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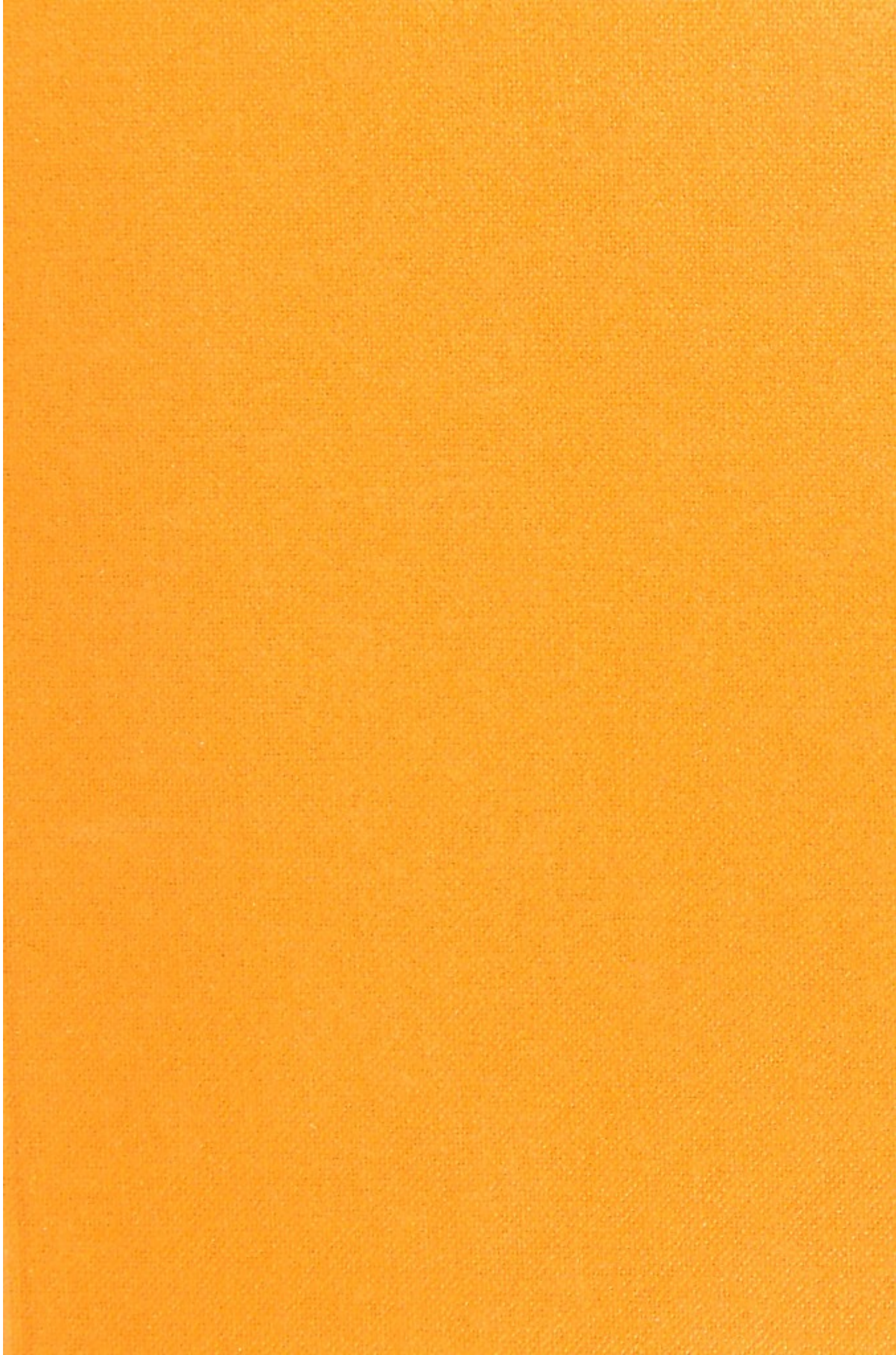
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Medical sketches. 1818.

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MEDICAL SKETCHES,

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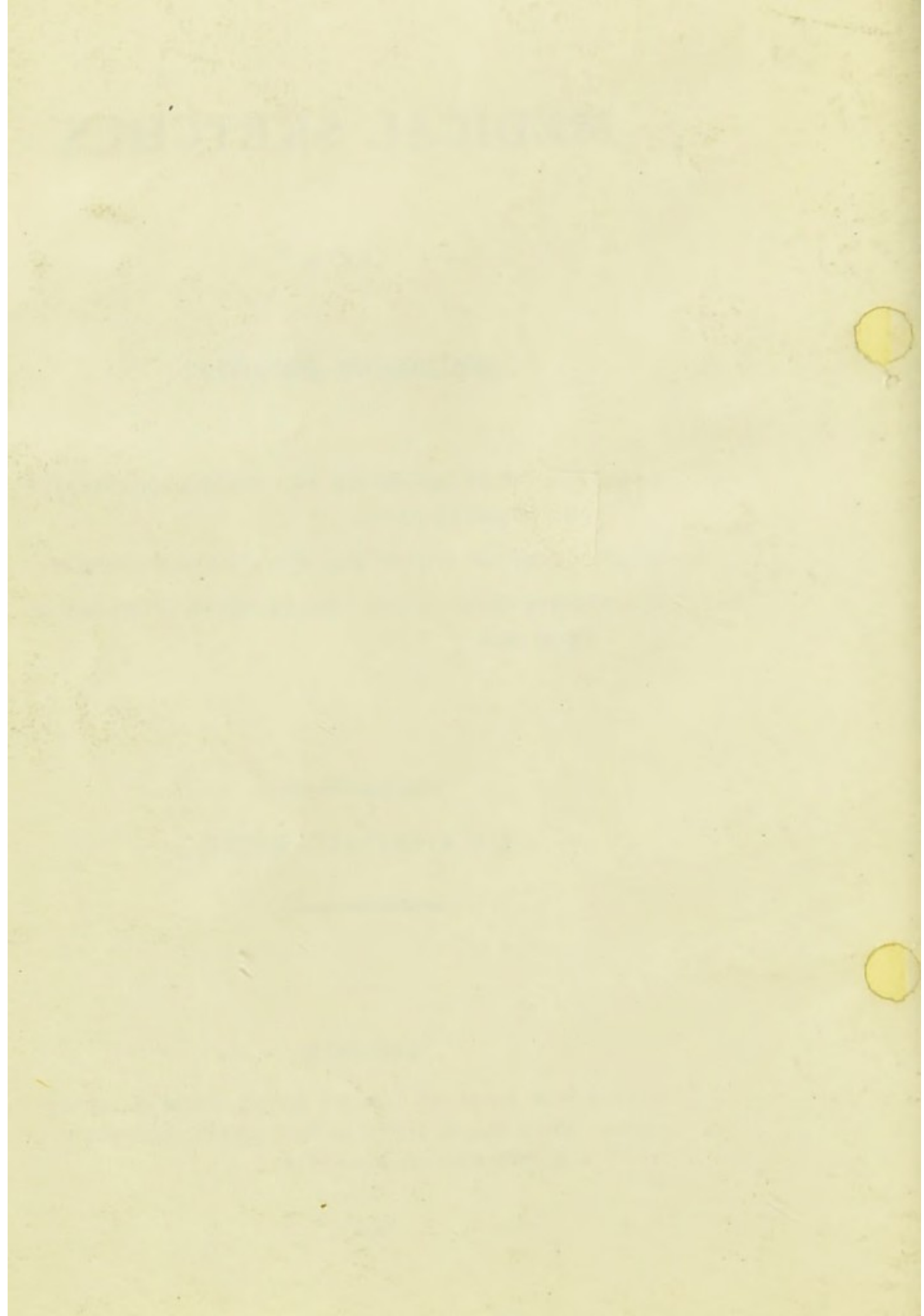
- I.—ON THE USE OF HELLEBORE, AS A REMEDY FOR INSANITY
AND OTHER DISEASES.
- II.—OF *COLCHICUM AUTUMNALE*, AND ITS USE IN MEDICINE.
- III.—OBSERVATIONS ON THE SUDDEN DEATH OF WOMEN IN
CHILD-BED.

BY GEORGE KERR.

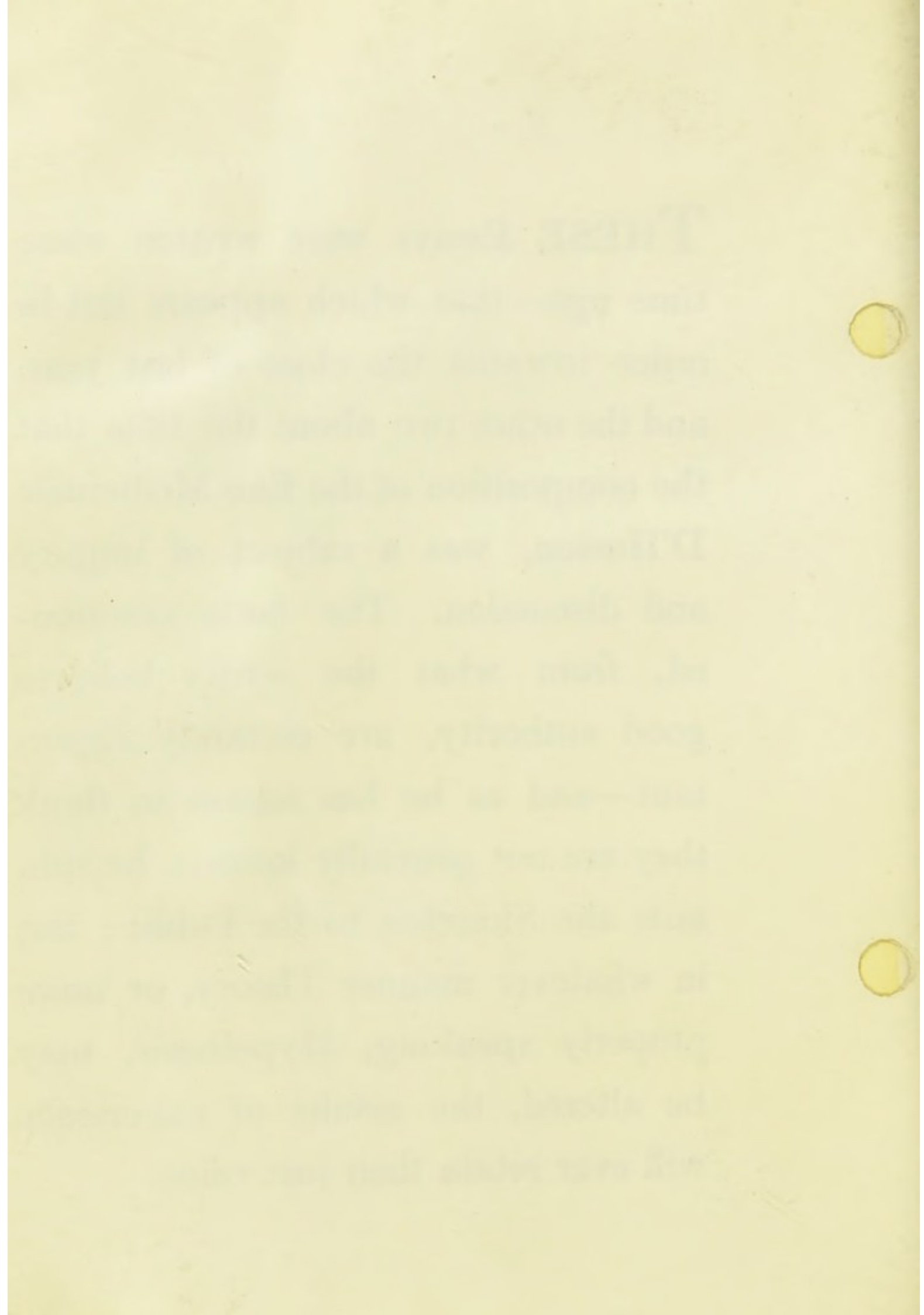
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1818.



THESE Essays were written some time ago—that which appears last in order towards the close of last year, and the other two about the time that the composition of the Eau Medicinale D'Husson, was a subject of inquiry and discussion. The facts mentioned, from what the writer believes good authority, are certainly important—and as he has reason to think they are not generally known, he submits the Sketches to the Public ; for, in whatever manner Theory, or more properly speaking, Hypothesis, may be altered, the results of experience will ever retain their just value.



ERRATA.

To be corrected with the Pen.

- P. 10, l. 6, for ὀλευκος read ὁ λευκος.
l. 7, for καδαρληγιων read κατάρληγιων.
l. 9, for πρηwei read πρησσει.
l. 11, for Θαλαων κρηων read Θαλασσα κρητσον.
l. 12, for τιπει και υγιειας read τη περ και υγιειας.
11, l. 8, for νισων read νισων.
l. 12, for εισω read εισω—for πρηwei read πρησσει.
12, l. 2, from bottom, for Ælius read Ætius—idem p. 13, l. 10.
14, l. 6, for continued upon read ventured upon.
30, l. 6, for Lenis read Servis.
53, l. 4, from bottom, for ιδιι read ισδιι.
65, l. 12, for acid read acrid.

TABLE

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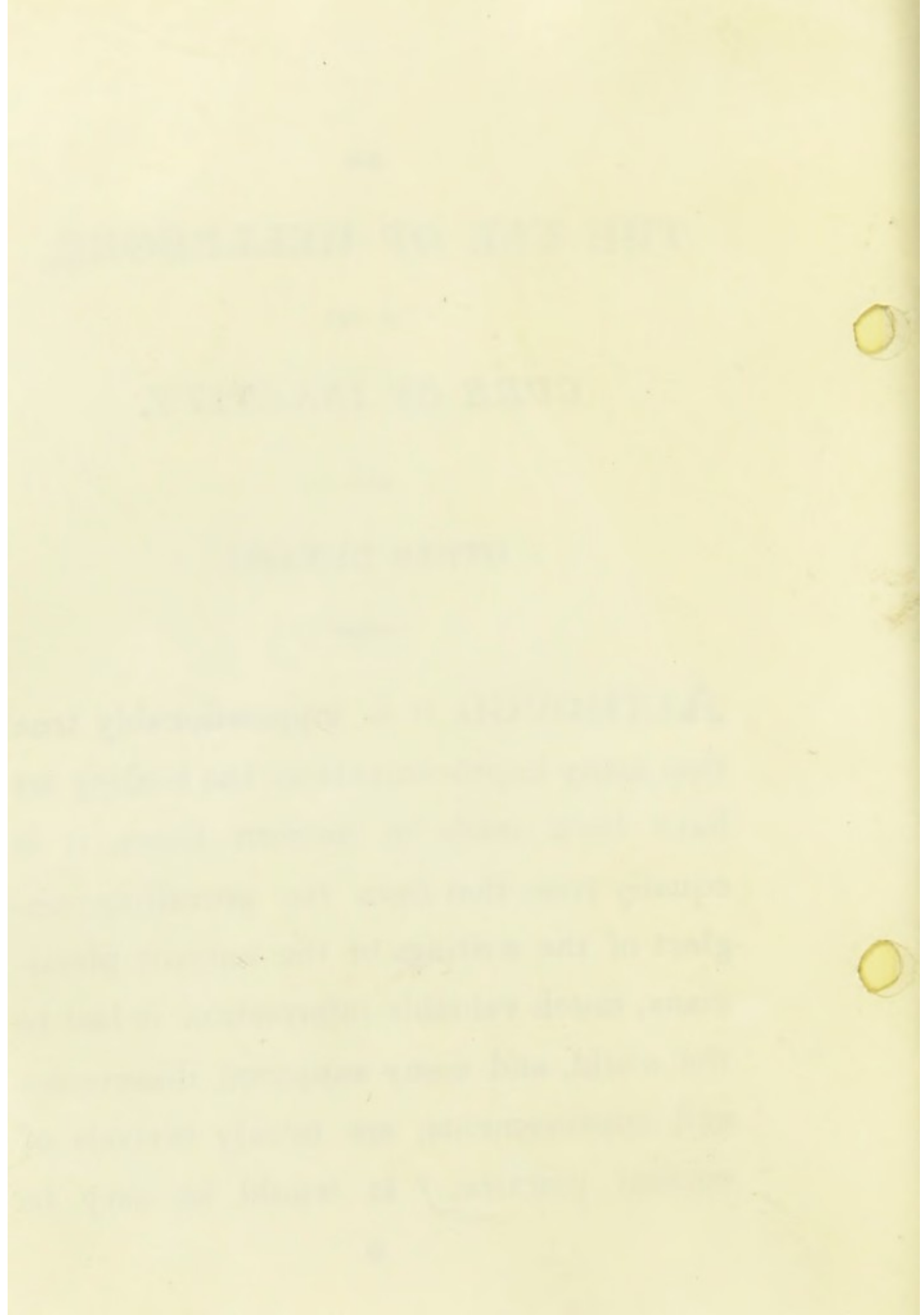
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ON
THE USE OF HELLEBORE,
IN THE
CURE OF INSANITY,
AND
OTHER DISEASES.

ALTHOUGH it is unquestionably true that many improvements in the healing art have been made in modern times, it is equally true, that from the prevailing neglect of the writings of the ancient physicians, much valuable information is lost to the world, and many supposed discoveries and improvements, are merely revivals of ancient practice. / It would be easy to



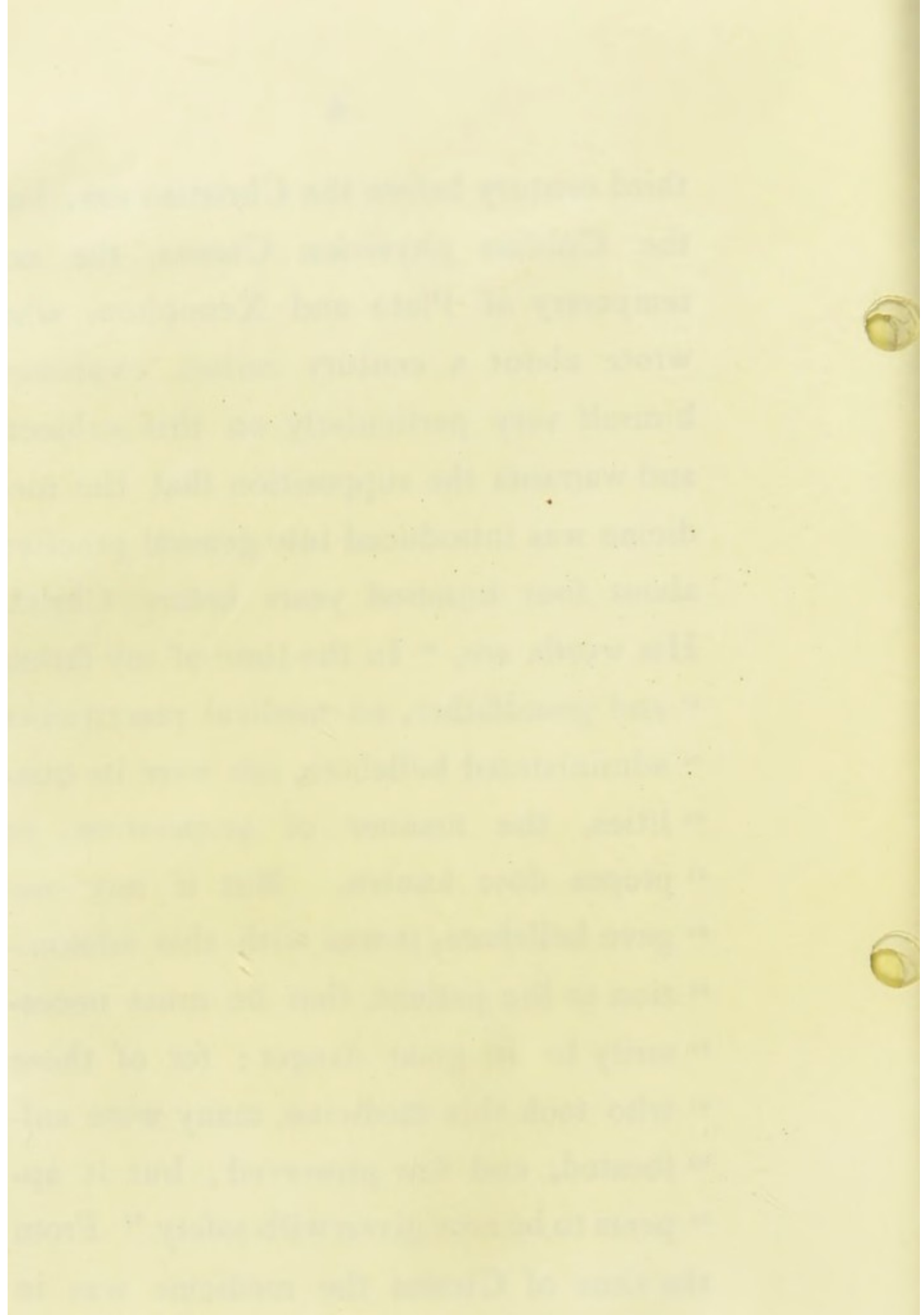
- point out many instances, both in medicine and surgery, in which the approved and recently adopted practice of the present day exactly coincides with the ancient rules; but the purpose of this Essay is to draw the public attention to the use of one remedy, once most successfully used, but now fallen into disuse, and even considered as a poison; and that is, Hellebore, as applied for the cure of Insanity, and other diseases. Not only are we assured of the efficacy of this Medicine, by the most respectable medical writers of antiquity, but we find that efficacy proverbially noticed by the poets and historians of Greece and Rome, and notwithstanding the discontinuance of its use, allusions to its once highly-estimated virtues occur in the writings of the moderns. *O Caput hellebore dignum!* and *ad Corcyram!* were

point not only to the fact that the
and to the fact that the
interests of the
they cannot be reconciled with the
rules; but the purpose of the law is to
show the public attention to the fact of
factors, and that the law is not
now being into force, and that the
as a person, and that is the
pled for the fact of the law, and other
the law. The law is not
theory of the law, by the fact of
specific moral values as well as
we find that the law is not
by the fact of the law, and that
the law, and notwithstanding the fact
nature of the law, the law is not
highly estimated value of the
wishes of the law, and that the
the law, and that the law is not

familiar terms of reproach when the sentiments uttered appeared unreasonable, and were equivalent to the expression "the man is mad." Indeed, of all other remedies mentioned by the ancient physicians, *Veratrum* appears to have been the most generally used in their most obstinate cases of mania, melancholia, gout, and elephantiasis, and its manner of exhibition is presumed by Hippocrates to be so well known that he does not describe it; but shortly says, that in certain cases [$\epsilon\lambda\lambda\epsilon\beta\rho\iota\zeta\epsilon\omega$ $\chi\epsilon\eta$], "recourse must be had to a course of hellebore," the frequentative verb strictly implying the repeated use of the remedy.

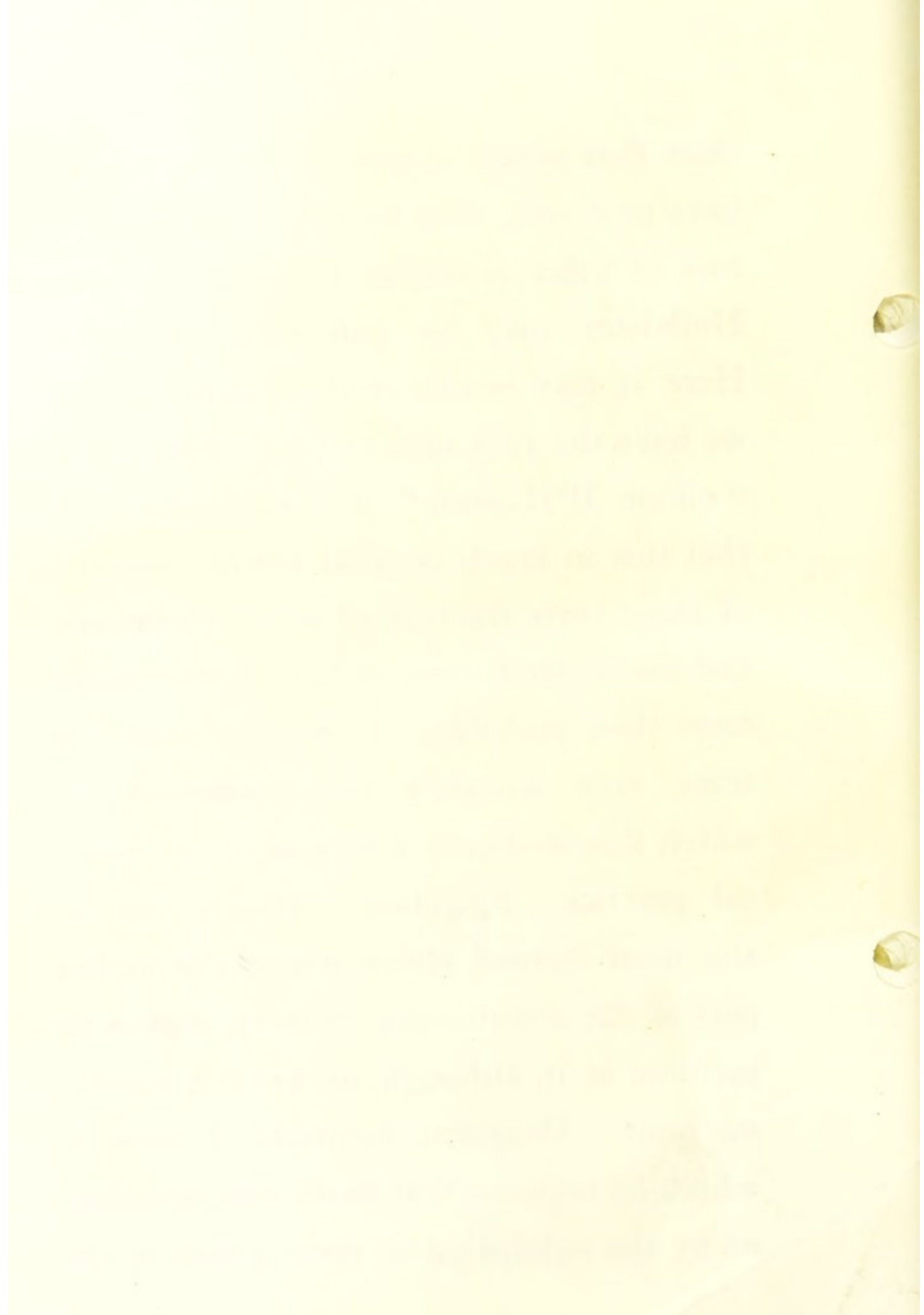
At what particular period this medicine was introduced into practice, we do not find in the writings of Hippocrates, who lived in the time of Artaxerxes, in the

third century before the Christian era; but the Cnidian physician Ctesias, the contemporary of Plato and Xenophon, who wrote about a century earlier, expresses himself very particularly on this subject, and warrants the supposition that the medicine was introduced into general practice about four hundred years before Christ. His words are, “ In the time of my father
“ and grandfather, no medical practitioner
“ administered hellebore, nor were its qualities, the manner of preparation, or
“ proper dose known. But if any one
“ gave hellebore, it was with this admonition to the patient, that he must necessarily be in great danger; for of those
“ who took this medicine, many were suffocated, and few preserved; but it appears to be now given with safety.” From the time of Ctesias the medicine was in



general use among the Greek, Roman and Eastern physicians for many centuries ; yet, as in all ages medical men have in some things differed in opinion, we find Alexander Trallianus, who lived long before the time, representing it as dangerous, and recommending as a substitute in the cure of melancholy madness, the Lapis Armeniacus. The commentator on Dioscorides Matthiolus, who lived about the middle of the sixteenth century, briefly noticing the dangers apprehended from the use of this remedy, adds, “ Cæterum albi
 “ quoque Hellebori dilutum exhibuimus
 “ quibusdam Melancholicis, magno sane
 “ successu, nullo tamen ægrotantium in-
 “ commodo, nullaque cum noxa.” I may have been thus successful, he goes on to say, because the Hellebore growing in the neighbourhood of Trent, may be milder

than that raised in hotter climates ; but I have no doubt, that by the proper admixture of other remedies, the very strongest Hellebore may be safely administered. Here it may be observed in passing, that we have the very idea of the “Eau Medicinale D’Husson,” if it be really true, that this so much boasted remedy consists of three parts tincture of white Hellebore, and one of laudanum, as Mr. Moore thinks more than probable. It is unnecessary to trace very minutely the gradations by which this medicine disappeared in medical practice. Spigelius, certainly one of the most learned physicians of the earlier part of the seventeenth century, makes no mention of it, although he wrote a treatise on gout. Morgagni mentions a case in which he believes that death was occasioned by the exhibition of three grains of the



powder ; and Chomel*, who wrote a short treatise on medical plants in the time of Louis XIV. says, that white Hellebore is used as a purgative for *horses*, but is too violent in its operation for internal use in medicine. He however adds, that an infusion in wine has been given with good effects in certain cases of mania. In our later dispensatories its external use in certain eruptions, is mentioned, but no formula is given, as far as I have observed, for its internal use.

If, then, we would know the manner of

* “ Au rapport de Tragus l’Ellebore blanc infuse vingt-quatre heures dans le vin, ou dans l’oxymel, et seche ensuit, puis donne a demi dragme, dans un verre de vin blanc, peut-etre utile a Maniaques, et a ceux qui sont sujets aux vapeurs, hypochondriaques.”

exhibition of this very powerful medicine, we must recur to the writers who assure us that they used it successfully ; and these are the elder Greek physicians, for the Arabians are but their translators on this subject ; and Celsus borrowed from them almost every thing valuable in his work, and would probably have given the same advice to medical students as Horace gives to young poets,—

Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturna versate manû, versate diurna.

Hippocrates, as before mentioned, although he recommends the medicine, gives no particular directions for its exhibition ; nor has Galen, his great successor, supplied the deficiency. Aretæus, of whom it may be justly said, that had not his book descended to us in a mutilated state, he

exhibition of the very powerful tendency
we must turn to the writer who shows us
that they need it intensely; and then
and the other Great physician, for the
diseases are not their specialty as the
subject; and I have borrowed from them
almost every thing valuable in his work,
and would probably have given the same
advice to medical students as I have given
to young men.

THE PHYSICIAN'S DUTY
TO HIS PATIENT

Hippocrates, as before mentioned, al-
though he recommended the physician to
no particular diet, he did not say
not to eat, but he gave many directions
the physician. A man of a weak
he says that he had not the least
wounded he was in a very short time.

would have been the most valuable of all the Greek writers on medicine, describes the cases in which this remedy ought to be used, but descends not to the description of the manner of exhibition, as supposing it well known ; and his book, as we have it, concludes with a beautiful eulogium on its virtues. He had before frequently mentioned this medicine as the remedy of all others the most to be depended upon in gout (και γαρ τοιςι ποδαγρικοιςι ελλεβορος ΤΟ ΜΕΤΑ ΑΚΟΣ) ; and in several other formidable distempers ; and he is finally describing the cure of elephantiasis, a disease, which in his time, as well as now, was with the greatest difficulty to be overcome ; and after proposing many remedies, he at length comes, as to the most powerful of all, to the exhibition of Hellebore ; recommending the

would have been the most valuable of all
the lives which are sacrificed for the
the cause in which the country might
be saved, but demands not in the least
the aid of the government of education, as
being a well known, and his book, as
have it combined with a beautiful
form in its nature. It had before
itself mentioned the condition of the
country at all times the same as
dependent upon in fact (as you are
informed) (as you are informed) (as
in several other countries the same
and he is finally describing the same
elements, a theory which is the same
as well as now, and with the present
difficulty to be overcome, and after
going many times to the length of
as to the most powerful of all in the
history of education, and the

white as an emetic, the black as a purgative. Lest it should be supposed, however, that he had recommended this medicine merely as an emetic, producing no other effect beyond the evacuation of the stomach, he adds, και εστι ὀλευκον (ελλεβορον) οὐκ εμετηριον μόνον, αλλα και ξυμπαύλων ὁμα καθαρτηριων ὁ δυνάτωλας, ε τω πληθει και τη ποιικιλίη της εκκριοις τοδε γαρ και χολερη πρησει· εδε ενλασει και βιη τησι επι τοισι εμέλοισι· ες τοδε γαρ ναύτη και θαλαων κρηων· αλλα δυναμι και ποιότητι εστι φαυλη τεπερ και υγιειας της καμνονίας ποιει, και επ' ολιγη τη καθαροι και επι σμικρη τη ενλασι.

And white Hellebore is not to be considered merely as an emetic ; but also of all other cathartics put together the most powerful, not from the quantity or variety of the matter evacuated, for this is effected by cholera ; nor by the violence of its action in producing vomiting, for sea sick-

which is an essential, the blood as a pump-
 ing force. But it should be repeated, how-
 ever, that the bad management of the heart
 can merely be an indirect producing of
 other effects beyond the extension of the
 disease. In other words, the heart (as a pump)
 is the primary cause, and the extension of the
 disease is the effect. It is not the heart as a pump
 that is the cause of the disease, but the
 extension of the disease as a result of the
 heart's failure. The heart is the cause of the
 disease, and the extension of the disease is the
 effect. The heart is the cause of the disease,
 and the extension of the disease is the effect.

And while the blood is not a pump, it is
 not merely an essential; but also of all
 other causes, not together the heart
 is the cause of the disease, but the
 extension of the disease is the effect. The
 heart is the cause of the disease, and the
 extension of the disease is the effect.

ness is excellent in that respect ; but by its own power and excellent specific quality ; for by that it restores health to the sick, and that with but little evacuation and slight retching.

Then follows the more emphatical part of the eloge in language highly poetical :
 Ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντων τῶν χρονίων νοσῶν ἐς ρίζαν ἰδρυ-
 μένων ἢν ἀπαυδῆσῃ ταλοῖσθα ἀκεᾶ, τοδὲ μόνον
 ἰήτηριον. Πυρὶ ἱκελὸν γὰρ ἐς δυνάμιν λευκῷ ἐλλε-
 βορῷ, καὶ ὅτι περπύρ ἐργαζέσθαι ἐκκαΐον, τὰδὲ πλεον
 ἐλλεβορῷ εἰὼ παρεκθεῶν ὥρηται, εὐπνοίαν μὲν ἐκ
 δυσπνοίας, ἐξ ἀχροίας δὲ εὐχροΐαν, καὶ ἀπο σκελείης
 εὐσαρκίην.

“ But farther, of all inveterate chronic
 “ diseases, if other remedies have failed,
 “ this only is to be depended upon for cure.
 “ For in power white Hellebore is like

“ unto fire ; and whatever the fire operates
 “ by burning out, Hellebore, by pervading
 “ every inward part, does still more effec-
 “ tually, producing free respiration where
 “ it was difficult, a healthy complexion for
 “ paleness, and the healthy fulness of body
 “ in place of emaciation.”

This passage, from the most learned medical writer of antiquity, is given at length, as the testimony of a man worthy of all credit, that the remedy was of all others known to him the most efficacious, and that it had been in his time found successful, when all other remedies had failed.

The writers who particularly mention the mode in which it was administered by the ancients, are Oribasius and Ælius, of the third century, and Paulus Ægineta,

supposed to be of the seventh, when the medicine had been in common use for nearly a thousand years. } Of these writers Oribasius gives the fullest account, and his work is not only valuable for what it contains describing his own practice, but as a collection containing the practice and formulæ of other distinguished physicians, whose writings have not come down to our times. From Oribasius, Ælius, Paulus Ægineta, and succeeding writers copy, and it is believed that until the medicine was discontinued in practice, no improvements or even alterations were made in the manner of exhibition which he so minutely describes.

He commences his treatise on the exhibition of Hellebore, with a description from Archigenes of the manner in which

supposed to be of the seventh century, and the
 evidence that there is evidence that the
 text is the same as the text of the
 Othman gives the other names and the
 work is not only written in the same
 form describing the same person, but as a
 collection containing the names and the
 names of other distinguished physicians
 whose writings have not been known to us
 since. From this it is evident that the
 history and the names of the
 and it is believed that the text of the
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 names of the physicians who were in the
 names of physicians which is not only
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The manuscript is written in the
 library of the library, and a
 from the library of the library.

the patient is to be prepared who is about to use a remedy so powerful ; and this preparation consists in repeated evacuations by vomiting and purging after stated intervals, during twenty days, and then the use of Hellebore may be continued upon, provided the patient possesses sufficient strength of body, and firmness of mind,—that is supposing the medicine to be administered to a patient, not a maniac. Then follow many rules concerning the diet proper for those about to take Hellebore, and this ought to consist chiefly of vegetables of easy digestion, and having a tendency to move the bowels. Thereafter vomiting is to be excited by the acrid radish, as an immediate preparative for the most powerful medicine of all ;—and this, says he, will teach what is to be expected from Hellebore—for radish “ *morsus excitat quandoque*

“ animi defectiones—quandoque etiam gut-
 “ turis angustias parit.” The dose he pre-
 scribes appears very formidable—not less
 than a *pound*, nor more than a *pound and a*
half; and this to be taken after having taken
 a little food, and drank some water. There
 can be no doubt that such a dose, of our
 acrid radish, in common use as a condiment,
 would excite the violent symptoms just
 mentioned; but there is some doubt with
 regard to the part of the plant to be used.
 “ Acres autem raphanas et teneros esse oportet—
 “ sique dulciores sint, caulem capere
 “ oportebit, et cum eo etiam pars foliorum,
 “ quæ tenerrima sint, et transversa.” The
 intention evidently was to produce full and
 more violent vomiting by this acrid vegetable,
 as a preparative for the still more
 violent operation of Hellebore, and although
 there appears something indistinct in the

directions for its preparation and use ; there can be no doubt that by cautious trials, the effect desired may be produced at the present day as successfully as in former times. From the writings of the same author Archigenes, rules are given for choosing the Hellebore proper for medical use. That from Mount Oeta is preferred—next that produced in Galatia, and if these cannot be obtained, the Sicilian is recommended.

The marks by which good Hellebore is to be distinguished, generally are a fair white colour, not approaching to livid, or having any dark spots, and when broken, no dust ought to appear, but a smooth and very white fracture. When taken into the mouth, it ought not to be immediately felt hot and acrid, but at first of a sweetish taste, thereafter gradually becoming more stimu-

direction for the preparation of the
and be no doubt that by constant trials the
effect desired may be produced at the pre-
sent day as successfully as in former times.
From the writings of the same author
A religious writer has given the following in-
struction: "The patient may be treated with
from 10 to 15 grains of powder—more if
produced in 24 hours, and if these fail
in obtaining the result is recommended."

The main object of the treatment is to
be distinguished, generally as a red
color, not approaching to black or having
any dark spots, and when broken, as that
ought to appear, but a smooth and very
white surface. When taken into the
mouth, it ought not to be immediately left
but not held, but at first of a sweetish taste,
that has gradually becoming more bitter.

lant, and provoking a great flow of saliva, and that frequently attended with vomiting.

The preparation of Hellebore for exhibition is thus described from Herodotus, who says, that it may be used without any considerable danger.—A pound of Hellebore is to be macerated for three days in six hemina of water, thereafter a decoction is to be made over a slow fire, till a third part of the water is evaporated, when the Hellebore is to be expressed; then we add two hemina of honey to the decoction, and again replace it over the fire, and continue the decoction until it does not adhere to whatever may be immersed—*donec non inquinet*. Of this preparation we give to those, who do not stand in need of the more violent operation of the medicine, *cochlearia duo*;

but not possessing a great deal of culture
and that frequently attended with some
ing

The proposition of William Lloyd
that is thus described from Lloyd's own
and that it may be well to say that
certainly danger — a kind of Lloyd's
to be considered for the purpose of a
of error, therefore a decision is to be
made over a few days, and a final vote of the
water is required, when the Lloyd's
is to be proposed: that we will now be
aimed at being in the direction of the
region it over the Lloyd's and contains the
demonstrated that it does not affect in what
any way be improved — does not require
? The proposition is given to Lloyd, who
do not stand in need of the Lloyd's

but to the robust the quantity of a quarter cyathus, *ad mystri magnitudinem*.

Here it is necessary to attend to the quantities ordered, and to reduce them as nearly as we can to the measures of the present day. The *libra* is certainly twelve ounces; the *hemina*, although frequently termed a pint, is in fact but three-fourths of the quantity, or nine ounces, or according to others *ten*; the *cochleare* is the twelfth part of the cyathus, which contained an ounce, five drachms, and two scruples; and the *mystrum* the fourth part of a cyathus, or ten scruples five grains.

Supposing then that we were at the present day to order a preparation of Hellebore, according to the above directions, the formula would stand nearly thus:

but as the subject the quantity of a quantity
of others, and might be regarded as

There it is necessary to attempt to the
quantity of others, and to reduce them to
quantity as we can in the measure of the
quantity of. The idea is certainly not
quantity; the quantity, although the quantity
quantity is not, it is not but the quantity of
the quantity, or the quantity, or quantity
to others as, the quantity of the quantity
part of the quantity, which quantity is
quantity the quantity, and the quantity, and
the quantity the quantity part of a quantity,
or the quantity the quantity.

Supposing then that we were at the part
and that we were a quantity of the quantity,
quantity is the quantity the quantity.

& Radicis veratri infrustulas scissi, lb i.

Aq. fontanæ - - - lb v.

Macera per dies tres—deinde leni

igne imposito et decoque ad - lb iii. ʒ iv.

Veratrum deinde exprimendum—

et addendum decocto mellis

despumati - - - lb i. ʒ viii.

et iterum decoque—*donec non inquinet* :

Capiat æger—grana septemdecem—vel si robustior sit, ad—ʒ ii. gr. xi.—Hellebore in this form, says Herodotus, may be exhibited with perfect safety.

Another prescription, nearly resembling this, is given by Archigenes :

& Radicis veratri ramenta - - lb i.

Aq. fontan. sextarios tres - - lb v.

Triduo macerandum—tum co-

quendum donec tres sextarii - lb ii. ʒ iv.

The first of these is the fact that the

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relinquantur, postea diligenter expressas vergulas abjicere oportet. Tres deinde libræ mellis reliquæ addendæ, et coquendum donec ad eclegmatis consistentiam redigatur, tum in vase vitreo aut argenteo reponendum, adhibita curâ ne perspiretur.

The medicine however was frequently administered in substance ; finely cut down, the same author says that two drachms may be given for the greatest dose ; a middling dose ten *oboli*, or five scruples ; and the smallest eight *oboli*, or four scruples.

Another formula is given by Antyllus :

℞ Ramentorum radicis veratri	- -	3 v.
Madescant in aquæ pluviae heminæ		
atticæ semisse	- - - - -	3 v.

Cola deinde trajiciendum et in duplici vase

...the ...
...the ...
...the ...
...the ...
...the ...

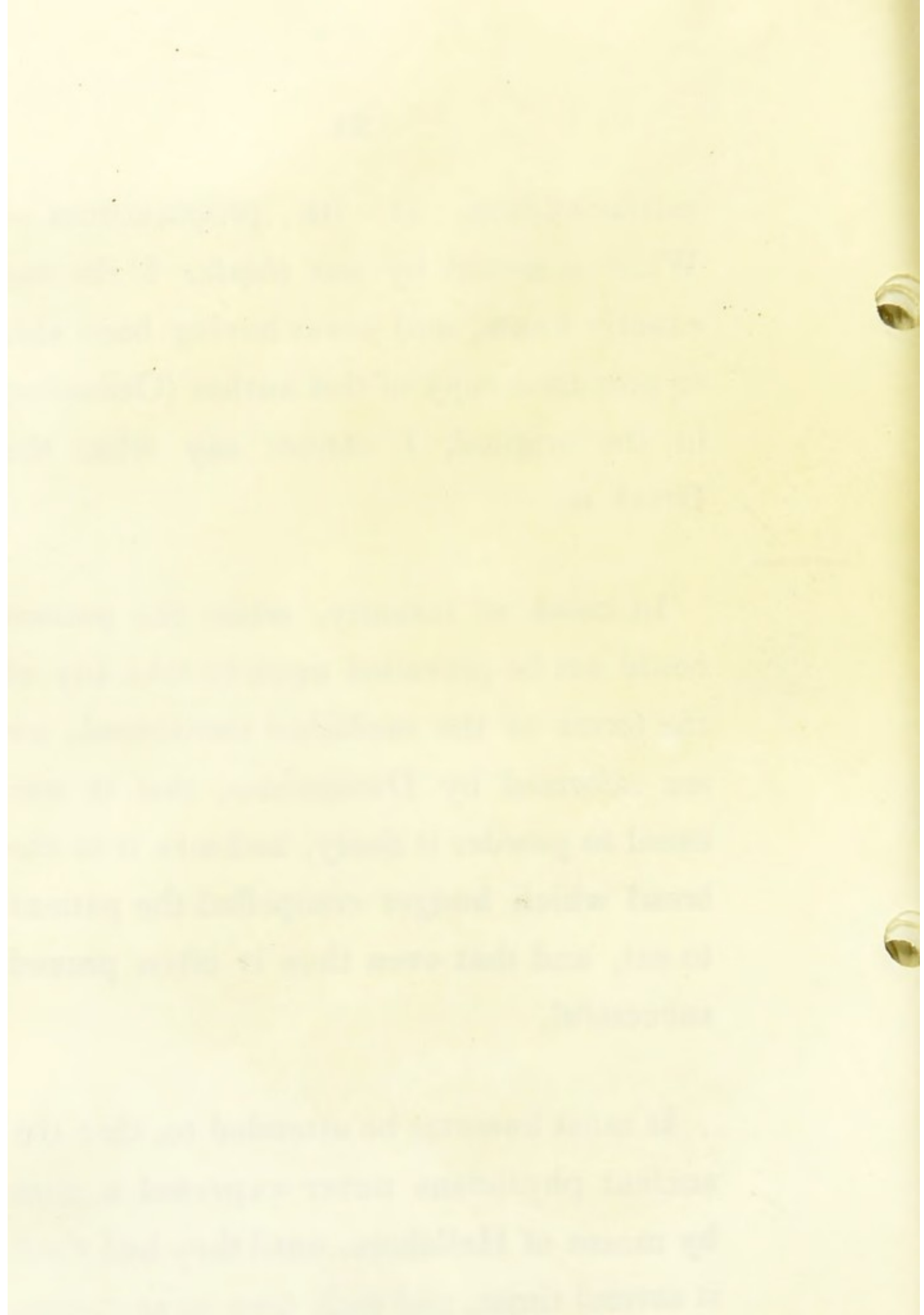
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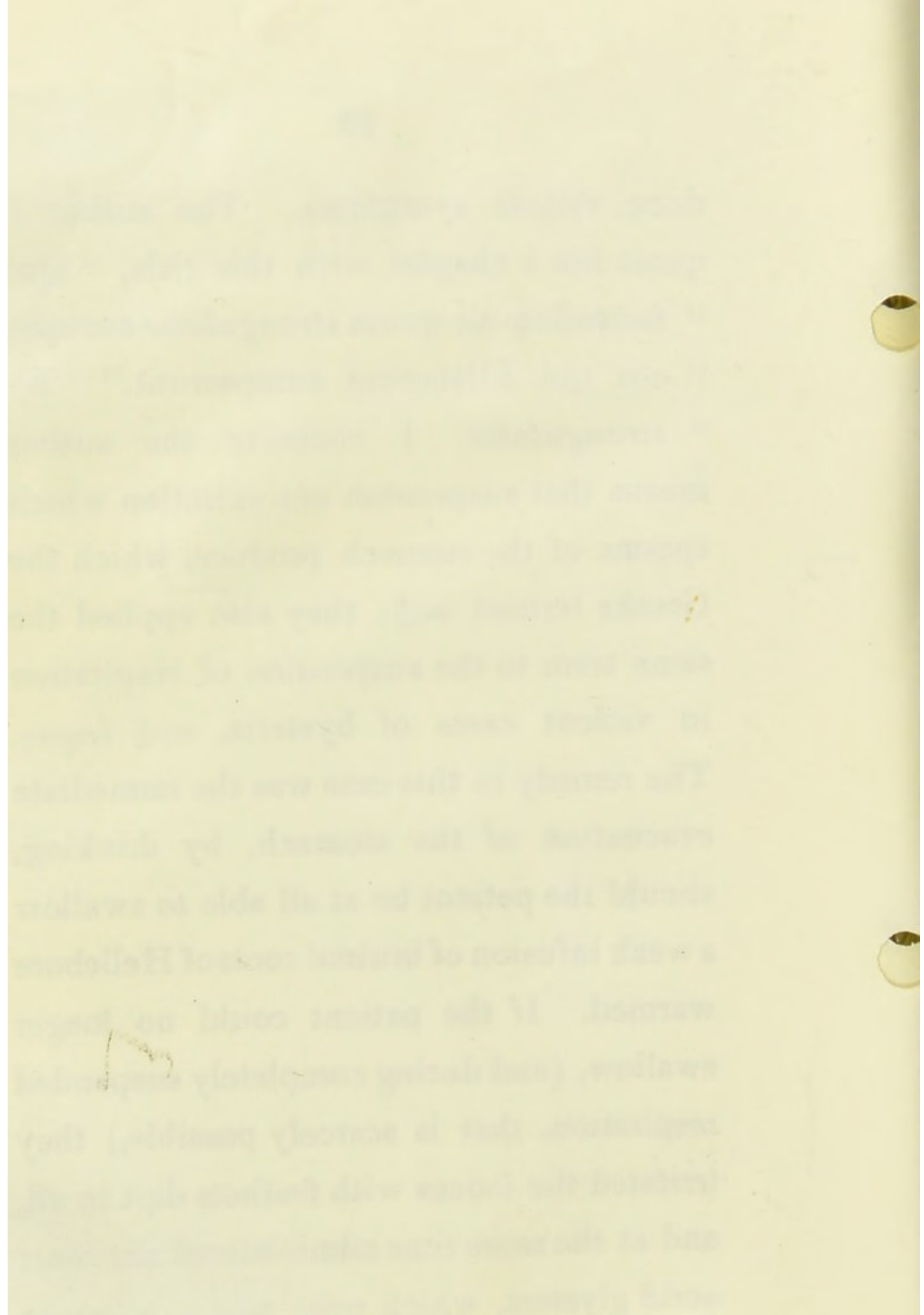
calefaciendum, et ita propinandum.—
What is meant by *vas duplex* I do not exactly know, and never having been able to procure a copy of this author (Oribasius) in the original, I cannot say what the Greek is.

—
In cases of insanity, when the patient could not be prevailed upon to take any of the forms of the medicine mentioned, we are informed by Dioscorides, that it was usual to powder it finely, and mix it in the bread which hunger compelled the patient to eat, and that even thus it often proved successful.

It must however be attended to, that the ancient physicians never expected a cure by means of Hellebore, until they had used it several times, and each time so as to pro-



duce violent symptoms. The author I quote has a chapter with this title, "Qui
 " faciendum sit quum *strangulatio* occupat
 " eos qui Elleborum sumpserunt." By
 " *strangulatio*" I conceive the author
 means that suspension of respiration which
 spasms of the stomach produce, which the
 Greeks termed $\piνιξ$; they also applied the
 same term to the suspension of respiration
 in violent cases of hysteria, $\piνιξ \upsilon\sigma\epsilon\rho\iota\chi\eta$.
 The remedy in this case was the immediate
 evacuation of the stomach, by drinking,
 should the patient be at all able to swallow
 a weak infusion of bruised roots of Hellebore
 warmed. If the patient could no longer
 swallow, (and during completely suspended
 respiration, that is scarcely possible,) they
 irritated the fauces with feathers dipt in oil,
 and at the same time administered the most
 acrid glysters, which were said to alleviate



symptoms for a time, until other remedies
 might have effect.—Another chapter de-
 scribes what is to be done, “ubi vox et
 “sensus amittitur.” In this case the teeth
 are to be forced asunder by small wedges,
 “cuneolis,” that the fauces may be irritated
 as before-mentioned ; the powder of Helle-
 bore, or euphorbium, is to be blown into
 the nostrils ; but if these remedies prove
 ineffectual, recourse is then to be had to an
 operation which I shall give in the author’s
 own words, lest it might be supposed that I
 were describing the vulgar operation of
 tossing in a blanket. “Si vero et vocis et
 “sensûs privatio ita perseveret, vestimen-
 “tum aliquod admodum firmum et robus-
 “tum extendemus, et ex duobus partibus
 “tenendum juvenibus robustis, et aliis
 “qui contra sese sint constituti, ac jubebi-
 “mus ut ipsum vestimentum sublime A

“ terra extendant, tum in eo reclinabimus
 “ hominem qui Elleborum sumpsit, quan-
 “ doque vero in latus utrumque devolve-
 “ mus, aliis id latus quod properos sit
 “ attollentibus ; aliis vero deprimentibus.”

After describing thus particularly the manner in which the patient is to be exercised, he very coolly adds, “ ac tunc quidem scire
 “ convenit ; nisi homo his quassationibus
 “ et commotionibus à sensûs privatione
 “ non sublevetur, eum non esse postea sen-
 “ sum recuperaturum.” A following chapter treats of the singultus and convulsion, which for the most part come on after a full dose of Hellebore. If these prove moderate, the physician is desired not to interfere, as they prove useful by agitating the stomach, and provoking a more perfect discharge of its contents ; but if they prove excessive, a warm infusion of such plants as are grate-

ful to the stomach is prescribed, together with sternutatory. In still more urgent cases, tight ligatures are put upon the extremities, perhaps with the view of checking convulsive motion, as we sometimes do in cases of epilepsy, and the patient is to be put into the warm-bath. It is added, that strong passions of the mind are to be excited, “adhæc pavores quosdam machinamur, et contumeliis incessimus et ut magnas inspirationes edant edicimus.”—Another effect of Hellebore, when the stomach is no longer in danger, is yet to be guarded against, and that is hypercatharsis. “Nimias purgationes sistemus calidissimum potum propinando, et extrema ligando, et vehementi frictione, et validis Cucurbitulis tum Hypochondrio tum verò dorso admotis, et vi etiam avulsis;” and if these prove unsuccessful, narcotics

are to be applied. It is to be observed, that the cupping here mentioned is what we term dry cupping ; for when it was the intention to draw off blood, scarifications of considerable depth were used. A medicine so powerful, after the more violent effects were over, left the patient exceedingly languid, and profuse debilitating sweats are mentioned as frequently demanding the attention of the physician. These he is to moderate by ventilation, spunging the surface with cold water, or *posca*, a kind of oxycrate ; and the patient is finally to be restored by light nourishing diet and wine.

From the above sketch we see, that however efficacious Hellebore may have been in the cure of many diseases, its exhibition must have been formidable to all concerned, the practitioner, as well as the patient

and his friends.] The account given of the patient's situation, when in danger of suffocation, is shocking. " *Ingens vomendi*
 " *appetitus excitatur sed nihil excernitur,*
 " *facies intumescit, oculi exeruntur,—col-*
 " *ligantur, et constipantur partes ad respi-*
 " *rationem pertinentes, cum respirandi*
 " *summâ difficultate—nonnulli linguam*
 " *exerunt, & copioso sudore madescunt,*
 " *alii dentes concutiunt eisque mens*
 " *tentatur.*" Yet it appears that cautiously used, Hellebore has been and may still prove a very valuable remedy, without producing the violent symptoms just described, or endangering the life of the patient. In what variety of forms it was administered has been mentioned, and the doses are certainly large; yet Morgagni says, that in a case that came under his observation, three grains of the powder proved

fatal, by exciting inflammation of the stomach. I cannot help thinking that there must have been some misapprehension or mistake in this case, for in thousands of cases, far larger doses have produced not the slightest bad consequence. We all know with what timidity laudanum, calomel, and digitalis, were used not many years ago, and as they could not always cure, they were no doubt often unjustly accused of killing the patient.

When in the ancient prescriptions *ramenta veratri* are mentioned, I rather think that scrapings of the fresh root may sometimes be meant, such as we use of radish as a condiment at table, at the same time, the directions given for choosing it good, already mentioned, prove that it was frequently used in the dry state. At the

that by making information of the
needs. I cannot help thinking that there
must have been some misapprehension as
mistake in this case, for in thousands of
cases, the larger down have produced the
the slightest but not apparent. It is all
same with what looking forward, and
that, and I think, with that and many
years ago, and in that world and always
over they were so much often equally
amount of doing the same.

When in the midst of preparation for
which we had no intention, I think that
that average of the first year may have
time be some, such as we are in order
as a condition as table, as the same time
the situation given the situation is that
which, however, that is not in
greatly used in the day time. At the

same time it is reasonable to suppose, that like other bulbous roots, it would prove most active in its fresh state. It is however to be considered, that in many countries of Europe it is not indigenous, and must, in those countries where it does not grow, be used in the dried state, as we have it in our shops. / It has been said that according to Aretæus, Hellebore was anciently used in many different chronic diseases; it was, however, more especially used in cases of insanity, and even the poets bear testimony to its efficacy as well as the moral writers and historians. / Horace describes a case of partial insanity, if I may use the expression, where the patient's ideas were deranged on only one subject, and that case he says was cured by Hellebore.

and now it is necessary to suppose, that
 the other subject would be a good proof
 that nature is the first cause. It is true
 that we are not certain that there is any other
 cause of things, but it is not impossible that
 there is some necessary cause, if there is
 given, we need not the first cause, as we have
 it is necessary. It has been said that it
 belongs to Nature. The subject is not
 really such a new subject, and it is not
 new: it has been treated many times. It
 need be none of us, and even the
 point has testimony to its reality as well
 as the moral witness and philosophy. The
 new subject is not a new subject, but
 I may say the evidence, which the
 fact is that we are not certain that there is
 religion, and that there is a new cause.

By the way,

—————Fuit haud ignobilis Argis

Qui se credebat miros audire Tragædos,
 In vacuo lætus sessor—plausorque theatro ;
 Cætera qui vitæ servavit munera recto
 More ; bonus sane vicinus, amabilis hospes,
 Comis in uxorem, posset qui ignoscere, Lenis,
 Et signo læso non insanire Lagenæ,
 Posset qui Rupem, et puteum vitare patentem.
 Hic ubi cognatorum opibus, curisque reffectus
 Expulit helleboro morbum—bilemque Meraco,
 Et redit ad se : Pol me occidistis amici,
 Non servastis ait ; cui sic extorta Voluptas
 Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus Error :

A case something similar we have for many years witnessed in this place. A man, of the name of Morison, now I should suppose nearly eighty years of age, well informed for his rank in life, and in every other respect perfectly correct and sound in mind, has, for more than forty years, firmly

believed that a certain non-descript diabolical tormentor had and has power over him by means of a loadstone. He believes that this tormentor can stop him from the performance of the common actions of life, render it impossible for him to handle a knife, fork, or spoon, at table; arrest his progress in walking; stop his watch, or deprive his violin of all sound in a moment.

When I first knew him, he had about a thousand pounds, which he had acquired in the service of a gentleman abroad, but he would not trust it out at interest, nor in any bank, as he said he was sure the tormentor would abstract it. He kept it in a little iron chest, secured, as he thought, by crucifixes (for he is a Roman Catholic);

believed that a certain man (George) had
not returned and had been given away him
by means of a letter. - His belief was
the strongest one and he was the
strongest of the common sense of the
world is responsible for the fact that a
half, but, as usual, at table, when the
progress is waiting for the world to
depart the side of the world in a way
that

When I first knew him, he had shown a
thousand pounds which he had acquired
in the service of a gentleman abroad, but
he would not let it out of his pocket, and he
say that, as he said he was now the
master would return it. He says it is a
little less than that, and he says, by
exhibition for he is a Roman Catholic.

it consequently rapidly diminished, and he now subsists upon charity. Whether in a case such as this, Hellebore could have been serviceable, I do not know ; but we have reason to think that in former times it was tried in cases not dissimilar.

Three parts of the tincture of white Hellebore and one part of laudanum, the tincture being prepared with white wine, was supposed by Mr. Moore to be the *Eau Medicinale D'Husson*, nearly resembling it in its sensible qualities and effects. On the other hand, as was mentioned formerly, Mr. Want believes the *Colchicum Autum-nale* to furnish the active ingredient in that celebrated medicine. A spirituous tincture is kept in the shops, which I have often prescribed in gouty affections, and often

used myself for rheumatism, and always with some relief. The dose is from one to two drachms ; but I cannot say that I have ever known it produce the strong effects ascribed to the Eau Medicinale, or any symptoms similar to those described by Oribasius. That both the Colchicum and Veratrum are most powerful remedies, is not to be questioned, and should they again come into general use, more convenient formulæ will no doubt be contrived.

The botanical description of plants not growing in this country, is not so interesting ; but it may be proper to say, that the Veratrum is of the Class III. *Polygynia*, Order I. *Monoecia*. No calyx ; corolla six petalled, stamina *six*, pistils *three*,

capsules *three*, with many seeds. It is a native of Asia Minor, Italy, Switzerland, and Austria; flowers from June to August, and is found to be most powerful in warm climates.

