

An inaugural dissertation on the theory and practice of emetics : submitted to the examination of the Rev. John Ewing, S.T.P. provost, the trustees and medical professors of the University of Pennsylvania, for a degree of Doctor of Medicine, on the 8th day of May, 1793 / by Henry Wilkins, of Annapolis Maryland ; member of the American Medical Society.

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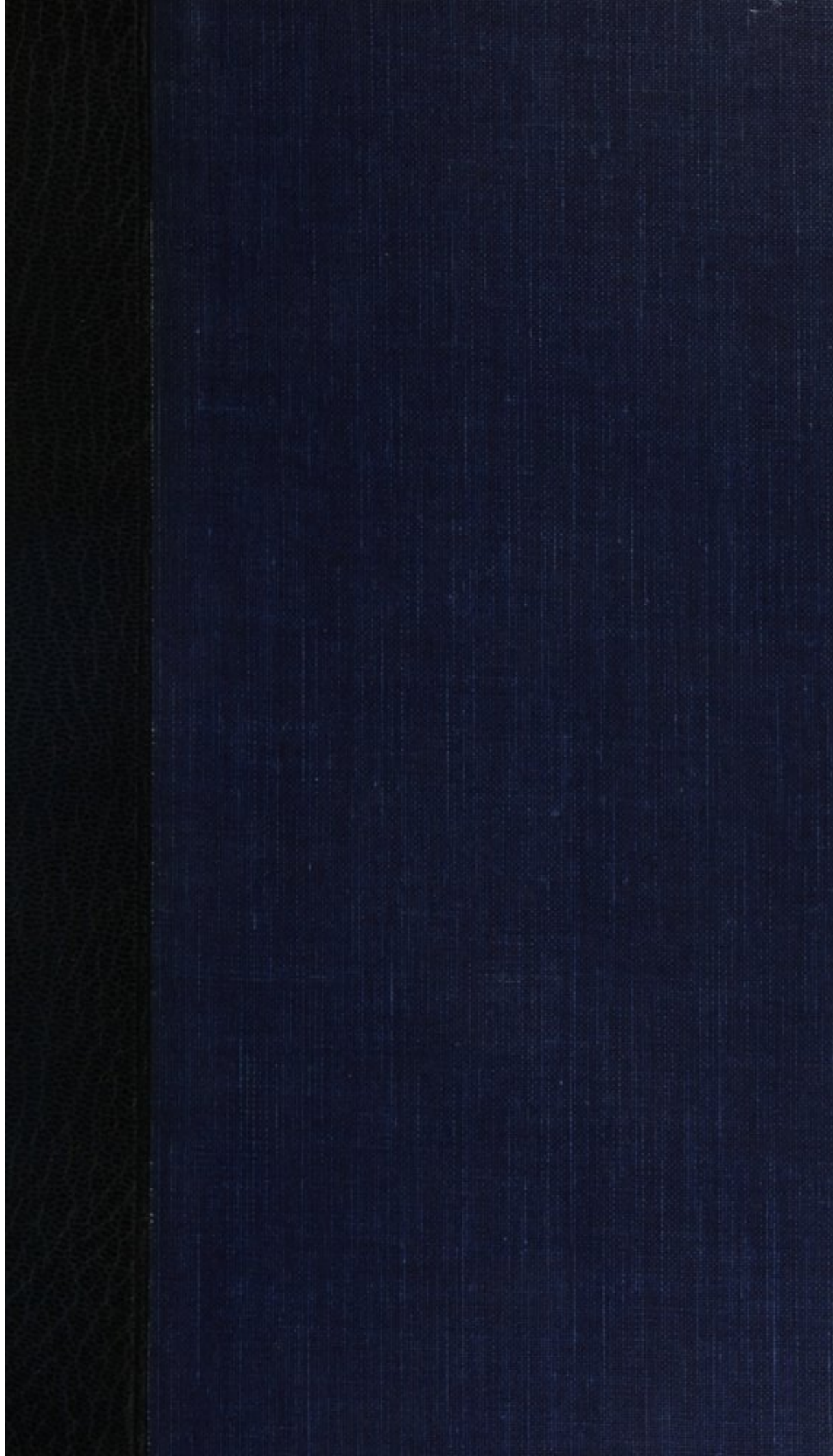
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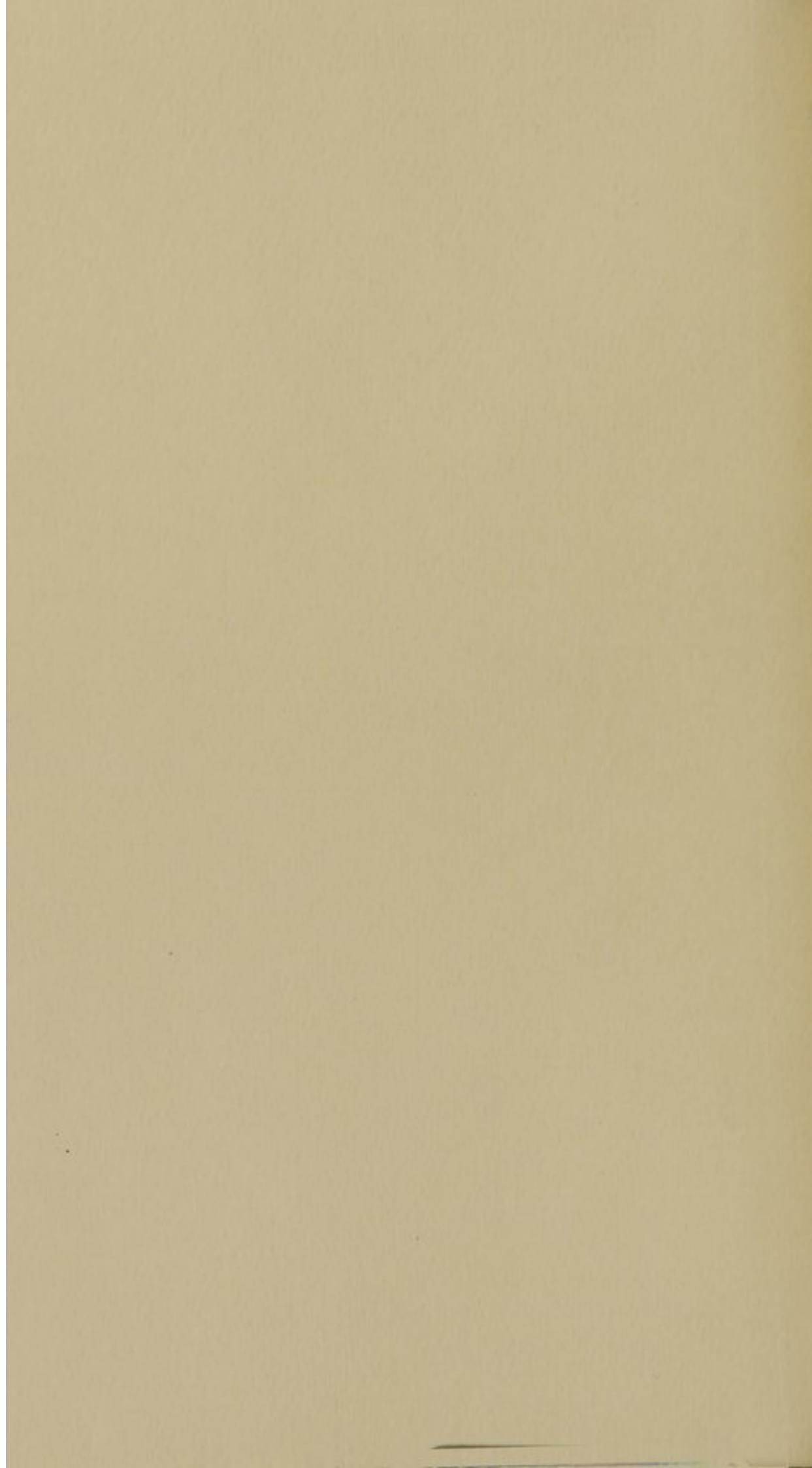
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W. Wilkins (H)

AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION
ON THE
THEORY AND PRACTICE
OF
EMETICS.

SUBMITTED TO THE EXAMINATION OF
THE REV. JOHN EWING, S. T. P. PROVOST,
THE TRUSTEES AND MEDICAL PROFESSORS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA,

For a DEGREE of DOCTOR of MEDICINE,
On the 8th Day of May, 1793.

BY
HENRY WILKINS,
OF ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND—MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN
MEDICAL SOCIETY.

—RES ARDUA, VETUSTIS NOVITATEM
DARE, NOVIS AUCTORITATEM—

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THE THEORY.

TO treat on any subject advantageously, it is not only necessary to begin *a radice*, but also to produce or call forth to our assistance, whatever may appear useful to enlighten our subject, or the conception of our readers; and this is more especially proper, when we better understand the auxiliary, than we do the subject under treatment. For the above reason, I intend, before proceeding to treat of irregular actions, to touch upon the regular actions or physiology of the stomach; having premised as much of the anatomy as our subject requires.

Of the Stomach.

THE stomach is formed by several coats; the internal part may be called its surface, (which is formed by what is called the vilous coat) from its analogy in property to the cutis, the universal surface of our body. Like the cutis, it is a defensive covering to more delicate parts over which it is spread. It is full of papillæ and pores, which transmit or secrete a fluid; and it is spread upon a cellular membrane. Beneath this cellular membrane, muscular fibres run, chiefly in two directions, longitudinally and circularly; these fibres appear to originate from the œsophagus; they form a coat which is enveloped in the manner of the other abdominal viscera by the peritoneum, which forms the last coat of the stomach.

As our subject does not require great accuracy about the shape or situation of the stomach, it will suffice to say, that the stomach is of a curved conical figure, the basis of which lies about the left hypochondrium; and the lowest part (which is not the apex) with the apex in the epigastrium, thus having a diagonal situation.

THE cardia and pylorus, the two orifices of the stomach, are situated on the small or superior arch of the stomach, at about three-fifths of the stomach's length distant from each other. The constant contents of the stomach, viz. air and gastric fluid, together with the necessary ingesta, and the action that these indirectly produce, are the excitors of action proper to the stomach: heat is common to every part.

THE air is a stimulus by its distending power, especially as it antagonizes the pressure around; and if we may judge from the effects of air admitted into wounds, or natural cavities of the body,

body, we shall surely conclude it to be a stimulus in its intrinsic quality.

THE gastric fluid is too small in quantity to give distention to the stomach, but by its quality it gives a stimulus, which is proved by the sensation of hunger depending much upon the secretion of it, as well as by its effects when applied to an ulcer.

OUR ingesta when well chosen (taken aggregately) act as a stimulus both by body and quality, and the action of the stomach serves to perpetuate itself by disturbing the state (viz. rest) which is best suited for the nerves to retain their subtle moveable contents.

THESE powers, though they are not instruments of motion, yet they are as necessary to the producing motion in the stomach, as blood is to the continuance of the action of the heart. In an anonymous essay which I published last fall, on animal motion, I endeavoured to define the property of that principle which we call life in the moving state, and from its property being to condense or contract, and such a power being a sufficient agent for every action in the system, (for every action may be reduced to contraction and relaxation, the latter the effect of an escape of that principle which produced the former) I concluded that the vital principle was the sole agent of motion, and that every other power in the system, as far as they concerned motion, was only for the regulating or conducting the principle of life or motion.

HENCE the action of every part, *ceteris paribus*, is just equal or agreeable to the quantity of vital principle determined into it, as the determination is equal to the stimulus applied.

THESE things I have thought necessary to mention, because, upon such principles I mean to explain my subject. By the operation of the stimuli, a quantity of the vital principle is determined into the coats of the stomach, sufficient for its action, which does not consist in the simple contraction and then a relaxation of the whole stomach, but in what is called a peristaltic motion, which is thus performed: Some of the upper circular fibres contract, and then those inferior to the first, whilst the first give way; during this action in the circulars, the longitudinals contract and then relax again. Such an action is well adapted to expel the contents of the stomach into the intestines.

IN a state of health, when the system is well regulated, I suppose the distribution of the vital principle to the stomach to be exactly answerable to what the animal œconomy can supply, without depriving other organs of their due, and equally well suited to what the stomach requires. With this I finish what I have to say on regular motion, and now proceed to irregular action, or

Vomiting.

THIS appears to be the immediate effect of an overplus of the moving power determined into the muscular coat of the stomach, the

the abdominal muscles, and the diaphragm; with these many other muscles are convulsed also, as those about the throat; but they rather retard than promote vomiting.

By the violent contraction of the fibres of the stomach, the pylorus is perfectly constricted for a while, so as to deny any passage that way, and also hinder the descending motion proper to the stomach and intestines, whilst at the same time the diaphragm is contracted to a plane and the abdominal muscles are drawn into a concavity. By this violent pressure which the stomach now sustains, the contents, if any, are urged so as to overcome the constriction of the œsophagus; this ascending direction of the contents, together with the constriction of the pylorus, effectually invert the natural action, so that now it assists in expelling the contents.

It is somewhat difficult to say how the muscles should be convulsed by medicines applied to the stomach, and especially those in particular which assist in vomiting. But if we consider the great connection of the nervous system, and the mobility of its contents, with the ease that an action can be excited in many parts, especially in the muscular system, it will appear almost impossible to excite a solitary action: and as to these particular muscles it may be observed, that they are some of the most capable of action of any in the body; that their unceasing natural action shew them to have, or require, a large, free, and constant supply of the principle of motion; and lastly, that being both voluntary and involuntary, they must have a very ready, easy determination to them: hence they are not only excited by medicines applied to the stomach, but also by irritations applied to the nostrils, the trachea, or the lungs, as in sneezing and coughing.

THE exhibition of an emetic appears to carry the system through three stages, in the following order:

1. A STATE of languor and listlessness.
2. A STATE of irregular excitement: and
3. A STATE of general, equal, deficient excitement or temporary relaxation.

As I am treating of the Theory, I look upon it to be my duty to give some explanation of the above appearances, which I shall do in the following corresponding numbers.

I. A STATE of perfection in the system does not depend alone upon a sound and sufficient set of solids and fluids, but also upon proper distributions of the moving principle.

THIS proper distribution produces such actions in the animal, vital, and natural organs, as taken together we term Health, from common sense or idea of such a state: As then some parts of our system are more suited for action than others, some more necessary to the immediate welfare of the animal œconomy, and finally, some more dependant than others; it follows of course, that a preternatural distribution of the moving power, without any increase or deficiency of itself or of stimuli, may shew or produce

produce a state of less or more general excitement than is to be observed at the point of health. In the stage under consideration, there appears a less general excitement, even with the addition of stimuli, admitting the emetic to be of the stimulant class.

THE vital principle appears to be with-held from the surface : hence the languor, a common symptom of a relaxed cutis and feeble pulse ; hence the discharge of saliva from the relaxation extending over the tongue and fauces ; and hence the paleness which is dependant upon the action of the extreme arteries ; these having suffered with the cutis, with which they are intimately connected.

II. THIS stage depends upon a profection of the same unnatural distribution of the vital principle as the first stage, but now the stomach, the diaphragm, and the abdominal muscles are carried from a predisposition into excessive action. By the above means, a considerable mechanical pressure is given to the venous system, which keeps up the languishing heart during the effort of vomiting, and immediately that is over gives it a temporary increase of action.

THE redness of the face that attends violent straining is not owing to any increase of action in the arteries at that time, for their action is almost suspended, but to the pressure of the muscles about the neck, hindering the return of blood by the jugular veins.

III. WHEN the stimulus is removed that caused the above states, then the natural stimuli receive each their proportional demands of the moving power, and of consequence a natural distribution is made ; but as excessive action exhausts the principle of motion in an uncommon degree, there will be a proportional deficiency throughout the system : hence the general relaxation and temporary loss of excitement which constitutes the third and last stage.

By attending to the above, we may know how to apply our emetics to more advantage, as some diseases indicate one stage, and not the others to be applied. It is by inducing these different stages, that the use of emetics is so extensive.

Of the Powers that produce Vomiting.

THEY are, 1st. Medicines that act variously on the stomach. 2dly. Mechanical distention and friction. 3dly. Various powers that act primarily upon some other part : this I have added to the two former, rather to make the subject complete, than because it is used.

OF MEDICINES.

IT is very certain that all emetic medicines do not have their effect by an identical *modus operandi*, for medicines of quite opposite qualities are found to have this same effect. Although I am unable to distribute emetic medicines into their proper classes, yet

yet I think there is a sufficient foundation for making three different classes: as, the Irritating,—the Stimulating,—and the Sedative :—on each of which I shall say a few words.

Of the Irritating.

UNDER this class I consider such medicines as determine the vital principle, to the parts which we discover to be principally excited in vomiting, with great celerity, compared with the natural determination: their effects are, quick and powerful vomiting. This determination they may bring about by having an immediate attraction for the vital element, or by having an attraction for the components of the stomach, (as escharotics have) which will not fail to have a powerful effect on the nerves there inserted.

Of the Stimulating.

To this class belong such emetics as have but little more attraction for the vital element than some of the natural stimuli have: they produce active, though not harsh vomiting, at some distance of time after being taken. Such an effect they may have from the same causes as the former, only being milder; especially in the latter case, for these never destroy the solids though they may have a tendency, and thus have considerable power on the nerves.

Of the Sedative.

SUCH medicines have a place in this class which have no direct tendency of themselves to excite the vital principle, yet by an indirect means they produce vomiting: as by relaxing the internal coat of the stomach, and thus allowing the natural stimuli to act upon such parts as they were naturally excluded from, and thus produce an uncommon determination that way. Such medicines may relax by having a power to solve the solids, as for instance, warm water, oils, &c. and probably there are other means which are not so well understood.

Mechanical Distention and Friction.

As motion in all parts of the system exhausts the moving power, it is evident that it also must keep up an afflux of that same power to the different parts.

As that then is the case, it is easily conceived how distention (which in fact is the same operation) should be attended with a like effect, and cause a determination equal to its degree: boluses of water are what we generally apply for the purpose: over-eating acts this way.

FRICTION differs little from distention in its mode. In this the distention affects the whole fibres immediately; in that only the eminentiæ are distended which communicate their action to the

the parts in conjunction. Friction, though it is sometimes applied accidentally to the stomach, yet it seldom or never is applied purposely for vomiting to any other part than to the œsophagus.

Of the various Powers that act primarily on some other Part.

THESE I think may be justly divided into two classes; 1. Such as induce or consist in an evident increase of action in some contiguous, connected or sympathizing part; 2. Such as consist in a defect of action over a large share of the system. Of the first class are inflammations, spasms, or irritations in different parts of the system, which by soliciting an increase of the moving power to themselves, do it also to other parts which being more capable of action, shew the effects more evidently than the primary affected parts; this may be done either by contiguity, or by affecting the nerves leading to the stomach and parts concerned in vomiting.

Of the second class are, great debility, violent shocks, fear, disgust, &c. all of which induce a state of debility over the corporeal system; by which means vomiting is produced, in the same manner, as is done by sedative medicines.

IN such cases as the above, the stomach or the arterial system constantly re-act, as being more suited or capable of re-action than any other parts. With this I conclude what I have to say on the Theory.

THE PRACTICE.

I SHALL begin with the most simple, and probably the most original use of emetics, which is to evacuate such substances as will prove noxious in the stomach. When such a substance has been taken, and it be adviseable to use vomiting, we are to proceed to it immediately.

IF an instantaneous evacuation is required, we had best try friction to the œsophagus with a feather, but if it admits of delay, we may use ipecacuana, which may be given on any substance and with any antidote, without fear of a decomposition. However, there are some cases which require rather more speedy evacuation than ipecacuana is suited to give; in such cases the zincum vitriolatum may frequently be used to advantage.

THE dose of zinc. vit. is from two grains to thirty. The dose of ipecacuana from ten grains to thirty.

II. Inflammatory Fever.

SUCH a fever in its highest degree, uncombined with topical affection, is a rare disorder in this country; and in such cases, probably, emetics might not have a place; but in those of less magnitude, and especially when children or youths are the subjects of it, as is most commonly the case, emetics are proper medicines, and should in general be used with or without bleeding, as the circumstances of the patient's age and degree of affection may direct. For this we have the advice of many eminent practitioners.

ANTIMONIUM tartarizatum is one of the best; and to render its effects permanent and more general, it should be given in doses of about one third of a grain, every eight or ten minutes, and continued till it vomits sufficiently. As the taste of it is disagreeable to some people, it may be dissolved in apple-water, which effectually destroys the taste.

By this medicine, the primæ viæ is excited *ab ore usque ad anum*; the surface is relaxed; and often a permanent sweat is produced, by which a perfect victory is gained over the fever.

III. Putrid Fever.

ALTHOUGH vomiting is frequently spontaneous at the beginning of most putrid fevers, yet it does not contra-indicate emetics; for it is the product of a debilitated primæ viæ, excited by a quantity of offending fordes; to discharge which, excite the stomach to a proper action, and rouse the vital system, emetics are properly suited. They should be given at the commencement of the disease. Only the gentler kinds are to be used, as ipecacuana; vinum ipecac. from a dram to half an ounce, vinum antimoniale, from twenty to one hundred and twenty drops; or a combination of ipecacuana and tartar emetic; as eight grains of the former, with half a grain of the latter; these are seldom or never to be repeated.

IV. Nervous Fever.

THIS fever appears to have a greater claim to obstructions, as a cause, than any other: to remove which, break the peculiar actions which constitute the disorder, and rouse the actions of the system, emetics are well adapted. For this purpose a gentle emetic of ipecacuana is often of service when given in the beginning.

V. Remittent Fever.

IN some cases of this fever it becomes necessary to stop the spontaneous vomiting. In such cases it would not be advisable to exhibit an emetic; but in most cases, where there is only nausea and vomiting that is troublesome from continuance, rather than excess, a gentle emetic, properly administered, will

be found to put a period to it, by evacuating the bile, and remitting the violence of the fever. James's powder, in doses of five or six grains, every twenty minutes, repeated according to events, or sulph. au. ant. in doses of two grains every hour, are such as have proved useful.

VI. Intermittent Fever.

THE stated returns of intermittents, *ad punctum temporis*, clearly discover to us, that an identity in the state of the system, is requisite to their recurrence, and the continuance of them after the removal of the remote causes that induced them, as plainly shew the power that habit has in their returns and continuance. Under these circumstances, I may enquire what promises so fair, and at so little expense to the system, to interrupt that peculiarity, break in upon a wrong habit, and relax the spasm that forms the first stage, as emetics?

REASON and experience both concur in directing the emetic at the accession of the cold stage.

THE antimon. tart. given in the manner directed in II. is the most effectual, and should be preferred except in very irritable stomachs, where ipecacuana will be sufficient.

VII. Cynanche Tonsillaris.

WE should not expect, *a priori*, that emetics would be either useful or admissible in this affection, but experience speaks the contrary. In the beginning is the time of administering the emetic. By it, a free perspiration is opened, upon the obstruction of which the disorder is founded, and by the action of the stomach a determination is made to that, and consequently from the seat of the disorder, whilst the small action of the muscles about the throat is insufficient to counteract the salutary actions of other parts. The emetic should be more or less powerful, and continued, according to the necessity of the case, and the patient's habit.

VIII. Cynanche Trachealis.

THIS is almost peculiar to children, and in some measure, from their inability to discharge the collecting mucous from the trachea. To throw off this, to give the secretions another determination, and to excite the torpid primæ viæ, emetics are so useful and strongly indicated, that many physicians use nothing more. From the great insensibility, powerful and repeated emetics are requisite. Scarce any less than four grains of tartar emetic can be expected to operate sufficiently on a child of two or three years old; and when this is given we may proceed to something else, if requisite. For a second medicine the zincum vitriolatum may

may be used, one grain every fifteen or twenty minutes for four or six times.

IX. Peripneumonia Notha.

DOCTOR Cullen recommends emetics in this disorder. They certainly are indicated to loosen and discharge the tough phlegm with which the patient's lungs are generally oppressed; and they will be useful in putting an end to the nausea with which the stomach is much affected. From the state of patients affected with this disorder, the vomiting should be gentle and of short duration; hence ipecacuana, vin. ipecacuanæ, vin. ant. and oxymel of squills are those in use. The latter is preferred by some, but upon no substantial reason. The dose is from half a dram to two drams, and that of the powder of squills from one to three grains.

X. Gout.

EMETICS are prescribed as an incipient medicine to remove the dyspeptic symptoms, which often return, and are very troublesome to those who have been much afflicted with the gout. The gentle stimulating kinds are such as are used: none answers better than vinum ipecacuanæ.

XI. Scarlatina.

SOME would have this disorder to proceed from the same cause as the cynanche maligna, and it is possible that it may; but it differs from that in symptoms, nearly as much as this does from the cynanche tonsillaris.

By the scarlatina, I mean a disorder that has much more inflammatory action, less putrescency, and a slighter affection of the throat than that affection which constitutes a cynanche maligna. Some have directed bleeding as an incipient prescription, whilst others order the bark immediately; but probably, a better way than either is to begin with a gentle emetic; for the ratio of which I refer to what I have said in III. and VII.

XII. Phthisis Pulmonalis.

THE use of emetics in phthisis is pretty well known. It is only the incipient phthisis that indicates them; and even here they are not always admissible, which is to be directed from a knowledge of the causes. Dr. Reed, who has written on this disorder, speaks highly of them. I cannot adopt his theory of the disorder or the cure; but had rather suppose, that the action of the stomach induced by vomiting, interrupts or suspends the morbid action of the lungs.

IPECACUANA in doses of eight or ten grains repeated several times, is a proper medicine. If it be continued in very long, it will

will be apt to do more injury to the stomach than good to the lungs.

XIII. Menorrhagia.

WHEN this is of the active kind, it is always supported by a particular determination to the affected parts.

IN such cases, emetics in nauseating doses should have a place; as being medicines extremely well suited to take off that determination, and relax the arterial system.

EITHER antimonials or ipecacuana may be used, as the collateral symptoms may indicate one or the other.

XIV. Amenorrhœa.

WHEN this depends upon a checked perspiration, or what is termed taking cold, emetics are proper.

BY them the headach, nausea, sluggishness, and every bad symptom is removed, together with the obstruction on which it depends. Such an emetic should be used as will prove active, and yet not operate rough: as eight grains of ipecacuana with a grain of tartar.

XV. Catarrh.

THERE are two species of catarrh; one proceeding from contagion, usually called *influenza*, the other from uncommon exposure to cold, especially after being heated. The former appears in such different states, that what is requisite in one case would be pernicious in another; that is, with respect to reducing the system. But in all cases emetics may be safely employed at one time or another; and in general they should be the first prescription. I am a witness of their good effects. They perfectly interrupt the morbid secretions or determinations, and they put a period to the most disagreeable symptoms and sensations of the disorder.

IN the Edinburgh commentaries, where emetics are highly spoken of, a combination of the ipecacuana and tartar emetic is recommended. In many cases of common cold they are useful to the same end as above.

HERE some prefer oxymel of squills; but their use does not warrant a better effect than is to be obtained from ipecacuana.

XVI. Dysentery.

IN this disorder, the system labours under a considerable pyrexia, superadded to a topical affection of a part of the intestinal canal; but although that be the case, the stomach is usually in a collapsed state, and hence, in the early state of dysentery, is usually affected with nausea. By giving small doses of emetics, and repeating them according to the necessity, the action of the *primæ viæ* is rendered more equal, and cleared of its offending contents;

contents; whilst the fever, which adds much to the affection, is counteracted, and reduced by the same medicine and at the same time.

THIS practice best suits the beginning of the disease, when it is most plainly indicated.

SOME are in favour with the custom of giving one, two, or three grains of ipecacuana twice a day; while others direct three or four grains of tartar emetic to be dissolved in a quart of warm water, and taken in small portions, so as to be consumed in the course of a day. James's powder in small doses is also a favourite medicine.

XVII. Apoplexy.

EMETICS have been prescribed by some in this disorder, particularly by Dr. Fothergill. It is the apoplexia serosa that they are used in. They must operate by their equalizing properties; and as having such properties, they may have a like good effect in the apoplexia atrabiliaria, and apoplexia cataleptica of Dr. CULLEN. An emetic of quick and considerable action should be thrown down at once; for which end twelve grains of zincum vitriolatum may be given at once, dissolved in a little warm water: or any other proper emetic.

XVIII. Palsy.

THE causes of palsy are numerous; some admit of no removal, others have no indications for such changes as emetics could produce: but there are some few cases that are said to depend upon such obstructions, as are removeable by a proper agitation of the system. In such cases, it will in general be prudent to try the effects of vomiting. To this end, half a dram or a dram of mustard may be given, which promises to give an additional stimulus to that of vomiting, and if its effects are favourable, let it be repeated *pro re nata*.

XIX. Epilepsy.

THERE are some cases of epilepsy, which depend upon a peculiarity of constitution that admits of a repetition of the paroxysm upon very slight changes. The slight changes that the lunar revolution effects, are supposed to be sufficient to excite them. If it is not, it admits of no doubt that they are apt to return at nearly stated periods, and hence when we discover the predisposition, a clear indication is offered to make some change in the system, to interrupt the morbid process, which a smart emetic at that time is found to do, with the advantage of subverting the threatening paroxysm, and doing the system no injury of itself. By this means an opportunity is gained of altering that state of the system upon which the disorder depends,

XX. Chorea.

XX. Chorea.

VOMITS are here prescribed, both to break up that determination of the nervous principle which constitutes the proximate cause of the disorder, and to reduce the system which is laid down as an indication to check the predisposition. The emetic should not be rough, but suited to the age and habit of the patient.

XXI. Asthma.

I HAVE known a gentle emetic, given at the accession of a fit of the asthma, so to interrupt it, that a slight fit of half the usual length was the consequence. It is perfectly safe, and scarce ever should be omitted when the predisposition takes place.

XXII. Dyspnœa.

THERE are several species of dyspnœa where emetics may be useful, and some where they may be hurtful.

THE dyspnœa catarrhalis appears to indicate them more clearly than any of the other species, whilst there is no place for them in the dyspnœa pinguedinosa, the dyspnœa thoracica, or the dyspnœa extrinseca.

XXIII. Hooping Cough.

ALMOST every practitioner prescribes emetics in this complaint, for the ratio of which I refer to what I have said in XX. They should be of the gentler kinds, and repeated frequently. The quantity is to be adjusted to the patient's age.

XXIV. Hysteria.

AN irregularity in the primæ viæ, which depends upon a collapsed state of it, appears to be the foundation of hysteric symptoms. To put an end to them speedily is a desirable object; and I am informed from good authority, that a dose of ipecacuana, or any other suitable emetic, will have that effect. As white vitriol is a proper medicine in these cases, exclusive of its emetic property, and also acts very speedily as an emetic, it is probable that a few grains may be better adapted to this case than any other emetic.

XXV. Mania.

EMETICS have been prescribed in mania, with benefit. It is the mania corporea of Dr. CULLEN that indicates them. It is certain that mania sometimes alternates with other affections of the system; and hence it is possible that it may yield to an instituted inoffensive action.

XXVI. Dropsy.

XXVI. Dropsy.

FROM the success of Dr. HOME (vide Clin. Exp.) in several cases of anasarca hydrothorax and ascites, with emetics, they are well worthy of a trial. The peculiar circumstances of the case are to direct us in the use of them.

No benefit can be expected in a case of hydatides; nor can we hope for much more in that species termed hydrops sacculus. Emetics give a determination of action and secretion to the stomach, and thus at once may aim at the cause, (if that be excess of action) and the disorder. Dr. HOME used squills, but they may not be better than ipecacuana.

XXVII. Jaundice.

IN that species of jaundice called *icterus calculosus*, it is probable that emetics may be often serviceable to expel the calculus from the duct into the duodenum; but in case they do not effect that, they may prove hurtful by urging the calculus into or along the duct, faster than the duct can yield, and thus bring on an inflammation, to the great disadvantage of the patient. As we can never know, *a priori*, the size of the obstruction, we shall always be at some risk; and therefore should try only the gentle emetics.

XXVIII. Hernia Humoralis.

MR. FALC, who has written exceedingly well on the gonorrhœa and its attendants, recommends in this case an emetic of ipecacuana and calomel, as a speedy and sure relief. Many other physicians have also recommended them. Swedeaur has shewn, that it will alternate with the affection of the urethra, and why may it not yield to any other action?

XXIX. Ulcers.

THE blue vitriol was some time past used among the common people as an universal nostrum. It was tried for old ulcers, and certainly proved useful in some desperate cases. They took from ten to eighteen grains at a dose; and from their own information given me, it always proved a gentle emetic, vomiting without producing the common antecedent nausea, as other emetics. However, I should never recommend above two or three grains. In venereal ulcers the *gratiola* has been greatly praised, which generally vomited: Its dose is from ten to thirty grains.

XXX. Anorexia.

IN the anorexia humoralis, as well as in the anorexia atonica, emetics are an excellent remedy; their use is so well known, that the patients generally propose the medicine themselves: a gentle emetic

emetic is sufficient. By the action of vomiting, the stomach regains its due action; the loss of which is the foundation of the complaint.

HERE I beg leave, to prevent seeming contradiction, to insert what appears to be a law in animal motion; which is, that when any organ below a due excitement, not depending upon a primary laxity of the solids, is thrown into a considerable action, it usually retains a considerable share of action compared with what it did before; but when an organ possessing its proper action is preternaturally excited, it is left in a state of lower excitement than natural, provided it has not been carried to an inflammation or spasm.

WITH this I choose to conclude my THESIS, lest I fall into the common error of straining the subject; trusting, that I have omitted few cases where emetics are plainly indicated; or, where though not plainly indicated, yet have been found useful from experience.

