may furnish alcohol sufficient, when applied to a brain

predisposed to diseased excitement, to produce a very injurious effect on that organ.

If our reasoning be admitted, the necessity of a change in the habits of our men of business, who have been of late the most numerous victims of apoplexy, is evident. Let them eat a hearty lunch at mid-day, and a very sparing dinner in the evening; and ever bear in remembrance the words of the poet—

“Oppress not nature sinking down to rest,
With feasts too late, too solid, or too full.”

LOW SPIRITS AND MELANCHOLY.

Study, it has been well said, weakens the body, dulls the spirits, abates the strength and courage, and often ends in melancholy and madness. Desk employment of any kind, tends much to the same effect, both in consequence of the position of the body, and the two great or long continued exercise of the head. One of the many causes which have been assigned for this, is negligence. Other men, says an old author, look to their tools; a painter will wash his pencils; a smith will look to his hammer, anvil, and forge; a husbandman will mend his plough irons, and grind his hatchet if its edge be dull; a huntsman will have especial care of his hounds and horses: a musician will string

and unstring his lute; only scholars neglect the instrument—the head—which they daily use. Take heed, says Lucian, that you twist not the rope too hard, till at length it break.

Contemplation and desk business are also said to dry the brain and extinguish natural heat; for whilst the animal spirits are intent on meditation in the head, the stomach and liver are left destitute of their due support, and thence comes crude and half-prepared blood, according to the principles so often established in this work. Hence it is that deskers are the victims of gout, stone, colic, flatulence, heart-burn, bad eyes, giddiness, apoplexy, and consumption, and all such diseases as come by over much sitting. Deskers are therefore often lean, dry, ill-coloured, lose their wits, and many times their lives, and all through immoderate study. Such were the studies of Seneca the moralist, who tells us that he never spent an idle day; part of the night, though tired with working, he kept his eyes open to their continual task: and Cicero, in his oration for Archius, says, that whilst others loitered, he was continually at his book.

As study and sedentary employment are subject to such inconveniences and disorders, those who pursue these ought, in the right order of

things, to be well rewarded; yet so it is, that after all their pains taken in Universities, expenses, irksome hours, laborious tasks, wearisome days, and barred in the interim from all the social pleasures of life, if they chance to wade through all this hardship, they are very frequently in the end rejected, contemned and driven to their shifts. Now if there were nothing more than this, it would be a fertile source of low spirits and melancholy. Men of most other trades and professions, after some years apprenticeship, are enabled to live by their craft, to live of themselves. A merchant adventures his goods to sea, and though his hazard be great, yet if one ship return out of four, he likely makes a profitable voyage; scholars, on the other hand, are most uncertain, and subject to casualties and hazards almost unavoidable. For first, the closest study may not make a scholar—every kind of marble is not fit for making a statue of Apollo; and again, if the capacity be good, how many diseases both of the body and mind must be encountered through life. Among other causes of low spirits, besides those we have just hinted at, we shall now touch upon certain articles of food, which are considered in proportion to their quantity and mode of cooking, prominent causes of the complaint among the sedentary.

LOW SPIRITS AND MELANCHOLY, FROM DIET.

Bread.—Bread that is made of what the old writers call the baser grains, such as peas, beans, and rye; or when it is over-baked, crusty and black, is not easily digested by the sedentary. John Major, in his History of Scotland, contends strenuously for the wholesomeness of oaten bread; which Dr. Johnson, on the contrary, considers as only fit for horses; as Galen, Wecker, and others, have done before him. One thing is clear, that many healthy men, not only in Scotland, but all over the North of England, Wales, and Ireland, use oaten bread as a staple article of food. The best bread, however, for deskers, is plain well-baked biscuit. Nothing can be worse than new bread or hot rolls.

DISORDERS OF THE URINARY ORGANS—THE
KIDNEYS—THE BLADDER, &c.

The usual position of the body in writing, is extremely unfavourable to the healthy functions of all the organs *below* the chest, as well as to those of the chest itself, and to none more than the kidneys, the bladder, and all the other organs connected with them; and hence the occurrence of retention or of incontinence of

urine, gravel, stone, diabetes, mucous discharges, strictures, and pains and inflammations of the kidneys, the bladder, &c. so frequent among accountants, clerks in the Public Offices, and men of letters. We deem it of the more importance to take up this subject first in order, that the unhappy sufferers are usually influenced from motives of delicacy not to take any advice till their complaints are, perhaps, too far gone to be easily cured, and too often, in the end, put themselves under the hand of quacks, who promise a speedy cure, but for the most part aggravate the complaint, or kill the patient with poisonous nostrums.

Next to the unhealthy position of the body, the principal causes of urinary diseases among those much engaged in writing and accounts is *the not attending to the calls of nature*. The mind becomes so absorbed in the business of the desk, that the call is once and again resisted, and according to the press of affairs, this inattention to nature is repeated day after day, and week after week, till the irritation of the bladder brings on some troublesome disease, either in itself, or in the kidneys, or other parts connected with it. A fatal case of this kind came lately under our observation. Mr. W——, a young man in a banking-house, engaged so intently in

detecting an error in a balance, that he neglected to make water for ten hours, and then he found it impossible, probably from a spasm producing a stricture; and notwithstanding every means which could be devised for his relief, he died on the fifth day. Many other cases of various severity we have seen arise from the same cause; some creating hourly alarm, others excruciating agony, and so terrible indeed are the sufferings sometimes caused by these diseases, that death is hailed as a blessing by the unhappy sufferers. We hope that our readers, thus put upon their guard, will endeavour to avoid at least this one cause of so much evil and distress, and be attentive to all such irritations of the urinary organs. The evils arising from the position of the body, are best obviated by *daily* riding on horseback for about one, two or three hours, which brings all the urinary organs into healthy action, and tends in a great measure to remove obstructions, and the consequent irritation.

When any complaint arises that excites alarm in the patient, either from troublesome pains, unusual appearances in his urine, mucous discharges, &c, we intreat him, as he values his health, not to lose time through false modesty, but forthwith to apply to some judicious prac-

titioner, who may, perhaps, easily remove at first what would become incurable. In the mean time we shall present our readers with a few simple and efficacious prescriptions, which they may try without fear of danger, if false shame prevent them from taking medical advice.

Prescriptions for Pains in the Kidneys.

Put six ounces of white poppies bruised, into six pints of rain water.

Boil down to a quart, strain, and press out the juice of the heads of the poppies. Foment the parts above the loins with it while it is hot; and if this does not relieve, the warm hip bath may be tried. Then

Dissolve one ounce of gum arabic, in two pints of warm barley water.

To be divided into four draughts, and taken as occasion requires.

Prescriptions for Irritation of the Bladder.

Infuse half an ounce of dried peach leaves, in a pint of boiling water.

A wine glassful three or four times a day.—Or,

Boil one ounce of the leaves of uva ursi, in a pint and a half of water till it is reduced to a pint.

An ale glassful to be taken three or four times a day; while the warm hip-bath, and the above fomentation of poppies, may be also used with great advantage.

Prescriptions for Mucous Discharges.

Take two drachms of the sulphate of zinc,
and a sufficient quantity of turpentine.

Make into five dozen pills; one or two to be taken
night and morning.—Or,

Mr. Cline's Pills for the Same.

Take two drachms of common turpentine,
one drachm of powder of rhubarb.

Mix and make into pills of five grains; two or three
to be taken thrice a day, in a glass of peach leaf infu-
sion, or of uva ursi decoction as above.—Or,

Copivy Mixture.

Powder two drachms of frankincense, and mix
with half an ounce of balsam of copivy;
and the whole with an ounce and a half of
gum arabic mucilage; add half an ounce
of simple syrup, and five ounces of cinna-
mon water.

Mix, and take three table spoonfuls thrice a day.

Prescription for Gravel.

Take two drachms of liquor of potass;
six ounces of lime water.

Mix, and take one or two table spoonfuls three times
a day in a cupful of beef tea, or veal soup.

Prescription for Incontinence of Urine.

Take from fifteen to thirty drops of tincture of
cantharides in a wine glassful of infusion
of peach leaves, or a wine glassful of de-
coction of uva ursi.

To be repeated, three times a day.—Or,

*Mr. Cline's Prescription for Retention of Urine.
from Strictures, &c.*

Take ten drops of the muriated tincture of iron,
in a glass of water.

To be repeated every quarter of an hour, till effectual.

*Prescription for Strictures and Spasms of the
Urinary Organs.*

Take four ounces of the fresh leaves of bella-
donna, bruised in a marble mortar ;
the same quantity of prepared lard.

Beat them up well, melt over a gentle fire, strain
through a cloth, and keep stirring till it is perfectly cold.
Apply this ointment externally, night and morning, to
the parts affected ; or it may be had, ready made, at
the druggist's, under the name of belladonna ointment.
The muriate of iron may also be tried as above, or the
tincture of cantharides : and occasionally, the warm hip
bath, and the fomentation of poppies.

THE CAUSES AND CURE OF GRAVEL AND SAND IN
THE URINE.

We have already remarked, that the sitting
posture at the desk has an injurious influence,
by unnatural pressure, on the kidneys and blad-
der ; at the same time we have pointed out the
injury of not attending to the calls of nature.
But what is of no less consequence in the pro-
duction of gravel and stone, is the weakened

digestion occasioned by confinement, and want of exercise in the open air. In nine cases out of ten of gravel or sand in the urine, occurring to those who are much employed at the desk, the enfeebled powers of the stomach will be found a prominent mark, and a certain cause.

But what is gravel or sand, you will ask? We answer, that if it is *white*, it is chiefly composed of lime; if *red*, it is an acid usually in a crystallized state, whether it incrust the sides of the *pot de chambre* with a red sediment, or be passed in grains with sharp angles. It is of the utmost importance to distinguish these two sorts—the *white* and the *red*, as they require quite opposite treatment. The white is neither so common nor so obstinate as the red. The red, being itself an acid, obviously arises from too much acid in the body, caused by drinking acid liquors, (and all wines, spirits, and malt liquors contain acid,) and by making a long interval of six, seven, or eight hours between breakfast and dinner, and then overloading the stomach beyond what it can digest, or by eating crude vegetables, such as greens, carrots, &c. which quickly ferment in the stomach. These, added to want of exercise, and pressing the kidneys and bladder, by stooping at the

desk, will, almost to a certainty, produce, first heartburn and indigestion, and then sand, gravel, or stone.

EXPERIMENTS.

To prove the superabundance of acid in your system, when you are troubled with gravel, buy at your chemist's a bit of litmus test paper, which is of a blue colour, but will turn red the instant you touch it with an acid. Fit it at night within your shirt colour, so as to touch the skin; drink something warm on going to bed, and in the morning, if there is too much acid in your system, you will find the paper changed from blue to red; and if you have not gravel, you may well fear it. Again, to prove to you the effect of the following remedies, take some potash, and drop into the urine containing the red gravel, or sediment, and you will see it dissolve and disappear under your eye. We give these simple experiments, to show you that the causes and cure are well understood, though other circumstances, such as long habit, and the continuance of the causes, may baffle every attempt to remove the disorder.

The gravel, or sand, seems to be usually formed in the kidneys, passing thence with the urine along the pipes called *ureters*, into the

bladder. Now, when this gravel is, as usual, full of sharp angles, it must fret and cut the tender inner surface of these pipes, occasion great pain in the loins, where the pipes lie, and must often draw blood, and consequently produce bloody urine. This is not all. The irritation thus produced commonly extends to the stomach, causing nausea, sickness, and vomiting; and to the head, inducing headache and giddiness. The kidneys, in this way, retaliate on the stomach the evils which it has in the first place brought upon them, by sending them its acid and ill-digested crudities; and the two organs thus wage alternate war with one another, till the poor sufferer has his life dreadfully embittered. This is the common progress of repeated fits of the gravel, as they are called.

For the white gravel, calcareous sand, or lime, we must prescribe acids, as this seems to arise from a deficiency, rather than a superabundance of acid in the system. For this purpose, you may try

Professor Brande's Remedy for White Gravel.

Take one tea spoonful of lemon juice,
an ale glassful of decoction of uva ursi,
sugar and peppermint water to taste.

Mix for a dose, to be frequently repeated.

To satisfy yourself of the efficacy of this remedy, pour some of it on the white gravel, and you will see it dissolve quickly. If you have not lemon juice, you may substitute the same quantity of cream of tartar, or twenty drops of elixir of vitriol. The cream of tartar will prove a laxative, which effect is also useful for the cure, as this can seldom be completed without the use of laxative medicines, along with Mr. Brande's prescription.

Mr. Brande has, on the other hand, recommended for the *red* gravel, a rigid abstinence from acid food and drink, such as sour fruits, cyder, champaign, &c., and as a medicine, the magnesia, in the dose of a tea spoonful night and morning. We are of opinion, however, that a more powerful medicine than the magnesia will be found in

Sir Gilbert Blane's Mixture for Red Gravel.

Take two ounces of pennyroyal, or cinnamon
water,

two ounces of gum arabic mucilage,
an ounce and a half of clarified honey,
three drachms of liquor of potass,
forty drops of wine of opium.

Mix, and take two table spoonfuls thrice a-day in a cup of barley water. You may add to each dose, with great advantage, two tea spoonfuls of the compound

spirit of juniper, or twenty grains of nitre. If we are rightly informed, Sir Gilbert has prescribed this with great effect for a high personage.

If this is found to irritate the stomach too much, you may try the magnesia, or a steady course of good soda water, at the rate of at least two bottles a-day. If this be too expensive, you will find to be equally efficacious,

Sir Wm. Knighton's Pills for Red Gravel.

Take six grains of dried subcarbonate of soda,
four grains of hard soap,
and a sufficient quantity of calumba root
in powder.

To make two pills, one to be taken night and morning, for some weeks. These may be usefully varied, by using carbonized potass for the soda, and extract of uva ursi for the calumba.

When a fit of the gravel makes its attack with violent pain, the warm bath must be immediately procured, and if that does not relieve, some blood may be taken from the arm, and forty drops of tincture of opium given with plenty of gruel, barley water, &c. The fomentations also, applied to the loins by a thick flannel roller, and that confined by a linen or calico one above it, will in most cases give instant ease.

One great cause of gravel, particularly the

white sort, is drinking or using in tea, soups &c., the *hard* water of pumps. Where soft cannot be had, those who are afflicted with gravel should always use distilled water. Luxurious living also, that is, unscientific eating, is a main cause of gravel and stone. M. Magendie gives the case of a merchant of the Hanse towns, who was cured of an obstinate gravel by falling into poverty, and on regaining his credit and his table, the gravel returned. A second reverse again cured him, and a subsequent good fortune caused its return with all its former violence. It is curious, and shows the value of exercise. Sailors are as free from gravel, as butchers are from consumption.

STRICTURES OF THE URINARY CANAL.

There can be no doubt, that about a third of most urinary disorders may be contracted quite innocently; and our family readers need not be told how deep a wound unfair suspicions may cause against those who are most free from all stain. It is for the purpose of putting those of our readers on their guard that we state the following;—The urinary canal is lined with a fine skin, precisely similar to that which forms the interior lining of the nostrils, and conse-

quently, is in the same way liable to be deluged with blood from various causes, and to become inflamed. When this happens, the passage of the urine will be obstructed or entirely blocked up, and the most serious and fatal consequences may ensue, such as bursting of the bladder, bad fistula, or mortification. Now the point we wish to impress on your mind is, that the inflammation and the stricture, which so usually follows it, may, and very frequently does, arise without the slightest dereliction of innocence on the part of the patient; for whatever may produce inflammation may end in stricture, and we shall now show you that this may be caused in many ways, which probably you were not before aware of.

We have already endeavoured to demonstrate, how much confinement at the desk or in the library, has a most decided tendency to produce *liver* complaints and *bilious* disorders, and we have also shown that one of the most common symptoms attending these is "a heat or scalding in making water, occasioned by the acridness of the bilious urine," which frequently, though not always, is high coloured, small in quantity, and deposits a pink sediment on the sides or bottom of the *pot de chambre*. Now if bilious disorders continue for any length

of time, even though of the slighter kind, or if a violent bilious attack has occurred, do you not clearly see that the urinary canal may be involved in the disorder; and first irritation, then inflammation, and thirdly, stricture may be produced? The one is a clear natural consequence of the other; and we ourselves have no doubt that a great number of strictures have no other cause than bilious derangement, though that derangement may arise from irregular living, dissipation, or sexual indulgence, as well as from too close confinement at the desk. But the latter of itself will often be a sufficient cause, while the sufferer is innocent of any irregularity. We, therefore, caution all those who are disposed to be bilious to watch narrowly whether any symptoms of stricture make their appearance, such as twisting or forking of the stream, frequent calls to make water, particularly in the night, &c., and to lose no time in applying the proper remedies.

Another very frequent cause of urinary strictures which desk business is apt to produce, is *gravel* and sand in the urine, the nature and treatment of which we have amply laid down. The way in which gravel produces stricture, will be easily comprehended when you reflect that the particles of the gravel or sand are crys-

tals of an acid, with sharp angles, which cannot fail to cut the tender skin that lines the urinary canal. The consequence will be that the cut parts will inflame and swell, and matter will be thrown out as in a cut on the finger, which will unite the opposite sides of the canal, in the very same way as the sides of the cut in the finger are united, by a hard, white, elastic substance, blocking up the passage of the urine, and forming the most unmanageable and dangerous sort of stricture. This you will at once perceive is no fanciful or imaginary case, but what happens every day to those who are afflicted with gravel. We conjure you, therefore, as you value your life, not to trifle with yourself, if you observe any symptoms of gravel; but apply the remedies which we have pointed out in our preceding pages. Those who are much employed at the desk require, above all others, to be careful in not at any time neglecting too long the calls of nature to make water, and in avoiding a stooping position, which presses upon and injures the kidneys. As indigestion also is one of the chief causes of this disorder, by its leading to the generation of the acid which forms the gravel, and crystallizes in the bladder, as you see water crystallize with frost, deskers ought to attend most punc-

tually to the state of their stomach, which, if kept in order by attention to diet, and their bowels open by an aperient medicine* when necessary, will be the most probable means of preventing many of the calamities we have had occasion to recount.

We need not muster many facts to prove that desk business, or literary employment, is a fertile source of all the multifarious complaints called *nervous*. The effects on the brain from constant stooping, and of course overloading it with blood, much more the constant stretch of the mind in thinking, investigating, or calculating, cannot fail to end in debility or derangement of the nerves. Sometimes this manifests itself by affecting the whole body, as in shaking palsy, and epilepsy, but it more commonly affects only one particular part, as the head in apoplexy, the calf of the leg in cramp, and the urinary canal in nervous stricture. Locked jaw is another nervous disorder, which in some degree, is analogous to nervous stricture, the jaw being shut by cramp, in a similar way to the shutting of the urinary canal. Another very

* The Stomach Elixir is one of those medicines which prove peculiarly efficacious in all complaints of the stomach, acting both as an aperient and stomachic. It may be had at 226, Strand.

common origin of stricture, among those who are much employed in literary pursuits, or desk business, is *Cold in the Bladder*, or, as it is called by the doctors, *Catarrhus Vesicæ*. Since this, however, is a disease very prevalent, painful, and often dangerous, and requiring our most careful attention in detailing its symptoms and cure, and in distinguishing it from *certain* other diseases, we shall speak of it under a separate head.

COLD IN THE BLADDER.

The bladder and urinary canal are lined with a soft mucous membrane, precisely similar to that which lines the nostrils, and like the nostrils, also, it is moistened with a bland mucus, designed by Providence to sheath the parts from the acrimony of the urine, that might otherwise produce irritation and inflammatory affections. This is the healthy and natural state of the bladder and the parts connected with it; but we may likewise remark, that in the healthy state, the sheathing mucus never superabounds so as to be discharged, no more than it ought to do in the healthy state of the nostrils, or when they are not irritated by snuff. We must now revert to the causes and origin of the disorder under review.

Confinement at the desk, or in the study, produces, as every body knows, a great susceptibility of being affected by cold, and more particularly in young persons, or those advanced in years, than in middle life. This susceptibility from desk confinement, however, usually fixes itself in some particular part of the body in preference to another, such as in the nostrils and ears; in the throat and lungs; or in the bladder and its canals. The former cases we have amply discussed in our preceding pages; the latter we shall now attend to as little less important.

Cold in the bladder, or *catarrhus vesicæ*, begins with a wearied soreness all over the body, and a feverish state of languor, listlessness, and irritability of temper, precisely like the beginning of a cold in the head. Wandering pains in the back and limbs, with dull headache, are often felt, likewise, before the peculiar affection is manifested. These symptoms are quickly succeeded by a disagreeable stiffness and uncomfortable feeling while making water, but still not amounting to what could be called pain. A soreness, however, soon follows of a similar kind to that experienced when the nostrils are affected by cold, and as this arises from inflammation it produces

an increase of the natural mucus. At first, this mucus is seen floating in the water, rendering it flaky or turbid; but it not unfrequently increases so much as to be discharged, involuntarily, in a separate form, and giving great alarm to the patient, who, though conscious of no irregularity, imagines that something more serious than a cold has produced the appearance. It requires little discrimination, however, to ascertain the distinction: attention to the preceding history of the symptoms will, in general, be sufficient.

PREVENTIVES AND REMEDIES.

When this complaint has once attacked an individual, he is afterwards liable, on the slightest exposure to cold, to a relapse more severe than the first; and as such relapses are almost certain to end in stricture, it becomes of the greatest moment to prevent the threatening danger. The best preventive of a relapse, or a second attack, which we know, is warm small clothes, well lined with silk, to preserve the electricity, and keep it from escaping out of the body. The feet also ought, above all, to be kept warm, as nothing has a greater tendency to bring on colds, both of the lungs and

the bladder, than cold feet, to which deskers and literary men are, in most instances, very subject.

If the disorder has actually made progress, or has, at least, manifestly begun, you ought to lose no time in trying to check its advance, or moderate its violence. One of the most powerful means which can be employed for this purpose is the warm bath, or what is better, the bidet or hip-bath. Great care, however, is requisite to prevent this remedy from proving a source of aggravation, by incautious exposure while the body is heated. Warm fomentations of the infusion of camomile flowers are also very useful; but nothing is of more advantage than drinking copiously of barley water, linseed tea, or grit gruel. Strict abstinence from meat, wine, and all liquors, stronger than soda water or small beer, must be enjoined. The most appropriate diet will be light bread puddings, or those of rice or tapioca; or arrow root, potatoes, &c. The bowels must also be kept open, with any laxative (except salts), such as castor oil, or the following

Laxative Powder.

Take six grains of powdered jalap,
half a grain of submuriate of mercury.

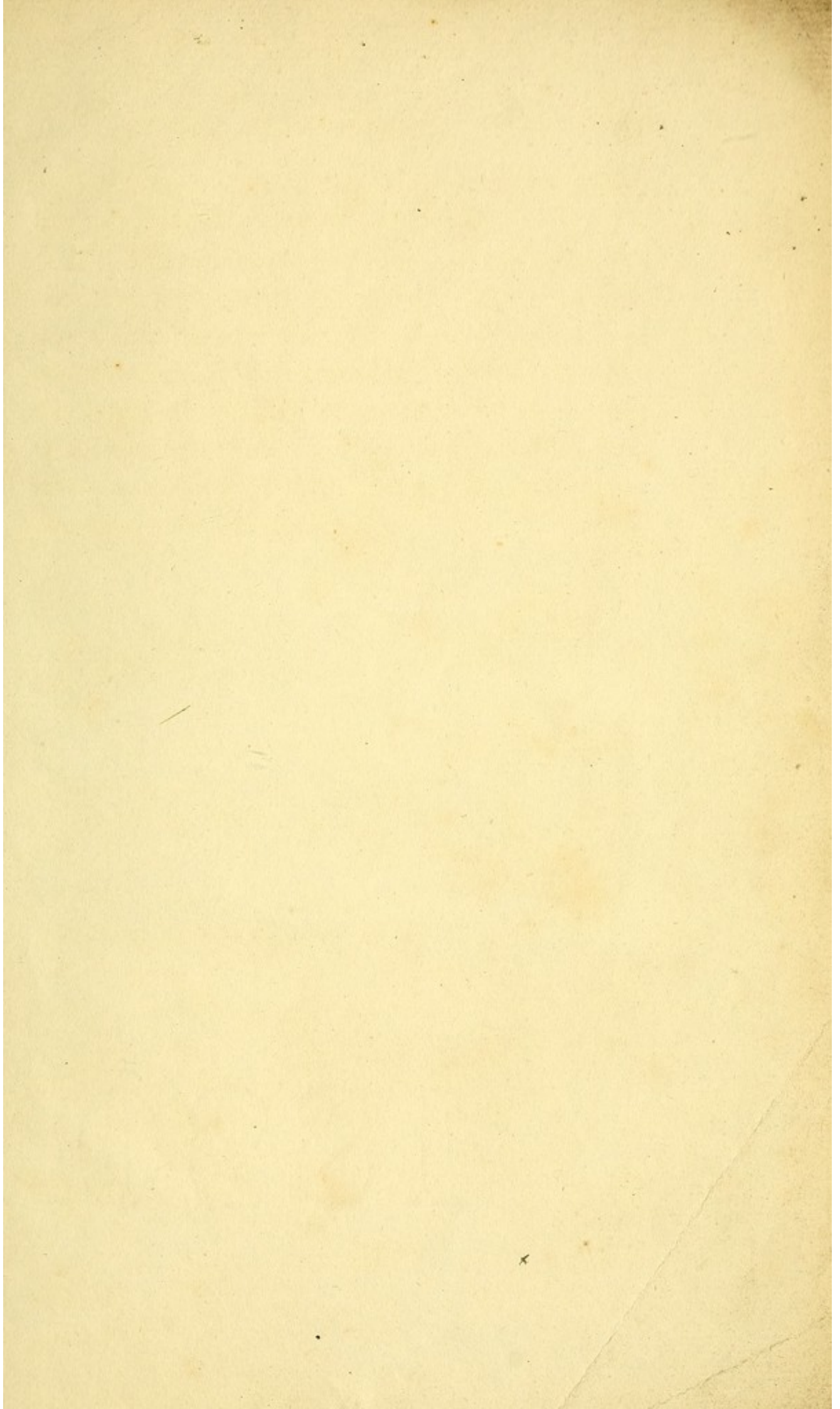
Mix with jelly, or pulp of tamarinds, and repeat the

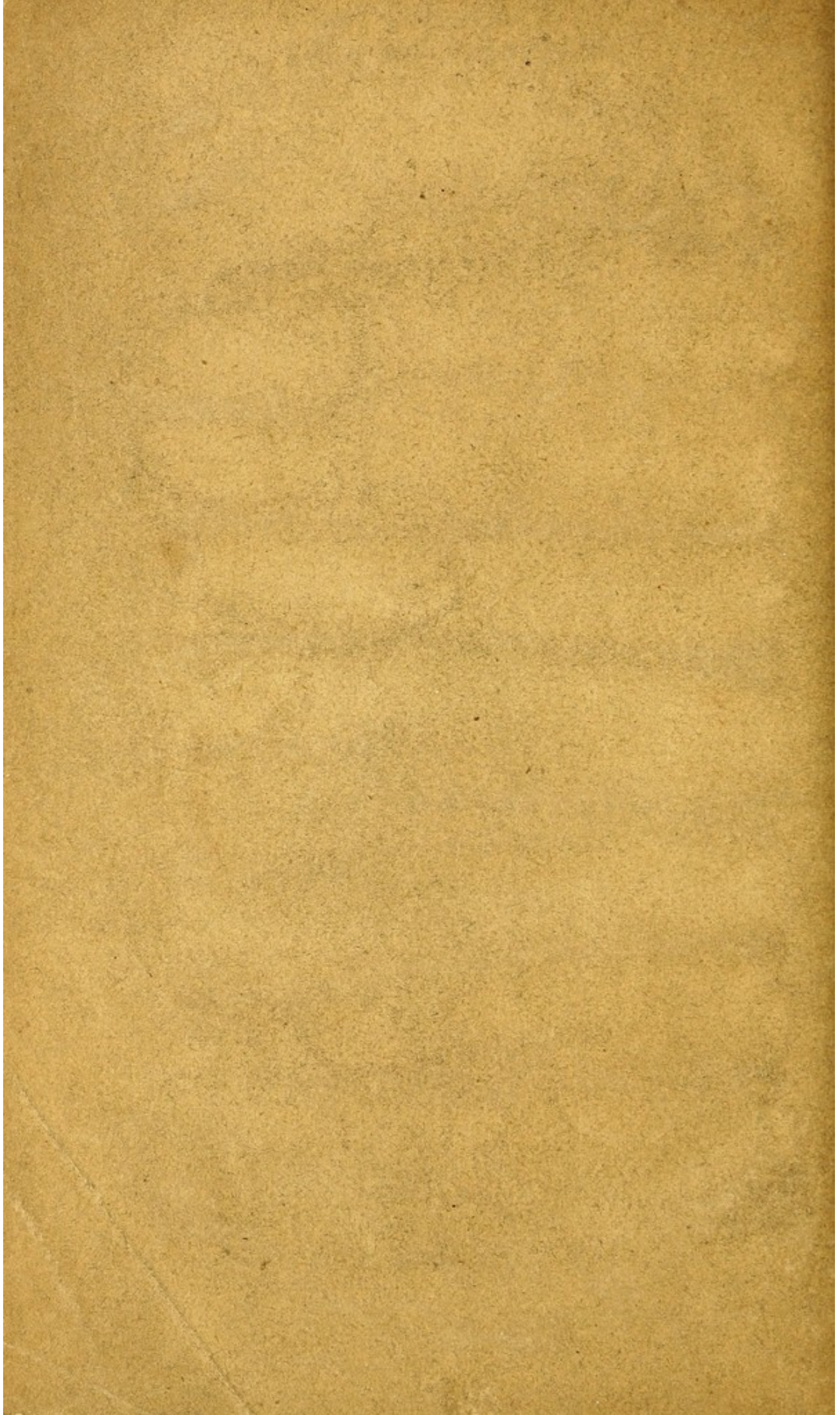
same dose every three or four hours, till the bowels are freely opened.

If this treatment is not successful in reducing the irritation, stronger measures must be pursued. The blister, in this case, ought always to be sprinkled with camphor, in order to prevent the distressing occurrence of strangury, which effect, the camphor in most constitutions, according to Dr. Percival, decidedly produces.

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