

A short account of the origin, symptoms, and most approved method of treating the putrid bilious yellow fever, vulgarly called the black vomit : which appeared in the city of Havanna, with the utmost violence, in the months of June, July, and part of August, 1794 / as practised by Mr. John Holliday, an English surgeon, resident in that city.

Contributors

Holliday, John.
Manning, William, 1767-1849
Loring, James, 1770-1850
Hall, Samuel, 1740-1807
Bingham, Caleb, 1757-1817
National Library of Medicine (U.S.)

Publication/Creation

Boston : Printed by Manning & Loring, for S. Hall, no. 53, and C. Bingham, no. 44, Cornhill, 1796.

Persistent URL

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

License and attribution

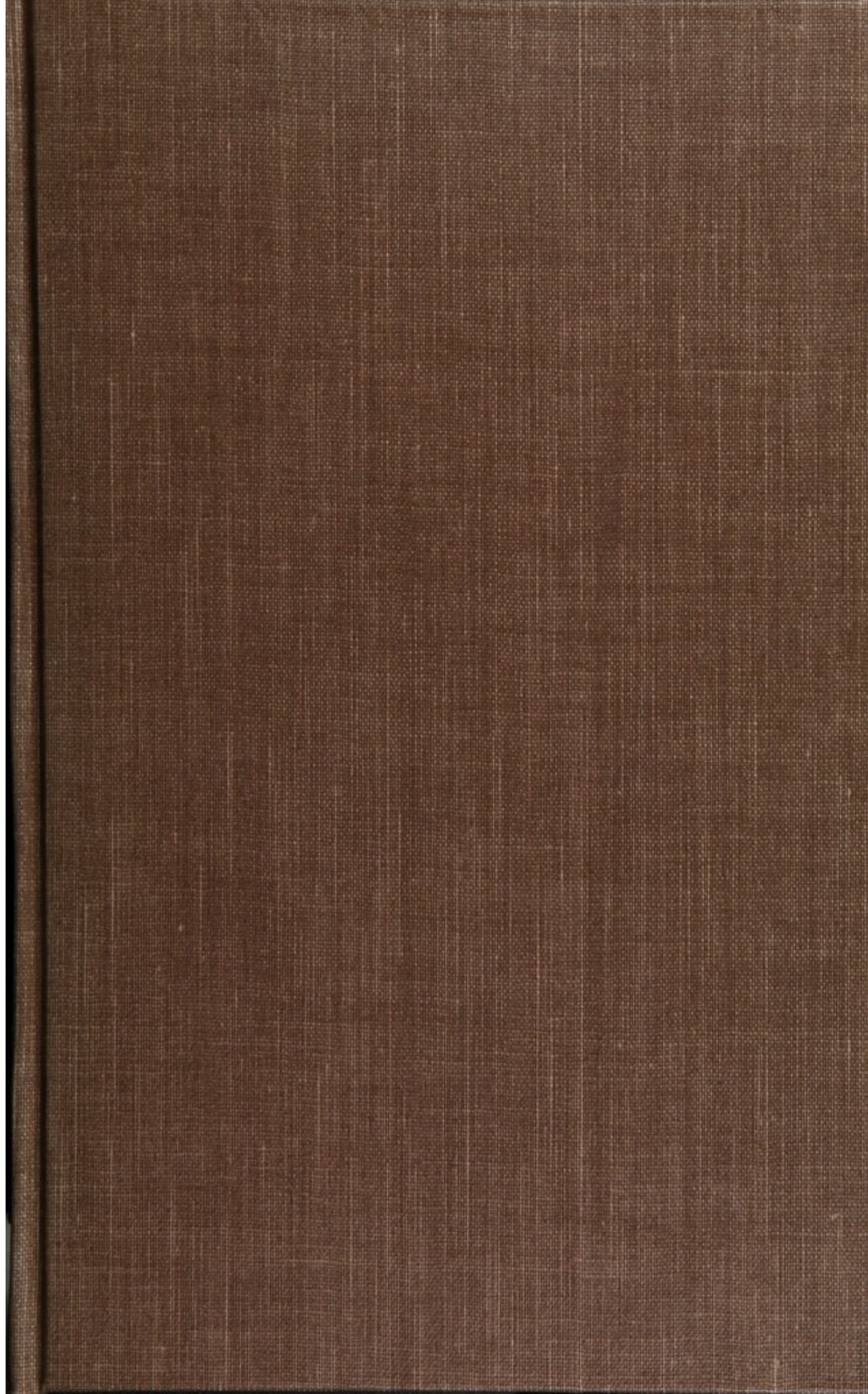
This material has been provided by This material has been provided by the National Library of Medicine (U.S.), through the Medical Heritage Library. The original may be consulted at the National Library of Medicine (U.S.) where the originals may be consulted.

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

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

**wellcome
collection**

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



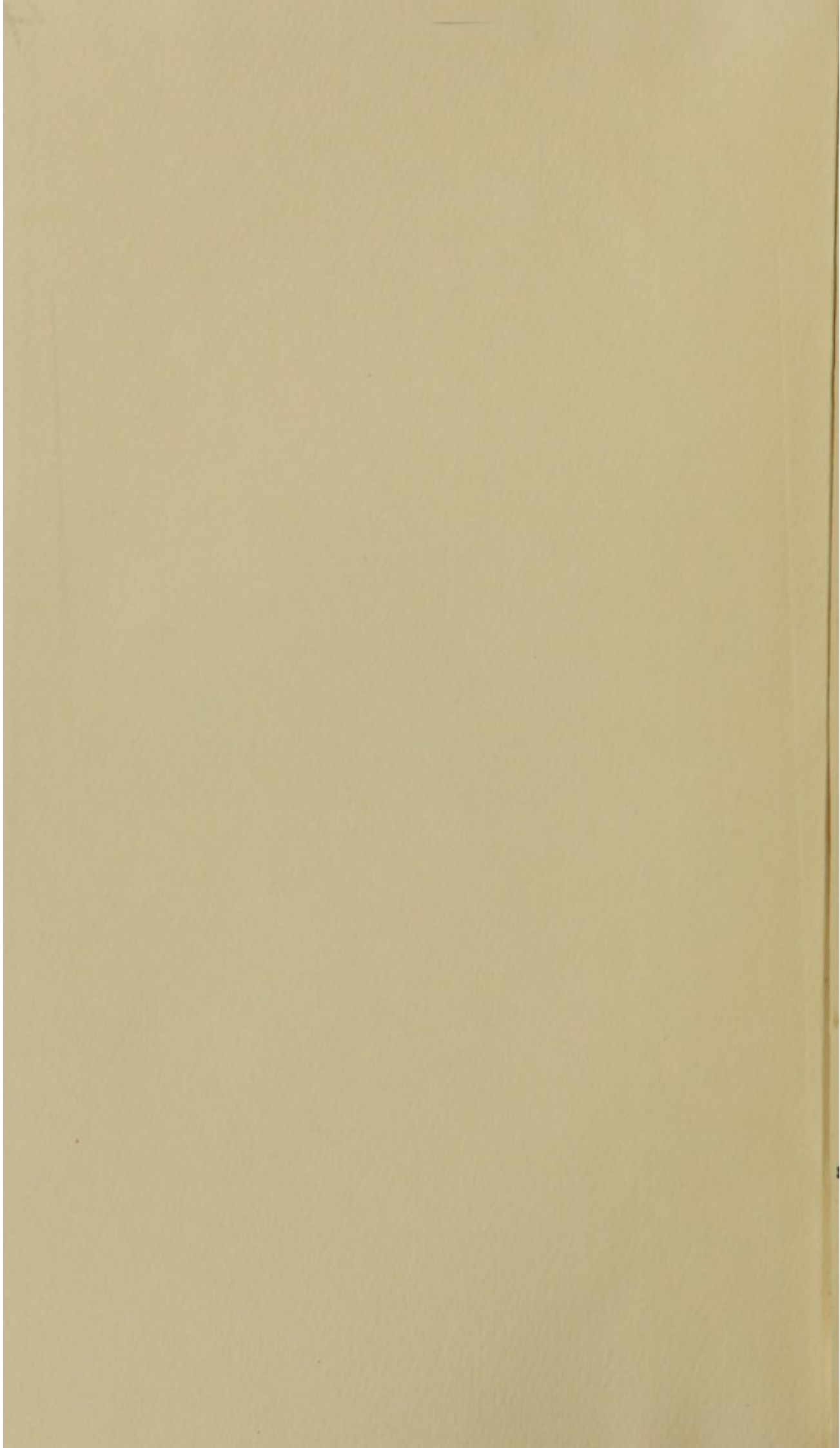
NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
Washington



Founded 1836

U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Public Health Service





4

A

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

ORIGIN, SYMPTOMS, AND MOST APPROVED

METHOD OF TREATING

THE

PUTRID BILIOUS YELLOW FEVER,

VULGARLY CALLED

THE BLACK VOMIT :

Which appeared in the City of the HAVANNA, with the UTMOST
 VIOLENCE, in the Months of *June, July,* and Part of *August,* 1794.

AS PRACTISED BY

MR. JOHN HOLLIDAY,

An ENGLISH SURGEON, resident in that City.

BOSTON :

PRINTED BY MANNING & LORING,
 For S. HALL, No. 53, and C. BINGHAM, No. 44, CORNHILL.



1796.

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE SYMPTOMS AND MOST EFFECTUAL

METHOD OF TREATING

PURTRID BILIOUS YELLOW FEVER

THE BLACK VOMIT:

Which appeared in the City of the MARYLAND, in the year 1793.

As recorded in the Hospital of the City of Philadelphia.

By WILLIAM HUNTER,

M.D. JOHN HOLLIDAY,

AN ENGLISH SURGEON, RESIDENT IN PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA: Printed by G. B. LEITCH, at the SIGN OF THE SHIP, in Market Street.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1793, in the Office of the Clerk of the District Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, by WILLIAM HUNTER, Author.

TO THE PUBLIC.

WHEN I was lately at the Havanna, the following mode of treating the Yellow-Fever, had, by its success, become the theme of general conversation: The ravages this disorder committed in Jamaica, were too recent in my memory, for me to pass unnoticed so interesting an account. I accordingly obtained the Recipes, and with them, most undoubted and authentic testimonies. The following letter will shew why I cannot lay the latter before the Public at this time. Humanity induces me to this Publication, and if, on a fair trial, the Medicines are found to be useful in remedying the fatal Malady, the knowledge of having been of service to my fellow-creatures, will prove an ample recompense to

Their obedient Servant,

WILLIAM HUNTER.

Montego-Bay, 20th June, 1795.

MR. WILLIAM HUNTER,

SIR,

THE Spanish Certificate which you gave me on Friday before the Fire to translate into English, relative to the Medicines made use of at the Havanna, to cure the Yellow Fever, is mislaid among my papers,
but

but I can say with truth, that I have read the whole, and it is authenticated by the Governor, a Lieutenant-Governor, a Colonel of the Army, and Mr. Allwood, of the Havanna, who certify the great benefit received from using it, by the Army and Men of War. The Lieutenant-Governor further says, that he gave a copy of the Recipe to an Officer on board the frigate *La Rosa*, bound for Vera Cruz, and that he had the pleasure to say, that it had the desired effect there; and was afterwards requested by this and other Gentlemen, his friends, to procure a full Copy of the said Recipe, mode of treatment, &c. and to send it to them. It is certain that these Medicines are made use of at the Havanna, and the many Cures performed by them, are certified by the principal Officers and other Gentlemen of that City.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

DAVID OROBIO FURTADO.



METHOD OF TREATING
THE
BILIOUS PUTRID FEVER, &c.

IN the month of June, 1794, the ship Lord Stanley, Captain Farquhar, laden with Negroes, and her Crew enjoying the most perfect health, arrived at the Havanna; this felicity was of so little duration, that after a few days of her arrival, she suffered so much from the above disorder, that, in the course of fifteen or sixteen days, she lost nineteen out of twenty-four officers and seamen that fell sick. The disorder successively made its progress not only in the different Men of War and Ships in that harbour, but also in the city and country places, so that in about two months, more than two thousand persons amongst the different ranks of people fell a sacrifice to it; there were ships of three and four hundred men, which remained with only forty or fifty; and in general, its most baneful effects were among the Marines. On the 27th of August, at night, there arose a most furious storm, which (though with the loss of many of our Vessels) delivered them from that mournful and deplorable calamity.

The contrary opinions amongst the Faculty has been great, as much in respect to the symptoms, as in the method of cure, and also in recognizing the disorder.

But as my intention is not to enter into the different opinions of every one, I shall endeavour to give a short,

short, but compendious relation of the symptoms, together with the method of cure, which I adopted with the greatest success on one hundred and fifty persons. The disorder, as I have said, first of all appeared on board the ship Lord Stanley, though I believe, by information which I afterwards had, it originated in a vessel from Philadelphia, where it raged with great violence. On the 6th day of June, there fell sick eleven men of the Lord Stanley, and the number increased, as I have already mentioned. The symptoms of the disorder were various, and in some, it terminated life in twenty-four hours from the first attack; and with others, it endured until the tenth day. The characteristic symptoms of the disease, as it shewed itself in this City, were as follows: The day preceding its attack, the patient commonly feels a heaviness, weariness, a general debility in the whole body, yawning, and want of appetite; the day following, or on the night of the first indisposition, the violence of the disorder begins thus: the patient will be found perplexed, uneasy, generally with slight pains in different parts of the body, particularly in the head, loins, &c. accompanied with a small chilliness in the extremities, (although there were many who did not feel this) attributing this to a slight cold, until unexpectedly he is seized with a severe degree of fever, with a great heat all over the body, a flushing in the face, heaviness and redness in the eyes, and a longing after fresh air, the tongue white, and excessive thirst, interior pains of the head, &c. the pulse quick, full, and hard, at times, feeble and irregular, a nausea, heaviness, and an uneasy sensation in the stomach, from the beginning, and the whole increasing with the disorder, particularly

ticularly after taking something to quench the thirst; the anxiety and uneasiness then increased, with vomiting a great abundance of bilious matter, the skin hot and dry, intense heat, with pain in the region of the precordia, the respiration difficult, and the urine high-coloured and little in quantity: the symptoms continued twenty-four or forty-eight hours, and at times I have seen them endure until the third or fourth day, differing in some of the symptoms, together with the times of its duration, according to the age, constitution, or malignity with which it had increased: when in the midst of these complicated and violent symptoms, there was an apparent cessation, and total relief from them, a slight perturbation and inclination to sleep only remaining.

From such favourable appearances, we prognosticated we had gained the desired crisis, and a total intermission of the disease; but, to the misfortune of the unhappy patient, at this time (by a minute examination) we observed on the white of the eyes a slight yellowish tinge, and successively in every other part of the body, accompanied with a perturbation of the intellectual functions, a glossy appearance of the eyes, the anxiousness and vomiting were augmented in such a manner, that they impeded the administration of nourishment or medicine: At this time, instead of experiencing that irresistible and burning heat which was before complained of, the patient feels chilly, and the cutis is alternately dry and moist, the pulse sinking and very irregular, the urine of an high croceous appearance, and at times resembling liquid and corrupted blood, depositing, as I have often seen, a black and offensive sediment: The tongue is in some, dry, parch-

ed, and discoloured, and in others, it is furred and moist. This stage of the disorder lasted but a few hours in some, and in others, from twenty-four to forty-eight, but seldom longer; and it is in this second stage when the medicines have not produced the desired effects, the beginning of the disorder neglected or improperly treated, when we see the direful efforts made between life and death, the pulse diminishing, more irregular and intermittent, nothing can be kept on the stomach, the vomiting increases with repeated efforts, voiding a black corrupted matter, similar to the grounds of coffee, the tongue and edges of the lips black and sticking, cold clammy sweats; the universal yellowness, together with the aggravation of all the symptoms, are demonstrative of the near approach of death: A total suppression of urine, *subfultus tendinum*, a death-like coldness of the extremities, tremblings, delirium, efforts of getting up from bed, a muttering voice, blood oozing from the mouth, nostrils, and many times from the corners of the eyes, ears, &c. black and foetid stools, livid spots on different parts of the body, particularly on the regions of the precordia; hiccups, coma, and death.

These are the characteristic symptoms of the disorder, according as it shewed itself in the city, varying, as I have already mentioned, in different persons, particularly being observed to act with the greatest violence, and most fatal termination, in men of a robust habit of body, new comers, and those addicted to spirituous liquors; and very prevalent with the sea-faring people, by their having been much exposed to the rays of the sun, inclemency of the weather, and that neglect of cleanliness too usual among them. The truth is, that
the

the fluids in all who laboured under the complaint, continually demonstrated the greatest tendency to a state of dissolution and putrefaction; and if those of the Faculty who have written so voluminously on the disorder, would have observed with more attention, that high degree of tendency of the fluids to dissolution and putrefaction, they would not have insisted on the use of such extensive bleeding, which, from experience, we have every reason to believe, has been the cause of so great a mortality.

I shall now describe, in the most concise manner possible, that particular method of cure which I used with the greatest success on upwards of one hundred and fifty patients labouring under this complaint, without the loss of one. On the 6th day of June, I was called by the Captain of the Lord Stanley, to the assistance of the sick of his crew, whom I thought proper should be sent on shore, as much for the benefit of attendance, air, &c. as to remove them from where they had caught the first infection. Imagining their complaint to have been of the intermittent or bilious fever common to the place, of little importance, and less malignity, according to the custom of fevers of that kind, (and ignorant of the fatal consequences which were about to ensue) I made use of emetics, antimonials, &c. until the result of experience convinced me of my error. Moved with compassion, and always in hopes of future success, I thought, with many others, that by the fulness of the pulse, together with other inflammatory symptoms which the disorder manifested, the patient could probably be relieved by bleeding, which method I immediately put in practice, using it from the lesser to the greatest degree, on a
great

great number of patients, but without the least probable benefit; rather to the contrary, hurrying on their miserable existence. Although I saw, and remarked these direful consequences, I followed for some time, the common and general method amongst the Faculty, until convinced of my mistake, and very erroneous practice, I desisted from the lancet, and assumed another method widely different, which, by Divine Providence, gained the desired effect.

I am every day more surprized, when I see medical men order bleeding in such quantities, *usque animi deliquium*; and having seen such fatal consequences arising from it, I am obliged to say, and really to believe, that those gentlemen who used it in such disorders to so great an excess, have either not met with that tendency in the fluids to a dissolution and putrid state, which here made itself apparent, or that they had but little practice, or paid but little attention to the different symptoms and termination of the disease. Having already explained the fatal consequences arising from bleeding, experienced from my own practice, and the innumerable ones I had the opportunity of seeing under the care of others, it is my opinion, that whoever has been so fortunate as to escape from this dreadful disease, by the use, or rather the abuse, of blood-letting, it arose from his entire vigour and robust habit of body; or the little tendency of the fluids to dissolution and putrefaction; and all those that have survived this method of cure, have been under a state of convalescence for two, three, or four months, and frequently the disorder terminated in remittents, or intermittents of the most difficult cure.

In

In no stage of this disorder, can emetics or antimonials be administered, owing to the irritable state of the stomach, and its propensity to vomit, that when once stirred up, (that terrible and direful symptom) it is almost out of the power of medicine to moderate it, or even to admit the purgatives so necessary, and the only medicines which, from experience, have been proved to be the principal part of the cure. Any person that has come into these hot climates, and who has exposed himself to either of the causes which produce this Fever, has sufficient warning, if he would attend to it, and sufficient time to cure it by anticipation; because, as soon as the patient feels any extraordinary heaviness in the body, with weariness, a stretching and yawning, and particularly when followed by a severe attack of the fever, intense pains of the head, &c. he then has very sufficient reasons of being certified that it is the beginning of the disorder, which is coming on with all the violent and customary symptoms: This is the time that the Faculty ought to cut off the arms of the enemy, not by bleeding, (as a greater part of the profession order) but with active and continual purges, until an entire cessation, or total ease, is obtained from all the symptoms. When one of the Faculty is certified of his opinion, either by the disorder being prevalent, or by the symptoms which characterize it, without more delay or loss of time, he should administer the following medicine in three parts, with the interval of two hours between each, and the suitable nourishment between one and the other.

RECIPE.—Take best Glauber Salts, one ounce; best Manna, three ounces; mix and dissolve them in a pint decoction of Tamarinds, strained.

This

This medicine is administered with intention of effecting an immediate and plentiful evacuation, with the greatest facility, and without the irritation the drastic purges usually cause; for which reason, I have generally adopted this method, not only in the beginning of the disease, but also in different cases, when it reached the terrible stage of the black vomiting; and always with equal success, constantly procuring a total alleviation and entire intermission of all the symptoms; continuing the use of the medicine, according to the age, strength, and violence of the disorder, there having occurred different cases, in which, through the violence of the disorder, a difficulty in some to evacuate, and an urgency of the vomitings, I have been obliged to repeat the said quantity twice or three times in twenty-four hours, observing the same regimen until it effected the desired purpose, which it generally did in twenty-four or forty-eight hours, and in very obstinate cases, on the third or fourth day. In these violent cases, when on the first dose of the said medicine an evacuation did not ensue so copiously as was desired, it was then assisted with the common purging clysters, or rather better with a mixture of salt water and oil of olives, which, by the irritation that it created in the *intestinum rectum*, rarely or never failed of producing the desired effect. The fortunate remission or crisis of the fever being already accomplished, the irritation must in its turn be attended to, as much for whatever it brings along with it, as for the purging medicines so often repeated, though administered with the aforesaid precautions. I ordered what follows:

RECIPE.—Take white Decoction, (with Cinchona and Tamarinds) a pound; Nitre in powder, a dram
and

and a half or two drams ; Crabs Eyes, two scruples ; Syrup of Violets, one ounce, mixed.

And repeated it twice, thrice, and four times, (dividing the said dose into three parts, allowing an intermediate space of three hours between each) until I found the pulse soft, easy, and regular, which it will attain on the second or third day. Finally, to complete the cure, to restore and recover the stomach and other viscera from their state of relaxation, and at the same time, to evacuate easily the remainder of the disorder, I used the following :

RECIPE.—Take Peruvian Bark, two ounces ; Snake-Root, half an ounce ; mix and boil them in two pints of water, until there remains one pint and a half, strain, and add Extract of Bark, two drams ; Tincture of Rhubarb, two ounces.

I order that the quantity of two or three ounces might be taken every second or third hour, continuing this or any other preparation of the Peruvian Bark, until the patient is found entirely re-established and free from every incumbrance, which rarely exceeds the sixth, eighth, or tenth day from the first attack. When the symptoms were violent, and apparently about to terminate fatally, after a plentiful evacuation, or on the first remission, I administered the febrifuge mixture of the Peruvian Bark, &c. in a great quantity, and always fortunately, not having failed in one of my endeavours after I put in practice these simple, though powerful Medicines.

During the time this disorder lasted in Vera Cruz, copies of these Recipes were carried thither ; and, I have the satisfaction to add, were used with the greatest success in every case to which they were applied.

STANLEY JOURNAL

... ..

... ..

... ..

... ..

... ..

... ..

... ..

... ..

... ..

... ..

... ..



5-

DESULTORY EXTRACTS

A N D

OBSERVATIONS,

SHEWING THAT THE

METHOD OF TREATMENT,

RELATED IN THE FOREGOING ACCOUNT,

Is agreeable to the Rules laid down by HIPPOCRATES and GALEN,

SYDENHAM and BOERHAAVE,

And confirmed by the Practice of HILLARY and LETTSOM,

in Acute Diseases.

By THOMAS BULFINCH, M. D.

Raro fallit medela,
Si non fefellerit caufarum indigatio.

CELsus.

B O S T O N :

PRINTED BY MANNING & LORING,

For S. HALL, No. 53, and C. BINGHAM, No. 44, CORNHILL.



1796.

DESCRIPTION OF THE

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

OF THE

The first part of the work is devoted to a general description of the principles of the system, and to a statement of the objects which it has in view.

The second part contains a description of the various parts of the system, and of the manner in which they are connected together.

The third part is devoted to a description of the various parts of the system, and of the manner in which they are connected together.

The fourth part contains a description of the various parts of the system, and of the manner in which they are connected together.

The fifth part is devoted to a description of the various parts of the system, and of the manner in which they are connected together.

The sixth part contains a description of the various parts of the system, and of the manner in which they are connected together.



EXTRACTS *and* OBSERVATIONS.

IT is an observation of the benevolent Dr. Lett-
som, “that every person who discovers a Med-
icine, which tends to prevent, or cure a disease more
efficaciously than former remedies, is a public bene-
factor, and deserves the patronage of the community.
It must however be acknowledged, that the assuming
the discoveries of others, indicates a want of genius,
or what is more reprehensible, a want of integrity.”
To free myself therefore from these imputations, hav-
ing been so fortunate as never to meet with but few
instances which called for assistance, in the disorder,
which is the subject of the foregoing treatise; * I free-
ly acknowledge that what I have now to offer upon it
is collected from the observations of others; without
vainly arrogating them to myself. From attending to
the former part of this paragraph, we are led to con-
sider how much the world is indebted to the man,
who, without any view to his own emolument, vol-
untarily comes forth to describe a method, by which
he has been so happy as to save the lives of many of
his fellow-creatures, when in the most imminent dan-
ger from a disorder, which has destroyed its thousands
in the years past. I will not, cannot attempt to esti-
mate the thanks due to him on this occasion, but en-
deavour to shew, that the method now delivered by
him, however summary and concise, is upheld by the
concurrent testimony of both ancients and moderns.

With

* These were speedily cured by adopting Dr. Hillary's method.

With respect to the former, I need not call your attention to their own respective writings ; but relate them as they may be found described by others, and in particular in that elaborate essay, on the agreement betwixt ancient and modern physicians, or a comparison between the practice of Hippocrates and Galen, Sydenham and Boerhaave in acute diseases ; intended to shew what the practice of physic in such distempers ought to be—by John Barker, physician to the British army, and fellow of the Royal College of *Physicians*.

As facts are stubborn things, neither requiring proofs to confirm, nor suffering objections to invalidate them ; it may seem unnecessary to offer any thing on the subject : But as I have just said that the method adopted is so very concise as well as uncommon ; it is feared, that it may not meet with the attention it deserves and its magnitude requires.

Our author not only informs us of the successful method, which he adopted, but candidly gives his reasons for departing from the methods pursued by himself and other physicians in the island, on finding them unsuccessful ; for he says in page 11th, “ Moved with compassion and always in hopes of future success, I thought with many others, that by the fulness of the pulse, together with other inflammatory symptoms, which the disorder manifested, the patient could probably be relieved by bleeding ; which method I immediately put in practice, using it from the lesser to the greatest degree, on a great number of patients, but without the least probable benefit, rather on the contrary hurrying on their miserable existence. Now if we look into what Hippocrates has said on this subject,

we

we shall find “ that* in fevers of the bilious putrid kind, he never made use of bleeding at all ; nay, he went so far as to forbid bleeding in some cases merely on account of the fever, though other circumstances seemed to make it necessary.” And again, as Martian proves at large, “ Hippocrates was so much averse to bleeding in fevers, which arose from Bile, that he thought it hurtful even in pleuritic pains, when they were owing to that cause.” And again in another place he says, speaking of the bilious fever,† “ In such a case when bleeding is instituted, on account of the violence of the fever, it is very hurtful, for when the humors are attenuated by the febrile heat, by bleeding they are still so much farther attenuated, that almost the whole mass of blood is changed into a bilious juice or ichor. “ As Hippocrates practised in the warm latitudes of Greece, he had reason to forbear bleeding in diseases, in which it is found to be of service in a colder climate. For the fevers which prevail in hot countries are mostly of the bilious or putrid kind, as those that happen in temperate climes are owing more frequently to a sanguine plethora, or redundancy of blood ; but as bleeding is indicated in the latter, so is purging in the former kind of fevers. The extremes of heat and cold were thought by all the old writers in physic, as well as by Hippocrates to be a reason against bleeding.”

“ For Galen frequently cautions physicians against bleeding in very hot and very cold weather ; in summer time or a hot country. But as Galen practised
in

* Dr. Barker's Essay, page 88, 89.

† Hippoc. Lib. 2. Quare in hoc casu propter febrim Venæsectio plurimum lædit, quatenus humores per Venæsectionem attenuati à febrili calore, eo usque attenuantur, ut Sanguis totus fere in biliosum succum transmutetur.

in the temperate clime of Italy, he had much greater reason for using this evacuation freely than Hippocrates, and the same way of reasoning holds good with regard to Sydenham and Boerhaave." Having now seen what was not the practice of Hippocrates and Galen in warm climates, we cannot but wonder, that physicians in those climates should still retain this uncertain and dangerous method. Our author having discovered the inutility of this method, wisely betakes himself to another, which is not only authorized by Hippocrates, Galen and others, but in which he was happily successful even to his utmost wishes. For in page 13, he says, "In no stage of this disorder can emetics or antimonials be administered, owing to the irritable state of the stomach, and its propensity to vomit; that when once stirred up, it is almost out of the power of medicine to moderate it, or even to admit the *purgatives* so necessary, and the only medicines, which from experience, have been proved to be the principal part of the cure." After having described the prelude to the disorder, he says, "This is the time that the Faculty ought to cut off the arms of the enemy, not by bleeding, but with active and continual purges, until an entire cessation or total ease is obtained from all the symptoms." In page 14, he gives his recipe of Glaubers Salt, &c. and says, "The medicine is given with intention of effecting an immediate and plentiful evacuation, with the greatest facility and without the irritation the drastic purges usually cause." In page 14, he says, "The fortunate remission or crisis of the fever, being already accomplished, the irritation must in its turn be attended to; as much for whatever it brings along with it, as for the purging medicines so often repeated, though administered

ed with the aforefaid precautions ;” he then orders the white decoction, &c. Finally, in page 15, to complete the cure, to reftore and recover the ftomach and other vifcera, from their ftate of relaxation, &c. he recommends a free, liberal ufe of Bark with Snake-Root, &c.

Let us now confider how confonant this method is to that of Hippocrates and Galen, Sydenham and Boerhaave. “ To know when to purge in acute difeafes is a matter of very great importance, and feems not to be fo thoroughly underftood, even at this day, as it ought to be ; at leaft it was fo little underftood, but a few years ago, that Dr. Friend declares, “ That it is very difficult to lay down any certain rules about it, and that it muft be left to the difcretion of phyficians to ufe it occasionally as they think fit.” This difficulty however will be fully cleared up by attending to what is faid in page 130, of Hippocrates’s own practice, the beft comment on his own works ; wherein he fays, “ That there are three different ftages to be obferved in fevers, viz. the beginning, the ftate and the decline. The beginning comprehends all that fpace of time, which is called the augment of the difeafe by fucceeding writers. The firft and laft of thefe ftages, are the only ones in which purging can be ufed with fafety, but chiefly the firft of them.” For if it be requifite to ufe remedies- (that is, powerful remedies, fuch as bleeding and purging, &c.) they fhould be ufed in the *beginning* of difeafes : but when they are come to the height, it is better to be quiet.* (Vid. Aph. Lib. 2d. 28.)

And in another place,† he “ advifes phyficians to take particular care at the firft coming on of a difeafe, to obferve whether purging is neceffary, for if

we

* Vid. Effay, page 122.

† Page 131.

we let slip the opportunity of doing it in the beginning, we must defer it, till the decline of the disease : but at this time, when the strength is exhausted by the length of the disease, one cannot venture upon strong purgatives, and weak ones do more harm than good, as they irritate the humors, and draw off only the thinner and more wholesome parts." In page 134, Hippocrates further observes, " that in *very acute* diseases, we ought not to wait till the urine is thick, but if the matter be *turgid*, we should purge on the *very day* in which the fever comes on, for fear we should lose the opportunity." Hence we see, as in page 132, Hippocrates's own practice, was conformable to his doctrine in this point : for of the two stages of fevers, in which purging is allowable, viz. the beginning and the decline, he generally chose the first.

No more need be said to prove, that the time in which Hippocrates commonly chose to purge was the beginning of acute diseases. In page 154, " If we ask with what view Galen made use of evacuations in fevers, such as purging, sweating, &c. the answer is, that he trod in the steps of Hippocrates in this, as he did in all other respects. For he observed the signs of the trugescency and concoction of the humors, and from thence he drew his indications for purging as Hippocrates had done before him ! (Vid. Comment. in Aphr. 23.) Agreeably hereto, he thought the proper time for purging was, either in the very beginning of a fever, when the matter was turgid and the disease so acute as to make it dangerous to slip the opportunity, as in the instance of a pestilential fever, &c.* or when signs of concoction appeared in the urine,

as

* Thus in a Quartan he says, Et si Coctionis morbi in diebus apparuerint, tunc purgare oportet, non semel tantum, sed sæpius, si fuerit necessarium.

as they commonly do in the *first part* of the state, or lastly in the decline of these diseases, to prevent a relapse, by carrying off the remains of the offending matter." With regard to Sydenham, it is said in page 202 of this work, "that he often purged in the beginning of acute diseases, as in the rheumatism, in a spurious peripneumony, small-pox, catarrhs, dysenteries; and other kinds of fevers; and he acquaints us with his reasons for doing it in those fevers. But there is some difference however between him and Hippocrates in one point; for notwithstanding they both gave purges frequently in the beginning of acute diseases, Hippocrates did it sometimes without previous bleeding; whereas it was an invariable rule with Sydenham never to purge in the beginning of epidemic fevers, without first of all taking away some blood;" which may be accounted for by his living in so different a climate. Let us now hear what Boerhaave, or his friend Barker for him, says, in page 244; "I would not be understood by what I have now been saying, to exclude the use of purging remedies in fevers. On the contrary I think it allowable to *purge* off the offending matter downwards as well as upwards, even in the first stage of these diseases, provided there is an indication for the use of them." It is common in the beginning of fevers, to find the stomach and bowels loaded with fordes or filth of one kind or other; as for example with phlegm or bile, which matter by fluctuating in the first passages occasions a sickness, loathing, vomiting, griping, anxiety, &c. When this is lodged in the stomach, it is proper to begin the cure with an emetic; but if it be in the bowels, it must be carried off by purging. These purges

however should be of the most lenient and gentle kind, lest by occasioning too great a commotion in the blood, they should increase the fever, and by that means do more harm than good." If Sydenham, therefore, and our physicians have always been cautious in this point, it is because purging in the first stage of fevers is very seldom indicated in *our* climate; but we may carry our caution too far in this respect, as those have done, who would have persuaded us that purging is never proper in a fever. We have sometimes Epidemic Fevers among ourselves, in which the Hippocratic method of purging even without bleeding ought to be pursued." Of this kind was the Epidemic which raged in the west of England, 1740 and 1741.

In this fever early purging was found to be of the greatest benefit, by others as well as by myself; for the learned and ingenious Dr. Glass in giving an account of it, says,* "I have used the same method in the spotted fever which is now epidemical with us, and the event has answered my expectation. Nay, I have sometimes known when the giddiness and great pain of the head, the remarkable oppression of the precordia, and the extreme lowness of spirits and loss of strength, which in this constitution come on violently with the fever, were presently removed by this method, and the spotted fever crushed in its infancy." The same judicious physician makes mention also of some other kinds of fevers in which early purging is of use. †

But

* Usurpanti mihi id genus praesidii in febre Petechiali apud nos hoc tempore Epidemica ex Votis successit Eventus. Imo novi aliquoties ubi Vertigo, gravis dolor Capitis, insignis praecordiorum oppressio, multus mentis corporisque languor, in hac Constitutione cum febre ingruentia, per eam medendi rationem (scilicet, purgationem per Alvum) protinus submota fuerint, suppressa febre in ipsis incunabilis. Comment de febr. 274.

† Medicamento purgante inter initia morbi utendum est. 275.

But as Ballonius observes,* “ Great judgment is requisite to distinguish whether it is best to bleed or purge, otherwise a physician may commit great errors in his practice.” The distinction which he makes between fevers which are seated in the *first passages*, and those whose seat is in the veins, will help to direct physicians in this point; for those of the latter kind require bleeding in the first stage of them; but those of the former kind do not easily yield to bleeding, but stand in need of cathartic remedies. “ Moreover,” says Donchers, in the Petechial Fever, “ it hath been found by manifold experience, that purging in this disease is the most certain remedy; indeed the necessity of it, and its good effects, are not only recommended by reason, but so confirmed by practice, that if it is false, or can be so, nothing is, has been, or can be true.”†

“ But not to tire the reader with any more quotations on this subject,” says Dr. Barker, in page 278, “ I can safely affirm that by following the method of Hippocrates, and purging in fevers, where there were signs of the *materia turgens*, in my own practices for some years past, I have often seen such good effects, as even exceeded my utmost hopes; having not only seen continual fevers changed into intermittents, but also entirely carried off by this means, in a few days, when they would otherwise have been, very probably, of some weeks’ continuance.”

As we have now seen the rules laid down by Hippocrates and Galen, Sydenham and Boerhaave, for early use of purgatives in acute diseases, let us attend to the confirmation of its benefit in the practice of a few physicians, whose names are held in high esteem.

In

* Ballonii Opera Tom. I. page 108.

† Donchers de feb. pestitentiali.

In looking into the memoirs of the General Dispensary, in London, in the years 1773 and 1774, by Dr. Lettsom, we shall find in his observations on fevers, with symptoms of putrescency as similar as the nature of that climate will admit, though not absolutely the yellow fever, that out of fifty patients of different ages, labouring under that disorder, he was so happy as to relieve forty-six of that number; in which we find that in no one instance did he ever bleed; but confined himself to the use of gentle emetics and eccoprotics to cleanse the stomach and bowels, and immediately after passed on to the free liberal use of the bark, with the assistance of a free use of wine, porter, and exposure to cold air, (by which means he was happily successful.) With respect to cold air, indeed, he is so sanguine, as to say in page 120, "So far as I can calculate, the accession of air is of as much consequence to the patient as bark or diet; nay, I should presume, that a putrid fever might be sooner cured by the free admission of air without bark, than by bark without air." If the Doctor should be right in this conjecture, how happy would the knowledge of this magnum Dei donum prove to mankind!

The next person whom I would mention is Dr. Hillary, well known for his valuable observations on the small-pox; to whom, for his useful hints and methods for correcting the virulence of that disorder, thousands, if not millions, are highly indebted. In his treatise of the Putrid Bilious Fever, in Barbadoes, commonly called the Yellow Fever, published in London, in 1766, he gives a full and accurate account of it, and the manner of its treatment; and though, according to Sydenham, he began his process by drawing

ing

ing blood, yet he did it with great caution, and if the patient's pulse rises, after the first bleeding, he says, " I repeat it once, in the first or second day of the disease, if the symptoms indicate it ; but bleeding a third time is seldom or never required, because the pulse generally sinks to be low on the third day, or very soon after it, when bleeding must be very prejudicial, as the blood is then in a dissolved state." These probably were the reasons why a before-mentioned author, Dr. Warren, advised " not to bleed at all in this fever." After bleeding, which it is presumed may be proper in Barbadoes, though not in the Havanna, from the difference of the climate, he enters on his second intention of cure, which is to evacuate and carry off as much of the bilious putrid humor as soon and safely as he can. " The great irritation of the stomach, by the putrid bilious humors, which constantly attend this fever, with almost continual reachings and violent vomitings, seems to indicate giving an emetic ; but the coats of the stomach are here so violently stimulated and irritated, and most commonly inflamed, by the acrimony of the putrescent bile, that any emetic, even the most gentle and mild, and in the smallest dose, brings on such an incessant vomiting, that it continues in spite of all remedies till an inflammation and mortification of the stomach comes on, which soon ends in death. Neither," says he, " could I ever find that any antiemetics, fomentations, or any other methods, would very seldom avail and prevent it. Wherefore I have strictly forbid giving any emetics whatever. But as the carrying off those putrid bilious humors, before this putrid acrimony is too much increased by the heat of the fever, or is carried

into

into the blood, is so absolutely necessary, I usually order the patients to drink large draughts of warm water, to which I sometimes add a little simple oxymel, or a little small-green tea, in order to carry off those putrid humors, and they are most commonly very copiously discharged by this means, and the patient much relieved thereby, as I have often with pleasure observed. After the patient has by this means vomited seven, eight or nine times, and discharged a good deal of yellow and blackish bilious matter, as they generally do, and the stomach is very well cleansed, I usually give a grain or grain and an half of Thebaic Extract; and order to take nothing into their stomachs, for two hours after, that they may retain it. If the patient has not a stool or two after drinking the warm water and vomiting, it is necessary to give a gentle purging clyster soon after the vomiting and before the opiate begins to affect the patient. After six or eight hours rest and respite, I order a gentle antiphlogistic and antiseptic purge to be given, in order to carry off as much more of those putrid bilious humors as we possibly can. Though purging in many other fevers may be deemed a bad practice, yet in this fever (as nature indicated it) I have always found it of singular service, and the patient not only greatly relieved by it, but the disease always rendered more moderate and manageable afterwards. Wherefore whenever a painful burning heat in the hypochondres or about the præcordia comes on, I generally give a little manna and tamarinds, which seldom or never fails to carry off a good deal of putrid bilious matter, and that burning pain which it causes with it; wherefore I generally repeat this purging whenever that burning pain returns and
indicates

indicates it, and with the success we can desire. About the third day an extraordinary change takes place, requiring a very different method of treatment from what it did in the first two or three days of the disease. For now every symptom and circumstance evidently shew, that a dissolution of the globules and texture of the blood, and a putrescent, gangrenescent state of the fluids hasten on apace, with all their fatal symptoms. Hence the third and last intention of cure evidently appears, viz. To put a stop to the putrescent diathesis of the fluids, and prevent the gangrenes from coming on. In these circumstances it is necessary that the vis vitæ and momentum of the circulating fluids be increased and kept up, and the most effectual antiseptics given, to put a stop to the putrescent disposition of the fluids, or gangrenes will come on. In these circumstances however the Cort Peru may be thought to be the best medicine, but for reasons which he gives, the Doctor prefers the Rad Serpent V, and says, he has found it the most successful, given in the following form as in the margin.* “ This medicine very rarely fails to sit light and easily on the stomach, even when the saline and antiemetic mixtures will not. Whenever the fever begins to sink too low, we must endeavour to keep it up in a moderate state, by increasing the quantity of the Rad Serp. and Saffron, or by adding some Vinum Croceum or Confect. Cardiac or some such like medicines, till the pulse is raised and the heat equally expanded all over the body. If
the

* R. Rad Serpent Virg. ℥ij. Croci Angl. ℥ss. M. et infund, vase clauso in Aq. Bul. q. s. Per Horam unam ut Col. ℥vj. adde Aq. Menthæ Simp. ℥ij. Vini Maderiens ℥iv Syr. Croci, vel Syr. é Mecon ℥j. Elix. Vitriol acid gut q. s. Ad Gratum acidior Saporem; M. Exhibe Cochl. duo vel tria singulis horis vel bihoris, vel sæpius pro Re nata.

the anxiety, with a burning pain and tenderness of the precordia or hypochondres return, either alone or with a coma or a delirium accompanying it, as is too often the case, and always arises from an increase or collection of those putrid bilious humors, they must be carried off by repeating the antiseptic purge, as before, and the following form is what I have always found to agree the best with most patients, and seldom fails to remove these bad symptoms.* This may be made stronger or weaker, as the strength of the sick requires, and I most commonly find it necessary to repeat this purging every second or third day for two or three times; and sometimes when the symptoms are bad and have not much abated upon taking the first and second purge, I have found it necessary to repeat the gentle purging every day for four or five days successively, and with the desired success too. This method," he says, "has been and may probably be thought by some others too simple and easy, to conquer so violent and formidable a disease. What! only bleed once or twice, and give a little warm water, and two or three simple purges, and this simple julep, to subdue such a terrible disease! without any fine boluses, cordial volatiles and veniatories! But I must tell such persons, that the more simple the method is, if it be but judiciously and fitly adapted to the nature and cause of the disease, it is so much the better, because *contraria contrariis medentur*. When the last stage of the fever is come on, before we are called in, provided that it is not at the very end of it, I have always found that

* R. Mannæ Calab ℥iſſ. or ℥ij. Tamarind Cond ℥j. Tart Vitriol ℥ſs. Solv in Sero Lactis Vino Maderiens per ℥vj. et Cola. Add Tinct. Senæ ℥ſs. Misce divid in tres vel quatuor partes, de quibus capiat Æger, Unam omni hora, donec incipiat purgare.

that this method of *gentle purging* whenever the before-mentioned symptoms indicate it, and a liberal use of the antiseptic medicines in the intervals has been so successful, that I have seen but two patients that have died in this fever during the eight years past, in which I treated it in this manner; and one of them so weak that he could not take a spoonful of any thing, and so near his end that he died about two hours after, without taking any medicine; and the other killed himself by drinking a gallon of cold water in less than three hours time, which struck such a coldness into his whole body that he died; though I have visited several every year, and in some a great many: therefore I take the liberty of recommending this method to others, and wish it might be successful to all.

I have said little of the dietetic part of cure, though it is necessary to say something, especially as their stomachs are generally so very weak and so much irritated by the acrid bile, that they almost reject every thing, and can often retain but very little. Their diet must be thin, light, and in small quantity, and as pleasant, palatable and antiseptic as possible. If the fever be low and the patient faint, I sometimes order him a glass of Old Hock, or old Madeira wine, and find them much better cordials than the Compound Spirits of the shops, and sometimes I order a beverage of water and lemon juice, sugar and Madeira wine, a little and often, to assist the antiseptic medicines, to raise the pulse and keep the fever in a moderate state."

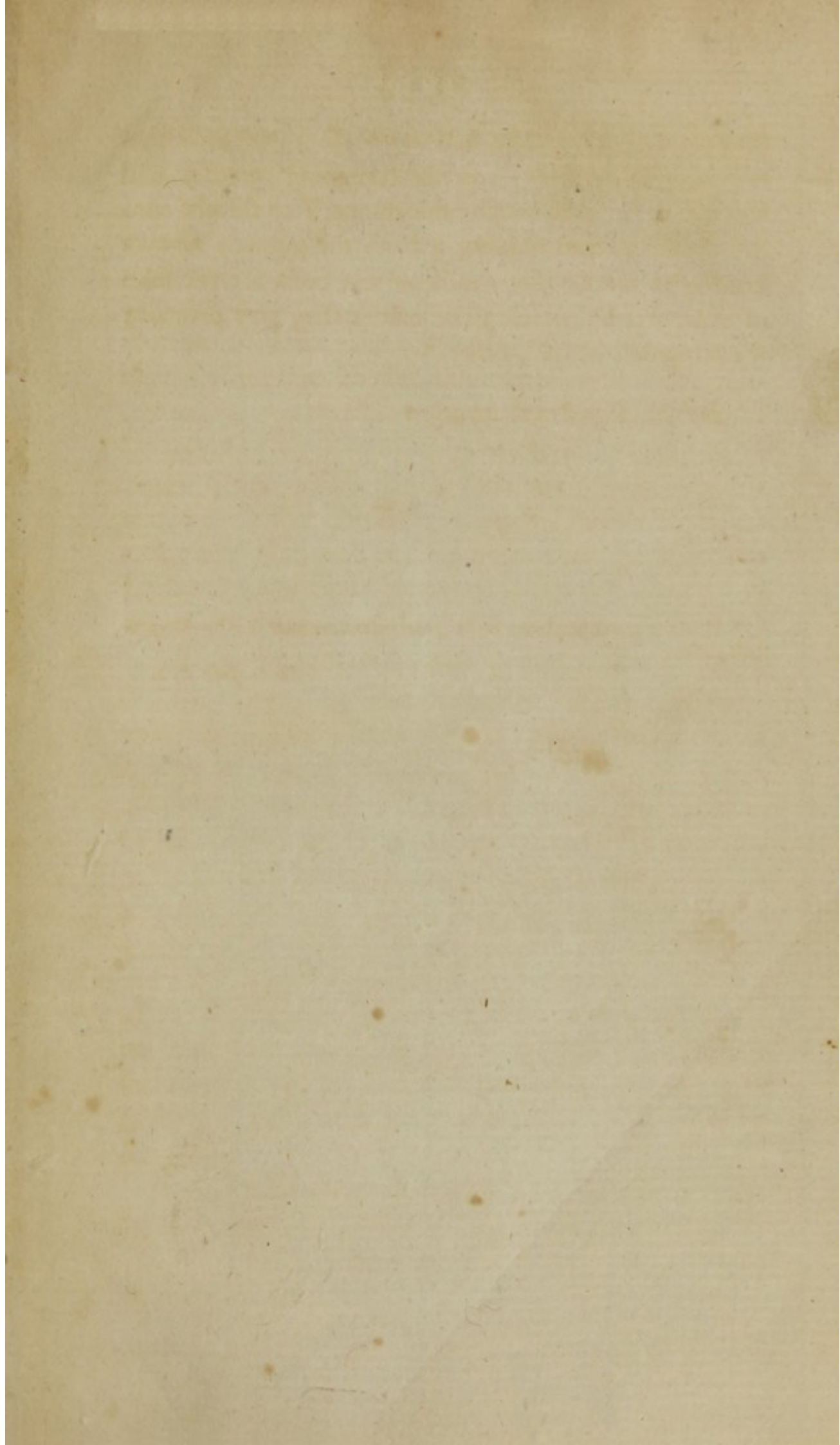
Having now given the most material part of Dr. Hillary's method, which, though it may by some persons

sons be thought tedious and unnecessary, yet as it corresponds so entirely with the foregoing treatise, and appears to be of so much importance, I could not content myself in withholding it from the public ; always bearing in mind, that mankind are born for the sake of man, that by mutual good offices they may promote the happiness of each other.*

Boston, August 3d, 1796.

* Homines autem hominum causâ generatifunt, ut inter se Aliis Alii prodesse possent.

Cic de officiis. L. I.





Med. Hist.

WZ

270

H739s

1796

c.2

NATIONAL LIBRARY
OF MEDICINE