

Observations on the nature and treatment of the variolous abscess, with remarks on the modern practice of inoculation, and a review of the principal writers on that important subject ... in a letter to Dr. Buchan / By Peter Clare.

Contributors

Clare, Peter, 1738-1786.

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Publication/Creation

London : Printed for the author, and sold by T. Cadell, 1781.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/n2bskkcm>

Provider

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine Library & Archives Service. The original may be consulted at London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine Library & Archives Service. 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
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>



3/-

Reese Collection
1781

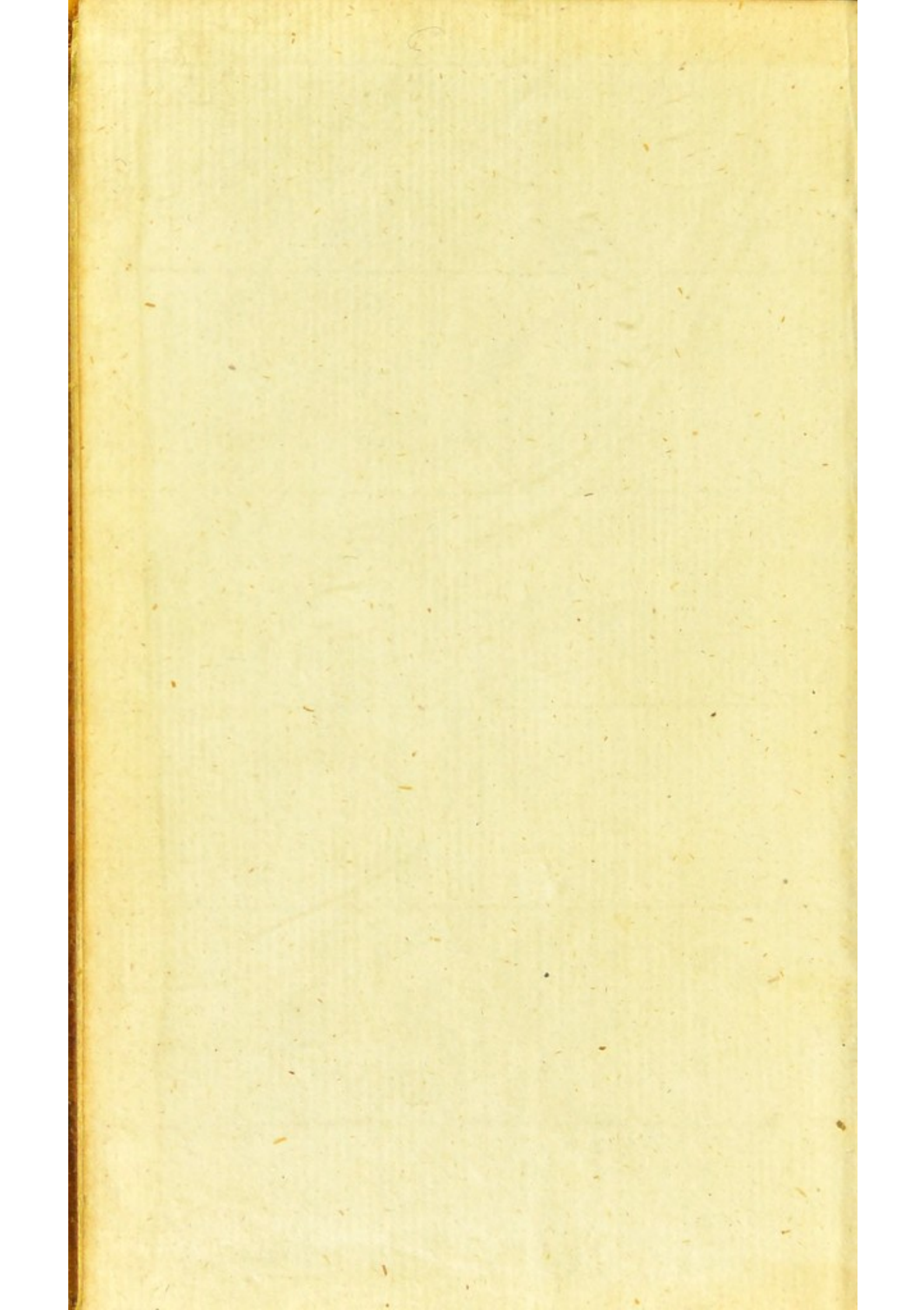
Private 4/-

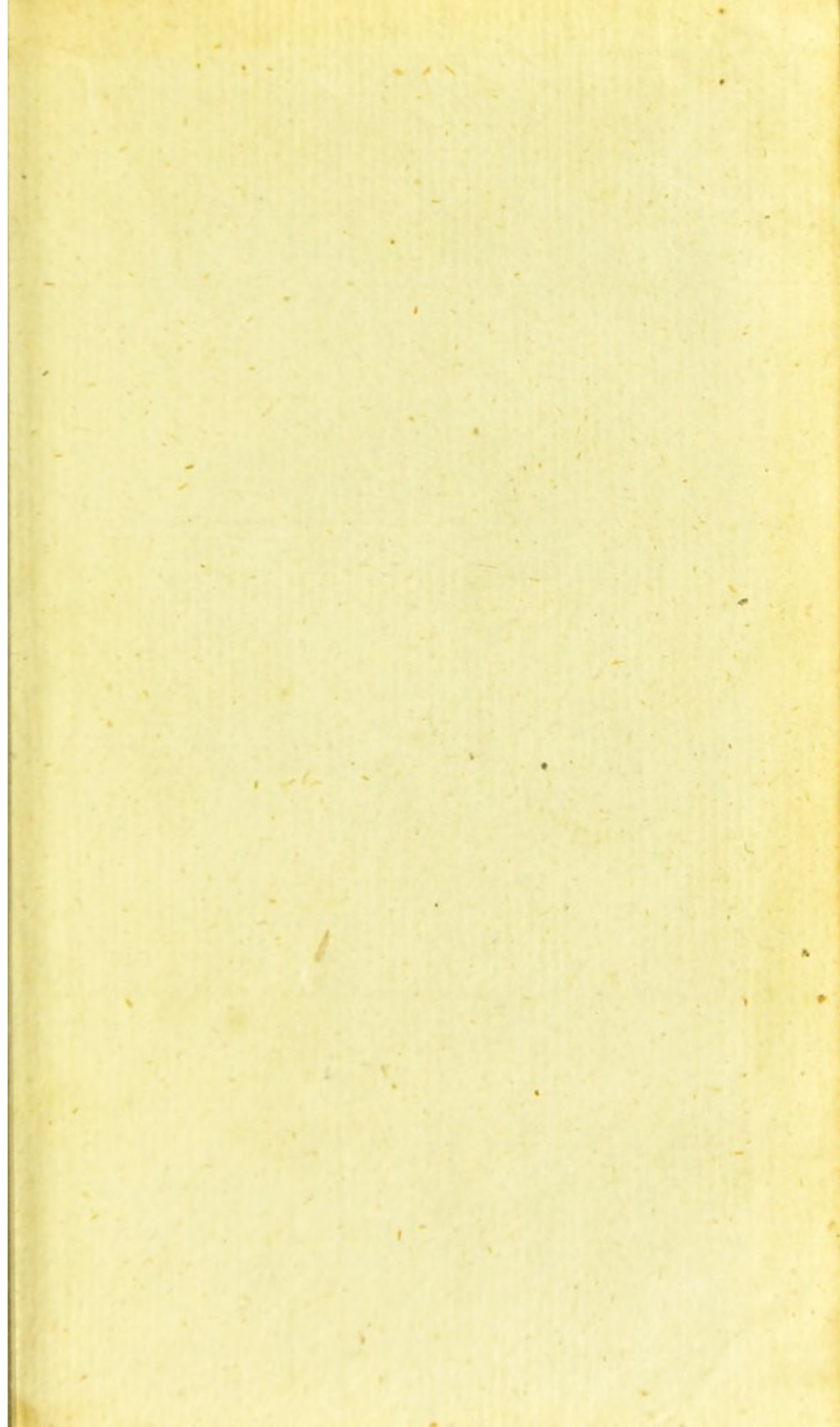
Richard Reese.

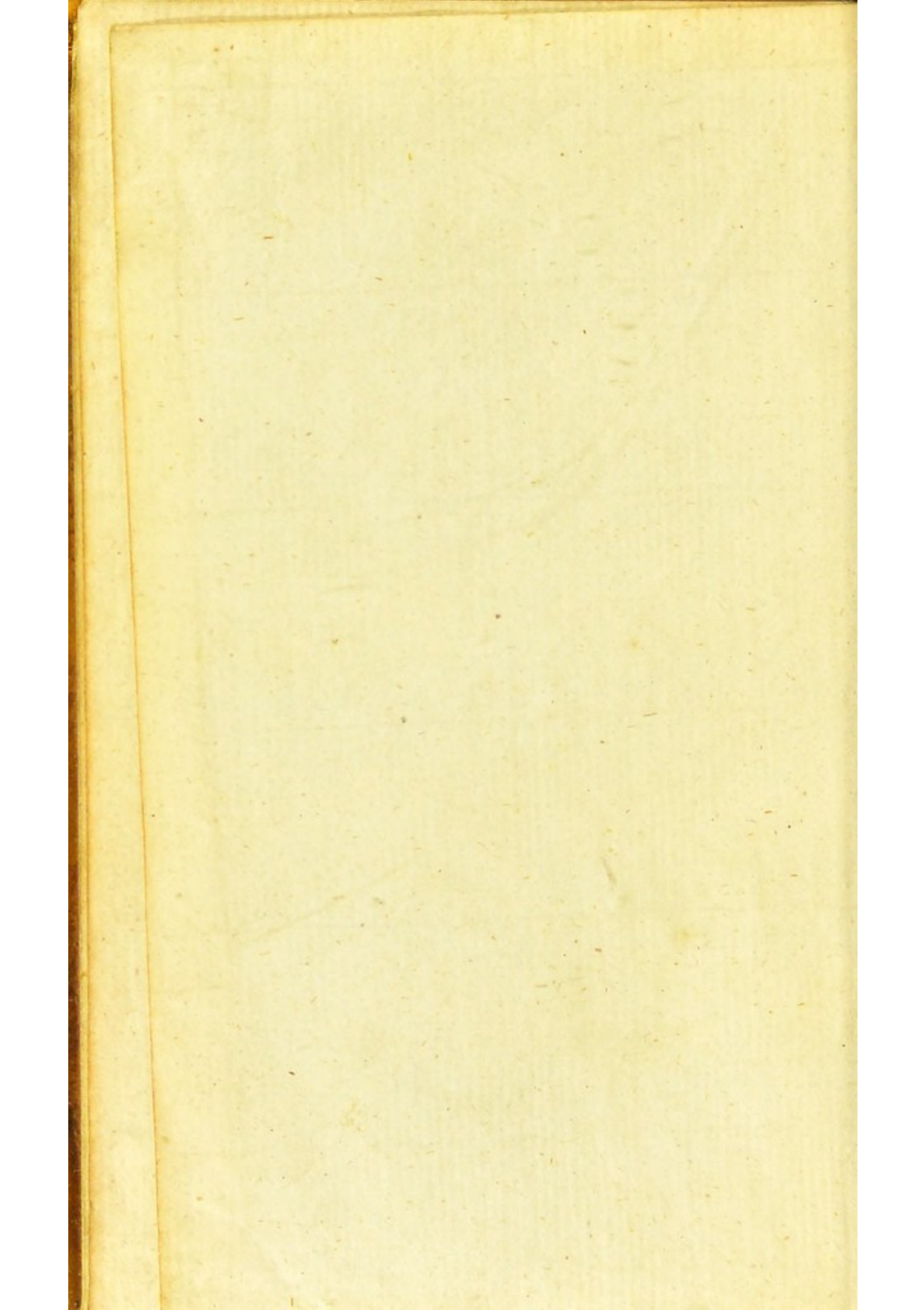


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

<https://archive.org/details/b21361058>







“In nova fert Animus, mutatas dicere formas.
————— Cœptis
Aspirate meis!”



M^r. CLARE.

Published January 25, 1781 by W. W. Ryland 27. 159 Strand.

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
NATURE and TREATMENT of the
VARIOLOUS ABSCESS,
WITH
REMARKS ON THE
MODERN PRACTICE of *Inoculation*,
AND A
REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL WRITERS
ON THAT IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

By PETER CLARE, SURGEON.

¹⁷³⁸⁻⁸⁶
IN A LETTER TO DR. BUCHAN,
Author of Domestic Medicine.

Graviora morbis patimur remedia.

L O N D O N:

Printed for the AUTHOR,
And Sold by T. CADELL, in the STRAND.

M, DCC, LXXXI.

12384 OBSERVATIONS

ON THE
NATURAL TREATMENT OF THE
VARIOUS ABSCESS.

WITH
REMARKS ON THE
MODERN PRACTICE OF INCISION.

AND A
REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL WRITERS
ON THAT IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

BY THE
LATE CLAUDE BUCHANAN.

IN A LETTER TO R. BUCHANAN,
M.D. &c. &c.

By the same Author.

LONDON:
Printed for the Author,
And Sold by T. Cadogan, in the Strand.
MDCCLXXXII.




TABLE OF CONTENTS.

G ENERAL Remarks on the great Importance of the practice of Inoculation,	
On the process preparatory to Inoculation, page 7	
Dr. Buchan's opinion with respect to preparation, - - - -	10
Baron Dimsdale on the same, - -	11
The Baron's remarks on convulsive paroxysms,	20
On the proper age for Inoculation, -	23
Difference in the seat of abscesses - -	26
On their great similarity, - -	27
On suppuration and concomitant fever, -	29
The mode of receiving the Small Pox in the natural way; and why it is more dangerous than in the inoculated, -	32
The advantage of cool air, - -	55
Effects of cold water, - - -	37
A 2	The

*The disadvantage attendant on the opening
abscesses in general, before they are ripe*

page 39

*Some account of the operations of nature, and
the vis vitæ, - - - - -* 40

On the primary eruptive fever, - - - 44

*On the treatment of the above by purga-
tives, - - - - -* 48

On nitre, and it's qualities, - - - 49

The effects of medicine in general, - - - 50

Dispensaries for Inoculation, - - - 54

Advice to Parents, - - - - - 58

*Also to those who wish to promote this salu-
iary practice. - - - - -* 59

(2)

A LETTER, &c.

S I R,

HAVING read with particular pleasure and satisfaction, your book intitled *Domestic Medicine*, in which, amongst other diseases, you have treated of the Small Pox by Inoculation, and also in the natural way; I take the liberty of communicating to you by letter, my sentiments on this important subject.

B

The

The world holds you in great estimation for the many humane and judicious observations with which your work abounds, and I am happy to give every testimony of my regard for that merit, which, whilst I despair of attaining, I cannot but acknowledge and admire.

You justly observe, that Inoculation cannot become materially beneficial till it is rendered universal, alledging that as many die annually of the natural Small Pox now, as before this practice was introduced; a melancholy circumstance! and which demands the attention of every thinking man in this kingdom.

As the state will derive the greatest advantages from Inoculation, it ought from true policy ever to promote and encourage that practice.

For

For this laudable purpose, premiums and honorary distinctions should be conferred on all those who in an eminent degree contribute to its advancement. Those gentlemen of the profession who inoculate the greatest numbers, particularly of the poor, in a given time, should be rewarded for their humane efforts to extend the use of this happy discovery, by which you assert they may save more lives than by all their other endeavours.

In the Roman state, the man who preserved the life of *one* of his fellow citizens, was entitled to a civic crown. Your instructions in the Small Pox alone, if duly attended to, will save thousands, a circumstance which must afford a heart-felt satisfaction far beyond the possession of any honorary reward.

“ One self-approving hour whole yéars
 “ out-weighs,
 “ Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas;
 “ All fame is foreign, but of true desert,
 “ Plays round the head, but comes not to
 “ the heart.”

These lines, Sir, were written
 by Mr. *Pope*, when he was con-
 templating—not the characters of
 heroes, who meditate the destruc-
 tion of the human species, but of
 public benefactors, men whose views
 like your's, were directed to the
 preservation and happiness of their
 fellow-citizens. *Non tu corpus eras
 sine pectore.*

In an Essay published not long
 since, I observed, that every ab-
 cess which is the crisis of a fever
 arising from an internal disorder,
 ought by all means to be encou-
 raged

raged *. This doctrine is agreeable to the fundamental principles of our art, and I am much inclined to think the variolous abscess ought to be treated in the same manner with other impostumations †. General assertions, it may be said, should be received with some allowance and exceptions, and that we should hear what may be urged on both sides of every question, before we attempt to form any determinate judgement.

* Dr. Sydenham, in his chapter on acute diseases, says, "Reason dictates, if I judge right, that a disease is nothing else but Nature's endeavour to thrust forth with all her might, the morbid matter, for the health of the patient."

† Dr. Mead says, "This observation holds good in all kind of abscesses, that the more the pustules tend to suppuration, the greater are the hopes of recovery, and therefore when that does not go on according to our wishes, all possible means are to be used to throw the morbid humour on the skin."

MEAD on the Small Pox.

Many practitioners assert, that the variolous fever is a fever *sui generis*, and ought to be treated in a peculiar manner; that it should be attacked with repellents, and every attempt should be made by evacuations, to diminish and subdue its influence. This doctrine of revulsion, when reduced to practice, is deemed very pernicious, and I believe it will be found much safer in general to assist, than to retard the efforts of the constitution.

Ab extrâ intûs redire malum est.

There is a considerable difference in opinion betwixt * Baron *Dimisdale* and you, on the subject of preparation and the subsequent treatment of this distemper. As my sentiments happen to correspond in general with your's, I have selected

* On Inoculation.

many

many passages from your book in support of them. The Baron writes in favour of a different practice, and his works being much read and esteemed, I have thought fit to make several quotations from them also, that a true and candid judgment may be formed.

Freedom of discussion is very allowable, when it does not arise from malicious or envious motives, but from a regard for truth. The opinions and practice, not the man, are the proper objects of literary investigation.

I shall now proceed to make some cursory observations on the process preparatory to Inoculation.

When the practice of Inoculation was first introduced into this kingdom, preparation was never omitted, and it seemed only a proper and ne-

cessary caution on entering upon a new and singular operation. Preparation being made, the mildness of the disease which followed, was supposed by many to be not less owing to the medicines than to the mode of introducing the variolous poison into the system. Some years elapsed before any one ventured to inoculate without this previous ceremony, and when it began to be omitted (whether by accident or design, is immaterial) the practice was found to be quite as successful as before. People set themselves to consider what was meant by preparation, and they doubted if it could be necessary to prepare those who were in perfect health *. In the

* The worst consequences have been known to proceed from the attempts of people to make themselves better than well; we therefore should not presumptuously trifle with a good constitution.

next

next place they reflected, that those who were materially disordered, could not be cured and made fit subjects for Inoculation in so short a time as that usually allotted for this purpose. It was also remarked, that persons who contracted the Small Pox whilst they had other diseases upon them, underwent the distemper as well as if they had been free from every sort of complaint; which circumstance greatly diminished the importance of the preparatory process, and brought it at length into disrepute. The practice, at this time, was principally in the hands of the surgeons, who thought little or no preparation necessary, or medicine, during the disease †.

You,

† Dr. *Mead* says. it is proper to mention, that this artificial disease is usually so mild, that

You, Sir, assert, that “ They know very little of the matter who impute the success of modern Inoculators to any superior skill, either in preparing the patient, or communicating the disease. Some of them indeed, from a sordid desire of engrossing the whole practice to themselves, pretend to have extraordinary secrets or nostrums*, for

that it scarce requires any help from medicines ; an opinion which is very generally credited at this day.

* Dr. *Black* says, in his *Observations Medical and Political*, “ Some prescribe elaborate and complicated preparation by diet, mercurials and purges, previous to inserting the variolous infection. Dr. *Gatti*, who wrote a sensible treatise on this subject remarks, and I believe justly, that the more simplicity is used in transferring the disease artificially, the practice and public benefit are likely to be more universal. Several of our European Inoculators often, with officious industry, exercise a superfluous preparatory parade of professional and scientific craft: young children especially, may dispense with many of these redundant ceremonies.”

preparing

preparing persons for Inoculation, which never fail of success. But this is only a pretence to blind the ignorant and inattentive. Common sense and prudence alone are sufficient both in the choice of the subject and management of the operation. Whoever is possessed of these, may perform this office for his children whenever he pleases, provided they be in a good state of health."

The Baron, on the other hand, " recommends to his patients who are in high health, to abstain from all animal food, including broths, also butter and cheese, and from all fermented liquors, excepting small beer, which is allowed sparingly, and from all spices, and whatever possesses a manifest heating quality. The diet is to consist of pudding, gruel, sago, milk, rice milk, fruit pies,

pies, greens, roots, and vegetables of all the kinds in season, prepared or raw. Eggs, though not to be eaten alone, are allowed in puddings, and butter in pie crust, and patients are advised to be careful not to over-load their stomachs, even with this kind of food."

After proceeding in this manner about 9 or 10 days before the operation, they are directed to take "three doses of the following powder, either made into pills, or mixed with a little syrup or jelly, at bed-time; and a dose of *Glauber's* salts dissolved in thin water gruel, each succeeding morning. The powder is composed of *eight grains* of calomel, the same quantity of the compound powder of crabs claws, and one-eighth part of a grain of emetic tartar."

Baron

The Baron *notwithstanding* asserts, p. 82, “ That alteration which appears most likely to be made, is in shortening the time of preparation; for as I have often been obliged to inoculate without any, *and have always had the same success*, it has inclined me to think, that much, if not the whole of this process may be dispensed with, except in very full habits, or where other particular circumstances may require it. But in all these cases from the insertion of the matter to the time of the eruptive complaints, the patients have been kept to a close observance of diet, and the use of the preparatory medicines, proportioned as well as I could to their conditions, for I durst not by way of experiment dispense with the use of

C

measures

measures that had been hitherto so successful."

You say, "There is reason to fear Inoculation will be far from being general as long as the practice continues in the hands of the faculty. Your observation may be just, yet I cannot help thinking the faculty ought to have a preference in this business. Suppose, Sir, apothecaries were paid properly for their visits, (like the rest of the profession) instead of their medicines, that there might be no inducement to give more than was really necessary for their patients, would not this obviate every objection?"

The *Circassian* mothers, Dr. Mead observes, were used to inoculate their own children. In the East-Indies

Indies the whole business is conducted by the Bramins, and with the greatest success *.

Persons are daily inoculated in every part of this kingdom, without any preparation. A very eminent practitioner has frequently assured me, that he never knew Inoculation do otherwise than well, except where the patients had been previously lowered, or during the distemper, the ill consequences of which I have frequently seen and lamented. Four children were inoculated formerly at my house, and were under the inspection of an eminent physician; they were treated in this

* They order their patients to abstain for one month before Inoculation, from fish, milk, and a kind of butter made of buffalo's milk: this is the invariable and only preparatory regimen.

manner, and all had a narrow escape †.

I suffered much uneasiness on account of the method in which they were treated, and I find I am not singular in my objections to this practice, for you say, “you have known children to appease the anxiety of their parents, bled, blistered and purged, during the fever which preceded the eruption of the Small Pox, to such a degree, that nature was not only disturbed in her operation, but rendered unable to support the pustules after they were

† The spots under the skin, at first were few in number, the contagion spreading from cell to cell, till they became infinite, yet made no approach to the surface. I think that if the fever had been higher, a few pustules would have been thrown out at once upon the skin, and the patients greatly relieved.

out;

out; so that the patient, exhausted by mere evacuations, sunk under the disease."

Baron Dimisdale says, page 33, "The feverish symptoms are for the most part so mild as seldom to require any medicinal assistance, except a repetition of the same medicine that was directed on the second night † after the operation; and on the following morning this laxative draught. Infusion of senna two ounces, manna half an ounce, tincture of jalap two drams. These are given as soon as the eruptive symptoms are perceivable, if they seem to indicate any uncommon degree of vehemence."

I have known such a draught give more than a dozen stools, and weaken

† Calomel and compound powder of crabs claws, of each three grains, emetic tartar $\frac{1}{10}$ of a grain.

the patient exceedingly, and being continued, reduce him to an hectic state.

Many families, I am informed, to avoid the expence of employing the profession, have followed your advice, and inoculated their children with the greatest success. There certainly is not a duty more incumbent on them than this which so immediately concerns the preservation of their offspring. They do not scruple to give medicines on several other occasions that are more serious; they administer remedies for the disorders of the stomach and bowels, and other complaints to which children are continually subject; why then should they not *inoculate* them also? I doubt not they will adopt the practice

tice when they are convinced of what every professional man is well persuaded of, that there is no hazard in it. The numbers who die under Inoculation, hardly deserve to be named. In the natural way, the calculation is that one in four or five generally dies, but by Inoculation not one of a thousand.

The Baron remarks that scarce two in three of all that are born, live to be two years old. I know not if this calculation is accurate; however, if just, it is a melancholy circumstance; and how many children may we suppose to die of the Small Pox in the natural way, before they arrive at this age? No doubt many, whose deaths might have been prevented by Inoculation. As long as this operation is deferred,

the anxiety of parents is beyond what any but parents can conceive; and children who live in large cities, where there is great danger from contagion, are on that account often deprived of the benefit of the air, so necessary to health.

The Baron observes “ that convulsive paroxysms often accompany the variolous eruptive fever in children; and though generally looked upon in no unfavourable light, as often preceeding a distinct kind of Small Pox, yet they are at all times attended with some degree of danger; nay some, it is well known, have expired under them; while others who have struggled through with great difficulty, have been so debilitated, and their faculties so impaired, that the effects have been perceptible

perceptible during the remaining part of their lives."

I have seen one instance where the ill effects of convulsions which happened at the time of Inoculation continued thro' life, but happily, not one where a child died in them. This event will sometimes happen during Inoculation (as it does frequently without it) from worms or acidities in the stomach and first passages. I do not think the apprehensions of convulsions, which are in these cases sometimes so slight as hardly to be perceived, ought to operate against the practice at this age; especially as they attack children of all ages, and are more strong and dangerous afterwards than at the breast*.

But,

* Dr. *Mead* in his chapter on the accidents attending the Small Pox, says, " Sometimes the

But, says the Baron, “even admitting the eruption to be favourable and not attended with any such alarming (symptoms as convulsions) yet, should a larger number of pustules than usual appear, or any untoward symptom happen, and require medical help, the unhappy sufferer is much too young to be prevailed on to take unpalatable medicines, or submit to other necessary measures by persuasions, menaces or bribes.” Surely, Sir, there is no medicine so good as milk for children at this tender age.

I shall now consider the opinion of Baron Dimisdale as to the proper age for Inoculation.

the patient is seized with convulsions just before the eruption. But this symptom is more terrifying than dangerous, and, in children particularly, those convulsions which frequently come on before the distemper appears, are generally rather a good than a bad sign.

“ In

“ In regard to the age, says the Baron, where it is left to my choice I decline inoculating children under two years old. I know the common practice is against me in this particular, but my reasons for rejecting such, are founded on observation and experience. I have indeed lately inoculated many under this age, at the pressing intreaties of their parents, *and they have all done well.* But it must be considered, that young children are exposed to all the hazards of dentition, fevers, fluxes, convulsions, and other accidents, sufficiently difficult in themselves to manage in such tender subjects, in-
 somuch that scarce two in three of all that are born, live to be two years old ; as is demonstrable from the bills of mortality.”

The

The Baron here confesses the common practice is against him, as to inoculating children under two years of age, yet he says that he has inoculated several under that age, *and they have all done well.*" Surely, this is great encouragement to adopt that method, especially as it meets with general approbation, and the Dr. confesses, that his sentiments on this subject, militate against the common practice*.

I have seen great numbers of children inoculated at the breast,

* Dr. *Mackenzie* says, "The most favourable period for Inoculation, seems to be that which precedes the breeding of teeth in children, while the several complaints attending that event are yet unfelt, and the humours are so mild, that an inflammatory distemper can, at that time, scarce rise to any great degree of violence."

Mackenzie's History of Health,

without

without any trouble, and with the happiest success; and I am, and always have been, an advocate for that practice which is attended with such striking advantages. I have known several medical gentlemen who once thought otherwise, but whom time, experience and reflection have brought to favour the most early Inoculation. You observe, that the most proper age is betwixt three and five years. "Many," you say, "approve of inoculating at the breast, and where no circumstance forbids this practice, that you have no objection to it."

Neither the Baron nor you, Sir, appear to be disinclined to inoculating at the breast, and I am apt to believe that you will both hereafter see reason to approve of a practice, the advantages of which are self-

D

evident,

evident, and the disadvantages only ideal and presumptive.—How cautious ought we to be, with respect to administering purgatives to infants in particular, since they sometimes excite convulsions, and cause a retrocession.

Common abscesses are usually seated in the cellular substance betwixt the muscles and the skin; the variolous abscess is in the cellular substance under the cuticle, and upon the skin or *cutis vera*, as it is called. This appears to be the case from the scars left by the Small Pox, and which proceed from the confined *virus* eroding the subjacent skin. The deeper the seat of an abscess, the longer it is in coming to suppuration, unless the matter happens to be deposited under a tendon, ligament, or a tendinous expansion.

In

In this case, though it is at no great distance from the surface, yet being powerfully restrained and confined, the matter is often a considerable time before it reaches the skin to make its exit there.

An abscess under the cuticle, *cæteris paribus*, will be sooner protruded than one in the adipose membrane. The variolous and other abscesses are usually preceded by shiverings, which seem to be the efforts of disease to produce a crisis.

There is a very great similarity in many respects betwixt the pustules in the Small Pox and other abscesses. They are accompanied with rigors, they tend alike to suppuration or gangrene. They are also treated in the same manner. The pustules in the limbs are fomented by bathing in warm water. When they are

perfectly ripe, it is recommended by the most celebrated writers to draw them to a point by cerate, and afterwards to discharge the contents by puncture or incision. Dr. *Brooke*, * *Tissot*, and *Holwel* in his account of Inoculation by the Bra-
mins, urge the propriety of this practice on your principle, viz. to prevent resorption of the matter, and the secondary fever.

Dr. *Tissot* observes “That in the Small Pox,” whenever there is a very considerable eruption, the fever is heightened at the time of suppuration, which is not to be wondered at, for one single boil excites a fever: how is it possible then that some hundreds, nay some thou-

* *Practice of Physic*—*Tissot's Advice to the People.*

fands of these little abscesses should not excite one?"

I apprehend, the fever is the disease, and the suppuration and expulsion the crisis which nature points out. The medical treatment will certainly be very different, according as one or the other of these ideas is adopted. The various fever is thought to constitute the essence of the Small Pox, that alone, without any eruption, being deemed in general, a sufficient security against the disorder.

Many attempts are made to mitigate this fever, and I believe these are frequently productive of mischief. "The Eastern practitioners, says Mr. *Holwel*, with great modesty arraign the European practice of phlebotomy, and cathartics in any stage of the Small Pox, but

more particularly when designed to prevent or mitigate the second fever; alledging, that the *first* weakens the natural powers, and that the *latter* counteracts the regular course of *nature*, which in this disease, invariably tends to throw out the offending cause *upon the skin*; that she often proves unequal to the entire expulsion of the enemy, in which case her wise purposes are to be assisted by art, and in that track, which she herself points out, and not by a diversion of the usual crisis into another channel; that this assistance can only be attempted with propriety, by emptying the pustules, as thereby fresh room is given in them for the reception of the circulating matter still remaining in the blood, and which could not be contained in the first eruption, by which

which means every end and purpose of averting or subduing *the second fever* is obtained, with a moral certainty ; whilst phlebotomy and cathartics administered with this view, are both irrational and precarious, as being opposite to the constant operation of nature in her management of this dreadful disease."

According to some writers on the Small Pox, there is the eruptive fever, and the fever of suppuration ; in the formation of abscesses in general, we reckon but one fever, that which tends to suppuration, and this is regularly encouraged to a certain degree. Should a *delirium* be threatened, bleeding is then prescribed, and is thought by the best writers in physic and surgery, to assist maturation. Purgative evacuations tend to create a retrocession of the mat-

ter, and are therefore forbidden in all critical abscesses. Clysters are recommended as safe and necessary, when there is great costiveness and tension.

The great success attending Inoculation is not in my opinion to be attributed so much to the quantity of poison admitted into the course of the circulation, since a spark will excite a flame, as to the manner in which it falls upon the habit, that is lightly and equally: the lungs or other vital parts not being in any considerable degree affected.

In the natural Small Pox, the contagious particles are imbibed by the mouth, nostrils, and throat, and conveyed to the chest, head, or both, and these parts become loaded with an infinite number of pustules.

I have

I have the most perfect recollection of the instant in which I contracted the Small Pox. When eight years old I caught the disease from an infected pillow case, which emitted a very strong and penetrating odour; a near relation of mine about the same age, perceived it also, and we spoke of it to each other. We both sickened on the eighth day, and had the distinct sort, with a good crop of pustules. I had been constantly in the sick chamber for thirteen or fourteen days without ever perceiving that particular smell.

Nature must certainly have much more difficulty in contending with the distemper internally, than when the limbs and the external integuments of the body are the chief seat of the contagion. The lungs being attacked with inflammation,
difficulty

difficulty of breathing must consequently ensue. These organs, whose use is declared to be to fan, and whose air vessels to cool the blood, become now the subject of fever, are incapable of affording themselves the same assistance they give to other parts of the body when under feverish influence; yet by draughts of fresh air, they even in this state, must receive a considerable degree of relief. Many writers are of opinion, that *dephlogisticated air* in the lungs, cools the blood coming hot from the right ventricle of the heart, and thus operates powerfully, and with great success as a refrigeratory.

I was present when a young lady, one of the children before-mentioned under Inoculation, was seized with a fainting fit, in the last stage of the distemper, and was almost
 expiring

expiring from the extreme heat of the room, in which three others were ill of the same complaint. Upon throwing the windows open, she began to breathe, was removed into a fresh apartment, and recovered.

We are immediately sensible of the cooling influence of the air on the internal, as well as the external parts of our body, when we are much exposed to it by standing near a river; and we find a feverish heat is soon removed by this circumstance alone,

Air, when applied to the external surface of the body, is far from being prejudicial to the pustules. All the modern Inoculators, Sir, as well as yourself, recommend to their patients, the keeping their apartments refreshingly cool and temperate.

rate. Dr. *Mead* advises “not to chill and freeze the patient in winter, but to supply him with pure and cool air, which he may take in plentifully, because a hot air causes difficulty in breathing and an inflammation of the lungs.”

The Doctor says, “I have seen subjects in which the lungs, brain, liver and intestines were thick beset with pustules; nor have I the least doubt but that those sudden deaths, which sometimes happen towards the end of the disease, are occasioned by the efflux of the purulent matter from the bursted pustules on one or other of the nobler parts” *.

It

* Mr. *Holwel* says, “In an epidemic season of the confluent Small Pox; Turkies, Chittygong fowls, Madras capons, and other poultry, are carried off by the disease in great numbers; and have the symptoms usually accom-

It will be said, perhaps, that cold air repels, and therefore that the patient ought, according to my opinion, to be excluded from it. Is it not admitted, Sir, that *Shiverings* are the usual attendants on the formation of matter, and that they assist its expulsion?

Mr. *Holwel* says, “ that in *India* he has been an eye-witness to the marvellous effects of throwing a few gallons of cold water over the head; the pustules, which had subsided, filled again, as by enchantment.

accompanying every stage of the distemper. I had a favourite parrot that died of it in the year 1744; in him I had a fair opportunity of observing the regular progress of the disorder; he sickened and had an ardent fever full two days before the eruption; on opening him, we found his throat, stomach, and whole channel of the first passages lined as thick with pustules as the surface of his body, where for the most part, they rose contiguous, but in other places they ran together.

Blood-letting, so far from preventing suppuration, we are assured from the best authority, (that of Dr. Mead, Mr. Sharp and others) actually promotes it. But this cannot be said of purgative evacuations; which cause a retrocession and absorption of the matter.

On this bad and injudicious principle of retarding maturation, Sir, it is, that some gentlemen of our profession, recommend the making an early opening by caustic, in inguinal* and other abscesses, before they are ripe. They alledge, that by so doing, we may prevent the formation of sinuses, and erosion of the neighbouring parts. Though there is some shew of reason in this argu-

* This, like the variolous abscess, is an envenomed abscess, accompanied also with a fever, *sui generis*.

ment, I disapprove of the practice, having seen many instances of induration being left behind, and of a relapse and second suppuration taking place in consequence of the matter's not being all critically discharged at the first opening. This event is similar to that of secondary fever in the Small Pox, which arises from the absorption of the *virus*, and produces abscesses in the axilla, or other parts of the body. Such are the consequences of any interruption being given to Nature, in the course of her salutary operations. A patient who had been treated in this manner, and where there was a hardness left about the wound, was seized three weeks after with a relapse, and a second suppuration took place. Displeased with the event, he went daily whilst under the

care of his Surgeon, to another gentleman of the profession, who seeing the bad consequences of this practice, took extraordinary pains to convince the patient that it would be greatly to his advantage to wait till Nature had deposited every drop of matter she intended to make. No time, said he, will be lost, for when an abscess ripens kindly, the wound heals better afterwards, than when it is crude and indigested. This sort of reasoning coming from a gentleman of the first eminence, gave the patient entire satisfaction ; he followed the advice, and was perfectly cured.

Since much is left to *Nature*, whose action is commonly called the *vis vitæ*, we ought to endeavour to give some account of her agency.

Hip-

Hippocrates has said that Nature was the curer of Diseases. Dr. *Mead* describes this first mover within us, which perceives, thinks and reasons, as a spirit of some kind or other, entirely different and separable from terrestrial matter, yet most intimately united with our bodies. If this is the case, should we attempt to do every thing ourselves and leave nothing to Nature, this intelligent spirit? Or should we study to obey her dictates? The best physicians in all ages have recommended a close attention to symptoms, which are the efforts of nature in every distemper. We must not therefore inconsiderately condemn those, whoever they be, who leave much to this powerful agent, but rather such as obstruct her salutary endeavours.

Dr. *Tissot* compares the human mechanism and it's operations to that of a watch, which he observes, can be repaired only by the hands of a regular artist ; but the comparison does not hold, there being no vivifying principle in this machine, to direct and forward it's motions*. In the human body it is the province of

* “ We do not confide the mending, or cleaning, of a watch to any who have not spent several years in considering how a watch is made. what are the requisites and causes of its going right ; and the defects or impediments that make it go wrong : and yet the preserving and rectifying the movements of the most complex, the most delicate and exquisite, and the most estimable machine upon earth, is entrusted to people who have not the least notion of its structure, of the causes of its motions, nor of the instruments proper to rectify their deviations.”

An animal machine when out of order, we know, will often recover of itself, but a watch will not, for want of the *vis vite*, the powers of nature.

the

the physician to attend minutely to the various operations of Nature, which being clearly discerned, may be assisted by his endeavours, which should ever be subservient to her, the *vis medicatrix naturæ*, and are then most likely to succeed. In a matter of so great moment as health, which being disordered, often requires the greatest abilities to restore, people's interest and an attention to their own safety will prompt them, if they have any understanding, to apply to those who, as Dr. *Tissot* says, by education and medical opportunities, it may be presumed, are best qualified to give them relief.

Empirics are undoubtedly the most destructive enemies to mankind: however it must be confessed, that in the practice of Inoculation there are many practitioners well

known in this and other countries, who make no pretension to medical skill, whose success is to be envied, and can only be attributed to that happy ignorance which disables them from causing an interruption to the efforts of nature by such means as are said to be *secundum artem*.

You observe, Sir, that every method is to be taken during *the primary fever*, by a cool regimen, &c. to prevent too great an eruption; yet after the pustules have made their appearance, our business is to promote the suppuration by diluting drinks, light food, and if nature seems to flag, by generous cordials." You have here drawn the medical line distinctly, and with judgment, *if too great an eruption can be prevented with safety*. I must not put my little knowledge
and

and experience in the scale against yours. You agree with me however, in admitting that you have seen the pernicious effects of purging in the early stages of this distemper; and that you have known children so much exhausted by different evacuations, as to sink under the disease.

Whilst your book, with those of *Mead*, *Tissot*, and other excellent physicians, is in every body's hands, I need not be apprehensive that any of my speculative opinions, supposing them to be wrong, will have influence to do any mischief. In the following pages, I shall therefore deliver my sentiments.

Much may be said on both sides of the question; and, I think I have made choice of that which is most safe. Every one is sensible in some degree
of

of the bad consequences of purging in certain stages of this distemper ; yet some medical gentlemen are more strongly impressed with this idea than others, according as experience has afforded them more or less Information. Extremes are generally reckoned bad, and it may perhaps be said, that by endeavouring to avoid the rock of *Scylla*, I have split on that of *Charybdis*. If this is the case, I can only say, that there are many others in the world who have presumed too much on their own ideas, and whose reasoning would not stand the test when opposed to the stronger reasonings of others.

*Non mihi, sed rationi, aut quæ ratio esse videtur,
Milito. ———*

SCALIGER.

There is an advantage arising from the close investigation of any disputed

puted point ; for by collision of opposite opinions truth is often discovered, and science greatly improved. Logical argument and controversial reasoning cannot well be adapted to every understanding ; but striking facts and the consequences thence deducible are to every capacity plain and obvious. It were perhaps better that a hundred frivolous observations were ushered into the world, than that one important fact should be lost.

Dr. *Duncan* has published a very sensible argument in favour of *Theory*, in his *observations on the use of mercury* *.

With

* “ Theory in medicine is principally despised by two sets of practitioners, the ignorant and the lazy ; the last are unwilling, and the first are unable to acquire the knowledge of it ; and amidst all their boasted contempt, it

With respect to the management of the primary eruptive fever before mentioned, most practitioners are of opinion, that the body ought to be kept cool. But, is this to be done by purgatives? I should think not. Purgatives, Dr. *Cullen* observes, not only inflame the *rectum*, but also extend their irritation to other parts of the body. Dr *George Fordyce* * says, with great truth, that severe purging often augments the inflammatory symptoms; if this

it will be found that they principally differ from others in implicitly adopting whatever opinions they first receive. Theory is natural to the human mind; and those who are accustomed to think, cannot be satisfied without assigning a reason for every phænomenon which falls under their observation. Theory by no means precludes observations: on the contrary it leads to a more minute attention to facts, and in this way opinions, of themselves ill founded, have often given rise to useful discoveries in practice."

* Elements of Physic.

is the case, *gentle* purging, that is, the procuring two or three stools in the day, cannot contribute *much* to the cooling the patient and abating inflammation ; for I apprehend that all purgatives act as stimulants.

The faculty do not agree in opinion with regard to the property of *nitre*, when taken into the stomach, or, as is supposed, into the blood. Some recommend this salt for its cooling quality, whilst others contend, that it produces considerable heat, and they bring experiments in proof of their assertion ; so uncertain are the effects of many internal remedies ! Should we not rather employ means which we are well assured contribute to cool ? remove the bed cloaths, admit fresh air, and give diluting acidulated drinks ?

F

Though

Though *nitre* is heating, it may be said perhaps that there are medicines which *cool*, a circumstance, I shall not attempt to disprove, but shall leave the *onus probandi* to those who place the greatest confidence in their utility.

The curative effects of *bark*, *opium*, *mercury*, and some other remedies are demonstrable, which is not the case with every medicine. Some of the good purposes which medicines in general answer, are very apparent and certain: they ease the mind of the sick, by removing all appearance of neglect; they contribute to the patient's recovery, and compensate the medical attendant for his trouble.

In a daily attendance of seven years at *St. Bartholemew's Hospital*, I have seen many patients under the
Small

Small Pox. Little medicine, just what was necessary, was administered there, and no more. Nature was permitted to do her proper work.— It is in these public habitations for the sick, that a knowledge of the practice of physic is best acquired, being there perfectly orthodox, simple and undisguised.

I knew a lady, who by the desire of the surgeon who inoculated her children, took all the medicines which came from the apothecary, and locked them up in her bureau, and not one of them was administered. The apothecary was regular in his visits, and remarked how well every thing went on, and particularly observed the good effect the medicines produced on the pocks, *in plumping them up*; an observation which might naturally have occurred

red to any man so deceived. The fact was, this surgeon had seen the bad consequences of some preparatory courses, and of the medicines administered during the Small Pox, which made him resolve, for the sake of his own credit, that no interruption should be given on this occasion, by what he considered as superfluous care at the best *. He saw the propriety of making a recompense to the apothecary for his time, and requested this might be made in a handsome manner, as is done to the rest of the profession. If this mode of payment was adopted, it could not fail to promote the advantage of all parties. A celebrated physician has declared in his

* This gentleman had observed as well as yourself, "That the patient's greatest danger in Inoculation arose, not from the want of care, but from the excess of it."

works, that he did not think himself warranted to take money out of the pocket of one man to put it into that of another, unless there was a valuable consideration for the same. —If this laudable example was followed in every business and profession, it would be much to the benefit of the community at large, and not a little to the credit of those who practised it.

I have dwelt long on the subject of the Faculty, as I am persuaded, that the evils of the preparatory process and subsequent course of superfluous medicines arise principally from this interested source.

Inoculation is an inestimable, yet tender plant, which requires the effusions of benevolence to water it and promote its growth. In this country at present it is unfortunately

exposed to the nipping blasts of a destructive influence, yet I am pleased with the prospect that it will flourish in our climate some time or other with great luxuriance. But whether we are more likely to be indebted on this occasion to the good endeavours of the Faculty, or of others, being a matter wherein opinions differ much, it would ill become me to decide †.

I have just been shewn a plan of a Dispensary for Inoculation in the city and county of *Chester*, which has been attended with remarkable

† It is rather extraordinary that *Inoculation*, the most rational and beneficial of all inventions, should have been so much opposed, whilst the absurd practice of *the transfusion of the blood of animals into the human body* was so eagerly embraced, in this country; in my opinion, it can only be attributed to a selfishness of disposition, which induces people to take much more pains to prolong their own than to preserve the lives of others.

success;

success ; and another in *Holborn* ; two of the conditions of the latter are as follow ; “ Every single patient is to pay *five shillings* at the time of Inoculation, and to be attended carefully, and regularly, at their own houses, from the time of sickening, ’till they are quite recovered, without any additional expence whatever.” The last runs thus :

“ Very poor people shall be inoculated *gratis*, and also their families ; and shall be attended in the same manner, provided they furnish some kind of proof of their desert, from a person of credit, to whom they are known.”

It gives me much pleasure to learn, that Dispensaries for Inoculation are beginning to be provided in this metropolis and other

places. These useful institutions, since the hospital for Inoculation can only accommodate a small number of those who apply, being the first of the kind which have come to my knowledge, I am happy, Sir, to communicate to you the pleasing information.

I cannot conclude my Letter without a quotation from your book, and one from Dr. *Black*, which appear to me to be much to the purpose. “ As the Small Pox has now become an epidemical disease in most parts of the known world, no other choice remains, but to render the disease as mild as possible. This is the only manner of extirpation, now left in our power ; and though it may seem paradoxical, the artificial method of communicating the malady, could it be rendered

dered universal, would amount to nearly the same thing as rooting it out. It is a matter of small consequence whether a disease be entirely extirpated, or rendered so mild, as neither to destroy life, nor hurt the constitution ; but that this may be done by inoculation, does not now admit of a doubt."

" Every life, says Dr. *Black*, saved by this practice, is so much solid treasure and strength added to the nation. There is no disease, where we have it so much in our power and command to lessen mortality, as in the Small Pox by Inoculation. It is a bridge furnished by Providence to pass over a deep gulph or raging whirlpool, in which millions of the human species have been lost."

This

This religious and just idea is well suggested, and helps to reconcile this beneficial practice to the minds of all, who are not predetermined never to submit their judgement to the voice of Reason.

The Parents who are so unfortunate as to lose a Child by this practice, will have the consolation within their bosoms, that they were actuated by the best of motives : whilst those who meet with a similar misfortune, through the omission of this important duty, will have not only the upbraidings of their own minds to encounter, but also the merited reproaches of the world. I wish all those who are entrusted with the care and education of children, would take this subject into serious consideration, and I think

think they would be induced to adopt the practice from the result of reason and reflection.

Those, who sincerely wish success to the practice of Inoculation, ought to oppose every gentle and persuasive argument to the rooted prejudices of mankind. Much mischief is excited and opposition kindled by every spark of irritation, which we should carefully avoid, since it never produces any good or beneficial consequences.

The General, who meditates an attack on a citadel, fortified by nature and art, often proceeds by stratagem and address, rather than open force. By these manœuvres what was deemed at first impregnable, is finally compelled to surrender. In like manner do the most inveterate prejudices yield to the

the well timed influence of cool reason and fair argument.

The man who wishes to make profelytes to any Cause, should seize the happy moment of a mental Calm, to enforce his tenets. Advice never makes so deep an impression on the mind, as when it is known to proceed from honest disinterested motives, and a regard for the public good. These considerations never fail to make converts in the end: a truth which you, Sir, must frequently have experienced in the course of your indefatigable and laudable attempts, to promote the health and welfare of mankind.

I shall be happy to have my endeavours co-operate in any degree with your's in rendering the practice of Inoculation what it ought
to

to be, plain and simple, to strip it of its borrowed terrors, and make it familiar and acceptable to the whole world.

That you may, in this metropolis, meet with all the success due to your approved merit, is the sincere wish of

S I R,

Your most obedient

Humble Servant,

PETER CLARE.

*Chancery-Lane,
September 1, 1781.*

(10)
Published by the same Author,

A New and Easy Method of Cure of the LUES VENEREA, by the Absorption of a grain of Mercury from the Lips; to which is added, a Treatise on the Gonorrhœa, Price 1s. Also, An Essay on Abscesses, &c. with a Head of the Author; the third Edition. Price 2s. 6d.

THIS Pamphlet is intended *as a Supplement* to the Essay on Abscesses, &c. and is added to the above, *without any additional Expence to the Purchaser.*

TO THE PUBLIC.

SINCE my Letter to Dr. *Buchan* was printed, I have seen a Pamphlet containing *A Series of Experiments, instituted with a view of ascertaining the most successful method of Inoculating the Small Pox.*

From the whole of these experiments it appears, that neither the number of the pustules, nor the mildness of the disease depends, in the smallest degree, on the mode of preparing the body; that Inoculation generally succeeds best, without any preparation; and that the common method of giving violent purges and mercurials, does more harm than good.

No one will question the accuracy of experiments made by the ingenious and candid Dr. *Watson*, F.R.S, and Physician to the Foundling-Hospital,

TO THE PUBLIC

Since my Letter to Dr. Baillie
was printed, I have seen a Pamphlet
containing A Series of Experiments
instituted with a view of ascertaining
the most successful method of treat-
ing the Small Pox.

From the whole of these experi-
ments it appears, that neither the
number of the pustules, nor the depth
of the disease depends, in the
smallest degree, on the mode of pre-
paring the body; that inoculation
generally succeeds best; without any
preparation; and that the common
method of giving violent purges and
sweats, does more harm than
good.

No one will question the accuracy
of experiments made by the inge-
nious and careful Dr. Watson, F.R.S.
and Physician to the Lord's
Hospital.

THE Small Pox is commonly divided into two kinds, *The Distinct, and the Confluent*. The former is where there are spaces betwixt the Pocks; the latter, where they are not apart, but run one into another. This situation is reckoned very dangerous.

The Distinct, or regular sort, according to SYDENHAM, begins with a shuddering and chills, which is succeeded by an intense heat, violent pain of the head and back, vomiting, drowsiness, and sometimes epileptic fits, especially in children, which shew the Pocks to be ready to burst forth, and that they will be mild. The eruptions are usually on the fourth day from the beginning, at which time the feverish symptoms either abate or wholly disappear. The spots are at first reddish, resembling flea bites, and are to be seen in various parts of the body. On the eighth day, the spaces between the pustules, which were hitherto white, grow red and swell, the eyelids are puffed up and close the eyes; next to the face, the hands begin to swell, and the pustules, which were before smooth and red, become rough and whitish, and throw out a yellow matter, resembling a honeycomb. On the eleventh day, the swelling of the face and inflammation disappear; and the pustules being ripe, grow dry, and fall off; and on the fifteenth they perish entirely.

All that is necessary in general during the *Eruptive fever*, (says the Author of Domestic Medicine) is to keep the patient cool and easy, allowing him to drink freely of some weak diluting liquors, as balm tea, barley water, clear whey, gruels, &c. He should not be confined in bed, but sit up as much as he is able, and should have his feet and legs frequently bathed in luke-warm water. His food ought to be very light, and he should be as little disturbed with company as possible.

The good women, as soon as the Small Pox appears, commonly ply their tender charge with cordials, saffron and marigold teas, wine, punch, and even brandy itself. All these are given with a view, as they term it, to throw out the eruption from the heart. This, like most other popular mistakes, is the abuse of a very just observation, that when there is a moisture on the skin, the Pox rise better, and the patient is easier than when it continues dry and parched. But that is no reason for forcing the patient into a sweat. Sweating never relieves, unless where it comes spontaneously, or is the effect of drinking weak liquors. So strong is the vulgar prejudice in this country, notwithstanding all that has been said against the hot regimen in the Small Pox, that numbers still fall a sacrifice to that error. I have seen poor women travelling in the depth of winter, and carrying their children along with them, and others begging by the way side, with infants in their arms covered with pustules; yet I could never learn that one of these children died by this sort of treatment; a sufficient proof of the safety of exposing patients in the Small Pox to the open air.

The food ought to be very light, and of a cooling nature, as panada, or bread boiled, with an equal quantity of milk and water, good apples roasted, or boiled with milk, and sweetened with a little sugar, or such like.

The drink may be equal parts of milk and water, clear sweet whey, barley water, or thin gruel. After the pocks are full, butter-milk, being of an opening cleansing nature, is a very proper drink.

This disease is generally divided into four different periods, viz. the Fever which precedes the eruption, the Eruption itself, the Suppuration or ripening of the pustules, and the Secondary Fever.

It has been already observed, that little more is necessary during the primary, or first fever, than to keep the patient cool and quiet, allowing him to drink diluting liquors, and bathing his feet frequently in warm water. Though this is generally the safest course that can be taken with infants, yet adults (grown persons) of a strong constitution, and plethoric habit, sometimes require bleeding. When a full pulse, or dry skin, and other symptoms of inflammation render this operation necessary, it ought to be performed; otherwise, unless the symptoms are urgent, it is safer to let it alone. If the body is bound, emollient clysters may be thrown in. If there be a great nausea, or inclination to vomit, weak camomile tea, or luke-warm water, may be drank, in order to clean the stomach. At the beginning of a fever, nature generally attempts a discharge, either upwards or downwards, which, if promoted by gentle means, would tend greatly to abate the violence of the disease.

Though every method is to be taken during the Primary Fever, by a cool regimen, &c. to prevent too great an eruption, yet after the pustules have made their appearance, our business is to promote the suppuration by diluting drinks, light food, and if nature seems to flag, by generous cordials. When a low creeping pulse, faintness, and a great loss of strength, render cordials necessary, we would recommend good wine, which may be made into negus, with an equal quantity of water, and sharpened with juice of orange, the jelly of currants, or the like. Wine whey sharpened as above is likewise a proper drink in this case; great care must be taken not to over heat the patient by any of these things: This, instead of promoting, would retard the eruption.

Excessive restlessness often prevents the rising of the Pock; when this happens, opiates are necessary; these, however, ought always to be administered with a sparing hand. To an infant, a tea spoonful of syrup of poppies may be given every five or six hours, till it has the desired effect. An adult will require a table spoonful to answer the same purpose.

To promote the urine, a tea spoonful of sweet spirits of nitre may be occasionally mixed with his drink. Nothing more certainly relieves the patient, or is more beneficial in the Small Pox, than a plentiful discharge by urine.

If the mouth be foul, and the tongue dry and chapped, it ought to be frequently washed, and the throat gargled with water and honey, sharpened with a little vinegar, or currant jelly.

During the rising of the Small Pox, it frequently happens that the patient is eight or ten days without a stool. This not only tends to heat and inflame the blood, but the feces by lodging so long in the body, become acrid and even putrid; from whence bad consequences must ensue. It will therefore be proper, when the body is bound, to throw in an emollient clyster every second or third day, through the whole course of the disease. This will greatly cool and relieve the patient.

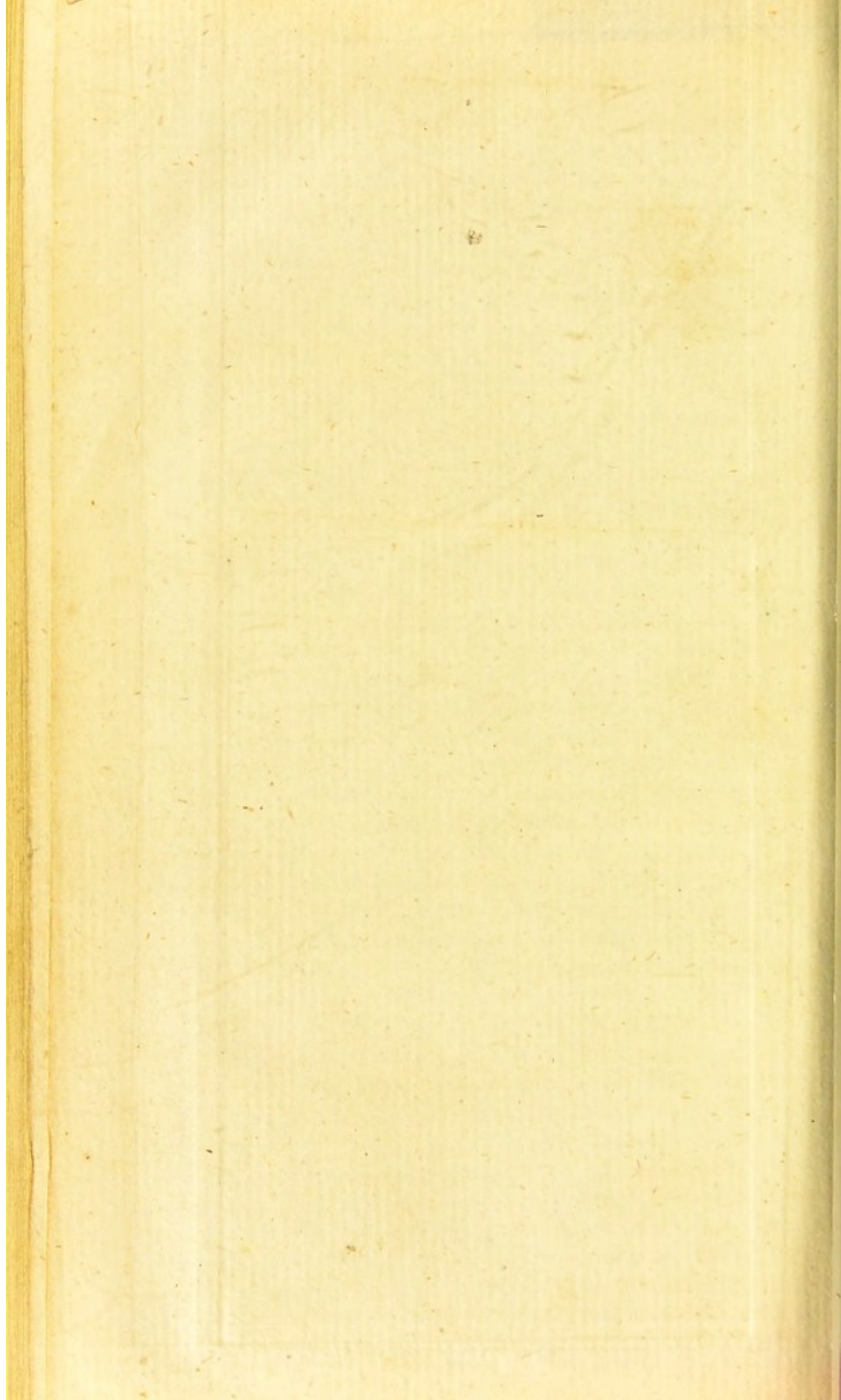
When the *Petechia*, or purple, black, or livid spots appear among the pocks, the Peruvian bark must be immediately administered in as large doses as the patient's stomach can bear. For a child two drams of the bark in powder may be mixed in three ounces of common water, one ounce of simple water, and two ounces of syrup of orange or lemon. This may be sharpened with the spirits of vitriol; and a table spoonful of it given every hour. If it be given to an adult in the same form, he may take at least three or four spoonfuls every hour. This medicine ought not to be trifled with, but must be administered as frequently as the stomach can bear it; in which case it will often produce very happy effects. I have frequently seen the *Petechia* disappear, and the Small Pox, which had a very threatening aspect, rise and fill with laudable matter, by the use of the bark and acids. The patient's drink ought likewise in this case to be generous, as wine and strong negus, acidulated with the spirits of vitriol, vinegar, the juice of lemons, jelly of currants, or such like. His food must consist of apples roasted or boiled, preserved cherries, plums, and other fruits of an acid nature.

When the Eruption subsides suddenly, or as the good women term it, when the Small Pox *strike in*, before they have arrived at maturity, the danger is very great. In this case blistering plaisters must be immediately applied to the wrists and ankles, and the patients spirits supported by cordials.

To prevent the *Secondary Fever*, which is very dangerous, and is in a great measure, if not wholly owing to the absorption of the matter, it would seem highly consonant to reason, that the pustules, as soon as they come to maturity, should be opened, as in common abscesses.

It is generally necessary after the Small Pox is gone off, to purge the patient. For very young children an infusion of senna and prunes, with a little rhubarb, may be sweetened with coarse sugar, and given in small quantities till it operates. A child of five or six years of age, may take eight or ten grains of fine rhubarb in powder at night, and the same quantity of jalap in powder the next morning, to be carried off with fresh broth or water gruel, and may be repeated three or four times, at the distance of five or six days. The dose is to be increased or diminished, in proportion to the age and constitution of the patient.

PLATON



UNIVERSAL INOCULATION.

The following Arguments are submitted to the Consideration of the Public.

"I have often (says the Author) wished to see some plan established for rendering the salutary practice of Inoculation universal; * but am afraid I shall never be so happy. The difficulties indeed are many; yet the thing is by no means impracticable. The aim is great; no less than saving the lives of one fourth part of mankind. What ought not to be attempted in order to accomplish so desirable an end?—The first step towards rendering the practice universal, must be to remove the religious prejudices against it. This can only be done by the Clergy.—They must not only recommend it as a duty to others, but likewise practise it on their own children.—Example will ever have more influence than precept.

The next thing requisite is to put it in the power of all. For this purpose we would recommend it to the faculty to inoculate the children of the Poor *Gratis*.—It is hard that so useful a part of mankind should, by their poverty, be excluded from such a benefit.—Should this fail, it is surely in the power of any State to render the practice general, at least as far as their dominion extends. We do not mean that it should be enforced by a law. The best way to promote it would be to employ a sufficient number of Operators, at the public expence, to inoculate the children of the poor. This would only be necessary, till the practice became general, afterwards custom, the strongest of all laws, would oblige every individual to inoculate his children to prevent reflections.

It may be objected to this scheme, that the poor would refuse to employ the Inoculators; this difficulty is easily removed. A small Gratuity to enable mothers to attend their children while under the disease, would be a sufficient inducement; besides, the success attending the operation would soon banish all objections to it. Even considerations of profit would induce the poor to embrace this plan. They often bring up their children to the age of ten or twelve, and when they come to be useful, they are snatched away by this malady, to the great loss of their parents and detriment of the public.

To prevent such fatal accidents we would therefore have every parish in Britain allow a small annual salary for inoculating all the children of the parish of a proper age. This might be done at a very trifling expence, and it would put it in the power of all to enjoy the benefit of this salutary invention. Two things chiefly operate to prevent the progress of Inoculation. The one is a wish to put the evil day as far off as possible. This is a principle in our nature, and as Inoculation seems rather to be anticipating a future evil, it is no wonder that mankind are so averse to it. But this objection is sufficiently answered by the success. Who in his senses would not prefer a lesser evil to day to a greater to-morrow, provided they were equally certain.

The other obstacle is, the fear of reflections. This has very great weight with the bulk of Mankind. Should the child die,

* The Author asserts, "That more die annually of the natural Small Pox now, than before Inoculation was introduced. While it is confined to a few, it must prove hurtful to the whole. By means of it the contagion is spread, and is communicated to many, who might otherwise never have had the disease." The French deliberated in council on this point, and resolved in favour of no Inoculation rather than a partial one.

they think the world would blame them. This they cannot bear. Here lies the greatest difficulty, and till that be removed, Inoculation will make but small progress. Nothing, however, can remove it but custom. Make the practice, fashionable and all objections will soon vanish. It is Fashion alone that has led the multitude since the beginning of the world, and will lead them to the end. We must therefore call upon the more enlightened part of mankind to set a pattern to the rest. Their example, though it may for some time meet with opposition, will at length prevail. I am aware of an objection to this practice from the expence with which it may be attended: this is easily obviated.

There is not a parish, and hardly a village in Britain, destitute of some person who can bleed. But this is a far more difficult operation, and requires both more skill and dexterity than Inoculation. The persons to whom we would chiefly recommend the performance of this operation, are the clergy, most of them know something of medicine. Almost all of them bleed, and can order a purge, which are all the qualifications necessary for the practice of Inoculation.

Should all other methods fail, we would recommend it to Parents to perform the Operation themselves. Let them take any method of communicating the disease they please, provided the subject be healthy, and of a proper age, they will seldom fail to succeed to their wish. I have known many instances of mothers performing the Operation, and never so much as heard of one bad consequence. A Planter in one of the West-India Islands is said to have inoculated with his own hand, in one year, three hundred of his slaves, who notwithstanding the warmth of the climate, and other unfavourable circumstances, all did well. Common mechanics have often, to my knowledge, performed the operation with as good success, as physicians. We do not however mean to discourage those who have it in their power, from employing people of skill to inoculate their children, and attend them while under the disease, but only to show, that where such cannot be had, the operation ought not on that account to be deferred. Instead of multiplying arguments to recommend this practice, I shall just beg leave to mention the method which I took with my own son, then an only child, after giving him, two gentle purges, I ordered the nurse to take a bit of thread which had been previously wet with fresh matter from a pock, and to lay it upon his arm, covering it with a piece of sticking plaster. This staid on six or seven days till it was rubbed off by accident, at the usual time the small pox made their appearance and were extremely favourable.† Sure this, which is all that is generally necessary, may be done without any skill in medicine."

Domestic Medicine, p. 252.

† The celebrated Monsieur DUPLANIL, who has translated DOMESTIC MEDICINE, prefers the application of SMALL BLISTERS (de petits emplâtres vésicatoires) to sticking plaster, on account of the greater certainty of the matter's being absorbed when the cuticle or scarf-skin is raised and detached. This method has been repeatedly tried in France, and is recommended by Mons. Tronchin, to those who are friends to Inoculation and have at the same time an insuperable objection to all kind of cutting instruments. In some countries they use a lancet; in some a needle, and in others a sharp-pointed thorn. In Turkey the women inoculate, and in the East Indies the Bramins or priests.

MISCELLANEOUS
REMARKS

ON

Mr. CLARE's

NEW METHOD of applying MERCURY,

IN THE WAYS OF

PREVENTION and CURE;

WITH

LETTERS

FROM SEVERAL

GENTLEMEN of the FACULTY,

Recommending this Practice, and assigning their
Reasons for preferring THIS to any other
Mode of Administration.

Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.

L O N D O N:

Printed for the AUTHOR of A NEW and EASY
METHOD of CURE, &c.

M, DCC, LXXXII.

MISCELLANEOUS

R. E. M. A. R. K. S.

OF

MR. G. L. A. R. E.

New Method of applying MERCURY

IN THE WAYS OF

PREVENTION AND CURE

OF

L. E. T. E. R. S.

FROM SEVERAL

GENTLEMEN of the FACULTY

Recommending this Practice, and assigning their
Reasons for preferring THIS to any other
Mode of Administration.

L. O. N. D. O. N.

Printed for the AUTHOR of A NEW and EASY
METHOD of CURING
M. DCC. LXXVII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

MY new method of administering mercury having met with the greatest approbation from several Gentlemen of the Faculty, I was unwilling that the public should lose the benefit, or myself the credit, arising from their candid opinions and attestations, I therefore resolved to collect their detached communications and to present them at one view to general inspection. Some of the testimonies produced in the follow-

ing pages are anonymous, the rest have their respectable and proper signatures—these will undoubtedly claim the greatest attention, but no less regard ought to be paid to the others, when the observations and experiments are founded on the basis of reason and facts.

I have translated into French Dr. Hunter's remarks and as many of Mr. Cruikshank's as seemed necessary to give foreigners, unacquainted with the English language, an idea of this practice.

Chancery-Lane, March

25, 1782.

Dr.



Dr. H U N T E R's
R E M A R K S
O N

Mr. C L A R E's
*New Method of introducing Mercury into
the Circulation.*

AS the *external* surface of the body (says the Doctor) is every where bibulous, so is the internal. There can be no doubt of absorption taking place on the inside of the mouth, of the *preputium*, of the *labia*, &c. and any fine powder, capable of being absorbed there, will, no doubt, be more readily absorbed when mixed with a watery fluid. When mixed with oil, and applied to wet surfaces, it may be presumed that it will

B

be

be kept at some distance. It is likewise very probable, that, when the calomel is rubbed upon the surfaces of the mouth, what gets into the stomach is carried down so gradually, and diffused over so great a surface, that it will stimulate the *primæ viæ* much less; and people with very tender bowels may therefore bear it much better than when given in pills, boluses, &c.

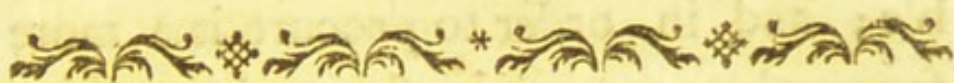
The Dr. adds, it is reasonable to suppose, that watery fluids will, in general, be more readily absorbed, perhaps even when applied to the outward surface.

Remarques de Docteur Hunter
 sur la Nouvelle Methode
 d'introduire le Mercure dans
 la Circulation du Sang, de
 PIERRE CLARE, Chirurgien.

“ **C**OMME toute la surface extérieure de notre Corps est absorbante, l'intérieure l'est de même. Il n'y a point de doute que l'intérieure de la Bouche, le prepuce & les labia &c. n'absorbent, & toute poudre fine capable d'y être absorbée, le fera toujours beaucoup plus facilement quand elle aura été mêlée avec un fluide aqueux. Quand mêlée avec de l'huile, & appliquée aux surfaces mouillées, on peut presumer qu'elle sera tenue à quelque distance. Il est bien probable aussi que, quand le Calomel est frotté sur les surfaces de la

Bouche, ce qui entre dans l'Estomac est introduit si graduellement, & repandu sur une surface si large, qu'elle agatera les *primæ viæ* beaucoup moins, & des personnes ayant des Intestines fort foibles, le peuvent mieux endurer, que quand il est pris en pilules, ou en Bolus &c. Et, il est raisonnable de supposer que les fluides aqueux seront généralement absorbés plus promptement peut-être même, étant appliquée à la surface externe."

REVIEW



R E V I E W

O F A N

ESSAY *on* ABSCESSSES, &c.

“**T**HIS Essay contains several judicious observations in surgery, tending to evince the superiority of lenient applications, to those of an irritating nature, in the cure of ulcers. But what chiefly merits attention, is, a new method of introducing mercury into the circulation, for the cure of the lues venerea. This is performed by the patient’s rubbing with his finger, moistened with saliva, three or four grains of calomel every day on the inside of the cheek. Mr. Clare is convinced from experiments, that this method of introducing mercury is practica-

ble; and in order to procure it a more favourable reception from the public, there are added a few remarks on the plausibility of the propofal, by Dr. Hunter, and a variety of fimilar obfervations by his anatomical coadjutor, Mr. Cruikfhank, in a letter to Mr. Clare. As Mr. Cruikfhank appears to have confidered the merit of the practice with great attention, we fhall prefent our readers with fome of his pertinent remarks.

‘ The abforption of calomel from the infide of the mouth, in your method, appears, from the testimony of many of your patients, undeniable. For if your patients rub three grains of calomel every day on the infide of the mouth, and it does not gripe or purge; and if the common effect of three grains, taken into the ftomach, is, that it certainly gripes and purges; then we muft conclude, that the three grains, given in your way, have
not

not gone into the stomach, whilst their producing evident effects on the disease, for which they were exhibited, shews, that they have certainly got into the habit; or, in other words, that they have been absorbed by the surface to which they were applied. One of your patients informs me, that he saw you weigh eight grains of calomel, that he employed all this quantity, in your way, at once; and that he went through this process three succeeding mornings without being sick, griped, or purged. On what other supposition, shall we be able to say, why these eight grains of calomel did not purge or gripe, but that, having been absorbed from the mouth, they became milder in their operation, in the same way as we know the divided quicksilver becomes milder when absorbed by the skin.

* If calomel may be absorbed in your way, it must be the most eligible method,

because it is less apt to irritate the stomach and intestines, and, by purging, to destroy its proper effect, than it would be if its first action was to be immediately on these parts. There are some preparations of mercury which may be taken into the stomach without irritating too much, provided opium is exhibited along with them; but there are many constitutions which will not bear opium; and if mercury cannot be exhibited properly without it, patients possessed of such constitutions must be extremely unfortunate, especially if to the former peculiarity of habit is joined another viz. an antipathy in the skin to every thing oily. How many, originally vigorous, deduce their present weak bowels, and crazy constitutions, from the mischief occasioned by the action of mercury on the primæ viæ! Now, whether the calomel is here absorbed from the mouth, or not, supposing it actually goes into the stomach,

but

but that the circumstance of its being given in a liquid form, diffuses its particular stimulus, or that this stimulus is blunted by its ropy vehicle the saliva, and that thus only it becomes milder in its operation: still the fact is, that it really is milder, and of course, as the medicine is allowed to be equally efficacious, this method is to be preferred to any other mode of exhibiting mercury internally.

‘ With those who believe that the calomel is actually absorbed from the inside of the mouth, and that it does not pass into the stomach and intestines, there will be still less doubt with respect to the propriety of employing this method rather than the giving calomel, or indeed any other commonly prescribed preparation of mercury, in form of draught, bolus, or pill; for though these preparations, taken in the stomach and intestines, may

may sometimes be absorbed from their internal surface as well as from any other, yet, from the greater irritability of these surfaces, the stimulus of the calomel, or of the other preparations, is more likely to prove too great; to produce sickness, griping, and purging, and to occasion their being hurled out of the body, before sufficient time has been allowed for their absorption. In this way the remedy runs a greater risk of being entirely lost, and of producing as little effect on the disease, for which it was exhibited, as the Peruvian bark would do on an intermittent, if, instead of staying in the stomach, it was constantly running off by stool. Or though it should not actually purge, yet, from its particular stimulus, the digestive organs, with whose state the functions of the body are so much connected, are more apt to be thrown into disorder; during which period, the attempts of nature to relieve herself
 against

against any disease, if not altogether prevented, must, at least, be extremely imperfect. On the contrary, if calomel is rubbed on the inside of the mouth, it is applied to a surface, which happens to be alternately exposed to heat and cold, and to considerable friction in chewing our food and cleaning our teeth ; of course to a less irritable surface, and capable even of bearing moderate friction. The calomel will here be mixed with the saliva during the friction, will be diffused over the whole mouth, and absorbed from the inside of the lips, surfaces of the tongue, roof of the mouth and fauces, as well as of the cheeks. Thus, its first effects will not be in the way of stimulus on the *primæ viæ*, but it will be gradually and equally applied to the general system.

We cannot dismiss this article without acknowledging that Mr. Clare has discovered

covered a method of administering mercury, which affords the strongest reason to expect that it will be productive of great advantages in practice; and the singular modesty with which it is recommended by the author, entitles it to the more candid examination.

Critical Review for March 1779.

*Extrait de la lettre de Mr.
Cruikshank à l'Egard de cette
nouvelle Methode, &c.*

“ **L**’Absorbtion du Calomel de l’interieur de la Bouche, selon votre methode, paroît par le temoignage de plusieurs de vos malades, incontestable. Car si vos malades se frottent tous les jours avec trois grains de Calomel l’interieur de la Bouche, et que ces trois grains n’agacent ni purgent, & si le commun
effet

effet des trois grains introduit dans l'Estomac, est qu'ils pincent & purgent certainement, alors il faut conclurre que les trois grains administré de votre facon ne soient point entrés dans l'Estomac, pendant que produisant leur effets visibles dans la maladie pour laquelle ils estoient appliqués, cela demontre clairement qu'ils sont entrés dans la Circulation ou autrement, qu'ils ont été absorbés par la surface à laquelle ils estoient appliqués. Un de vos malades m'informa qu'il vous vit peser huit grains de Calomel, qu'il employoit toute cette quantité, selon votre methode, à la fois, & qu'il continua ce procédé pendant trois matins sans être indisposé, pincé ou purgé; sur quelle autre supposition pourrons nous dire pourquoi ces huit grains de Calomel ne le purgerent ni le pincerent, mais parce qu'étant absorbés de la bouche ils devinrent plus doux dans leur operation, de la même maniere comme nous savons que

le vif Argent separé devient plus doux, quand il est absorbé de la peau ? Si le Calomel peut être absorbé selon votre methode, il faut qu'il soit le procédé le plus à choisir, parcequ'il est moins sujet d'irriter l'Estomac & les intestins, & par la purgation à détruire son propre effet qu'il seroit si sa premiere Action devoit être immédiatement portée sur ces parties. Il y a quelques preparations de Mercure que l'on pourroit prendre dans l'Estomac sans l'irriter trop, pourvu que *l'Opium* y soit administré, mais il y a beaucoup de Constitutions qui ne peuvent pas supporter *l'Opium*, et si le mercure ne peut pas être appliqué proprement sans *l'Opium*, il faut que les malades d'un tel temparement soient bien malheureux, tout encore si à la premiere particularité de Constitution y soit jointe un autre, c'est à dire, une Antipathie dans la peau à tout chose qui est huileuse. Combien des gens autre fois

fois vigoureux, derivent leur Intestins foibles tendres & leur Constitution infirme, du mal occasioné par l'Operation du Mercure sur les *primæ viæ*. Or, le Calomel est il ici absorbé de la Bouche ou non; supposons qu'il soit actuellement porté dans l'Estomac, mais que la circonstance de l'y étant administré en forme d'un liquide repand sa qualité piquante particuliere: ou que cette Qualité piquante adoucit par la viscosité de la Salive, et qu'ainsi elle devient plus modérée dans son Operation; neanmoins le fait est que le Calomel est actuellement plus doux, & par conséquence comme la medicine est approuvée d'être également efficace, cette methode doit être préférée à tout autre mode d'administrer le mercure en dedans. Quant à ceux qui croient que le Calomel soit actuellement absorbé de l'interieur de la bouche & qu'il ne passe dans l'estomac & les intestins, il y aura encore moins de doute

à legard de la propriété d'employer cette methode plutôt que de donner le Calomel ou, vraiment aucune autre preparation ordinaire du mercure en maniere de mixture Bolus ou pilules ; car quoique ces preparations recués dans l'estomac et les Intestins pouissent quelque fois etre absorbés de leur surface interieure aussi bien que de toute autre partie, non obstant de la plus grande sensibilité de ces surfaces, l'irritation de Calomel ou des autres preparations pourroient probablement devoir trop grande, à produire l'Indisposition, la Colique & la purgation, & pour causer à les jetter hors du corps, avantqu'il y eût un tems suffisant pour leur Absorption ; dans ce cas il y a grand risque que le remede ne soit entirement perdu, & qu'il produiroit si peu d'effet sur le desordre pour lequel il etoit administré, comme la Quina feroit dans une Fievre intermittante, si au lieu de rester dans l'Estomac, il passeroit continuellement
par

par en bas : ou, quoiqu'il ne purgeroit pas actuellement, néanmoins par son irritation particuliere, les Organes de la digestion avec l'état desquelles les fonctions du corps sont si étroitement jointes, sont plus sujettes d'être jettées en desordre, pendant quelle periode les efforts de la nature pour se débarasser d'aucun desordre, s'ils ne sont pas prevenus tous ensemble, il faut qu'ils soyent extrêmement imparfaits. Tout au contraire, si le Calomel est frotté sur l'intérieur de la Bouche, il est appliqué à une surface qui est alternativement exposée au chaud et au froid, et à un frottement considerable en mâchant nos Aliments, & en nettoyant nos dents ; par conséquent à une surface moins sensible, et même capable à supporter une friction modérée ; le Calomel sera ainsi mêlé avec la Salive pendant la friction, il sera repandu dans tout l'intérieur de la Bouche, et absorbé du dedans des levres, des surfaces

de la langue, & du palais de la Bouche & des mâchoires, aussi bien que des joues. Ainsi ses premiers effets ne seront pas en forme de *Stimulus* sur les *primæ viæ*, mais ils seront graduellement et également appliqués au Systeme general.

P. 104 le 1t. Ed.—187 le 2de. Ed.

A N
E S S A Y
O N T H E
CURE *of* ABSCESSSES, &c.

UPON former occasions of reviewing medical and chirurgical publications, we have expressed our sentiments with respect to the utility of such communications, it is therefore needless to repeat them, and we shall only observe that Mr. Clare, a gentleman eminent in
his

his profession, who served his apprenticeship to the celebrated Mr. Pott, senior surgeon of St. Bartholomew's hospital, in the pamphlet before us, plainly demonstrates that great improvements have been made of late years in surgery by the English surgeons, so that they may now claim that superiority which was given to the French in the former part of the present century. It is an indisputable fact, that all the operations of surgery in practice amongst the ancients, and even with the moderns till of late years were excruciating, tedious, and aukward—in comparison of the lenient methods which now prevail in England. With respect to abscesses, the first subject of Mr. Clare's attention, they were generally opened by the knife in England and in France; in the latter it is still the prevailing practice. Corroding medicines were likewise applied to the *fungus*; but this practice is also laid aside, and lenient dressings

dressings substituted. “ Formerly, says Mr. Clare, whenever any enlarged glands appeared in wounds, it was the practice to attack them with the most powerful escharotics, and where these failed, recourse was had to extirpation by ligature or the fingers. These glandular appearances are considered by modern surgeons as no unfavourable symptoms, and often form the basis of a cure, when treated with lenity.” The remarks on precipitate and other dressings, are very judicious, and discover great tenderness, sensibility, and humanity for those who have the misfortune to stand in need of surgical operations. Some extraordinary cases are related to shew the power of nature in aiding the cure of wounds when left a little to herself, and also of the balsamic quality of the blood for the same purpose, and Mr. Clare has the candour to recommend the greatest attention to these circumstances, though
 against

against the interest of his profession. Instead of Fryar's balsam, and other painful applications, we are informed, that pressing the lips of the wound together, and closing it, to preclude the air, is sufficient in common cuts.

But we must now introduce the principal subject of this pamphlet, which contains a discovery of a very important nature for the ease of venereal patients, who abound in this metropolis. Being induced from observation to think this disease is best subdued by the salivary discharge, and convinced that chemical preparations of mercury given internally in pills, boluses, &c. vellicate and injure the stomach and intestines, Mr. Clare determined to make trial of another method founded on the principal of absorption. No surgeon will deny the absorption of mercury into the blood, when applied in powder to a sore; a part which
has

has lost its covering, the external skin. This led him to order his patients to rub with the finger, moistened with saliva, three or four grains of *mercurii dulcis sexties sublimati* (calomel) every day on the inside of the cheek, on and round that part where the *salivary duct* opens into the mouth, and the diseases were cured. One or two grains rubbed in behind the *preputium* or the *labia*, will sometimes give a mercurial breath, and a slight spitting; and he thinks it may act in this manner as a preventive more to be relied on, in our opinion, than those that are daily advertised.

The nasty dreadful practice of mercurial frictions by unction in some cases, or what is called laying down in a salivation, is avoided by this new method; it is a fortunate circumstance for Mr. Clare, that he has communicated this improved method, to gentlemen of the profession,
of

of the most liberal sentiments, who have generously supported him by their opinions in favour of it. To Dr. Hunter and Mr. Cruikshank, he and his patients are greatly indebted, the sensible investigation of the absorbent system by the latter, forms a valuable appendix to this pamphlet, and is one of those rare instances seldom to be met with out of Britain, of disinterested friendship, and regard for the welfare of mankind, taking the place of those mean passions, envy and rivalry.

*Impartial Review of New Publications,
in the London Magazine, for March,
1779.*

A Letter from Dr. KROHN,
Member of the Royal College
of Physicians in London, and
Physician Man-Midwife to
the Middlesex-Hospital.

To Mr. CLARE, Surgeon.

DEAR SIR,

ON reading your publication on
Mercury, to be conveyed into the
constitution by absorption, with more ad-
vantage and equal success, &c. I was so
pleased with the idea, that I determined
to try it the first opportunity which should
offer itself, strictly following your mode,
prescribed.

In the beginning of October last a par-
ticular friend of mine from the country
came to me, then about a month ill of a
virulent

virulent *chancre*, to such a degree, that the ulcers of various sizes, deeply seated, had almost destroyed the *frænum*. Desirous of my advice, I prescribed your mercurial liniment, the benefit of which he very soon experienced, by recovering within the space of a fortnight, perceiving not the smallest inconvenience from it's use. He on the contrary found his bowels perfectly free from any attack on them, the usual attendant on former methods of treatment, which he had frequently experienced previous to this trial. No kind of wash or application whatsoever was used for the ulcers, which notwithstanding grew gradually better and healed. I saw him but very lately, when he informed me that he had not had the smallest return of the complaint in any shape.

It afforded me the more pleasure, as he, from peculiar circumstances, was

D

obliged

obliged to visit much, and to go into companies, where a reservedness in his manner of living amongst his friends must inevitably have raised such suspicions as would have proved prejudicial.

Two other cases of the like complaint have since occurred to me, in both sexes; where I was certain of ITS FULL AND GOOD EFFECT.—And what is more *surprising, is*, that *this mode* seems to agree *better* with people who are debauchees, having had a most essential proof of this assertion in the one, a man who drank all kind of strong liquors, was scarcely ever in bed for a week together, and that at the break of day, and much exposed to cold, damp and moist air.

If these little observations, made by me in consequence of your disinterested publication, can afford you any satisfaction, I will in future do myself the pleasure
 fure

sure to communicate what shall fall under
my inspection, with the utmost candour :
Till when, I remain with much esteem,

DEAR SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

HENRY KROHN.

Southampton street, Covent-garden,

March 1, 1782.

OF THE
VENEREAL DISEASE.

VARIOUS attempts have been made
within these thirty years to improve
the method of cure in the *Lues Venerea*.
Some practitioners have affirmed that the
disease may be totally extirpated without
the use of mercury; but excepting in very
slight cases, it appears from the most ac-
curate observations that this grand spe-

cific is indispensable. Salivation, however, which was formerly so much used, is now almost generally exploded, on account of its severity. The solution of the corrosive sublimate, which has been recommended upon the authority of BARON VAN SWIETEN, was for a few years greatly employed, but as its reputation had not been established upon just and accurate observations, it has since lost all its celebrity. It was seldom ever found to perform a radical cure; and the frequent use of it proved in many cases highly prejudicial. It has been succeeded in practice by PLENCK's remedy, which consists of quicksilver extinguished with gum arabic, to prevent it from salivating. The method of curing this disease by *fumigation* has lately been much recommended in France, but seems not to meet with great encouragement. The most recent proposal for the cure of the venereal disease, is that of Mr. CLARE, and

and consists in rubbing a small quantity of mercury on the inside of the cheek; by which means we not only avoid the inconveniencies of unction, but the purgative effects that are often produced by this medicine, when taken into the stomach.—See Dr. MANNING's *Practice of Physic*.

One of the Surgeons to the Liverpool Infirmary informs me that he has lately cured *an inveterate Corona Veneris* very expeditiously by my process; that this was the only opportunity he had had of using mercury in this way, and that he intended to make further trial of this easy and agreeable method.

A Physician at Edinburgh, distinguished for his medical abilities and accurate observations on the nature of diseases and their cure, has lately done me the honour of acquainting me by letter, that he has

made a number of experiments in the public Infirmary there, to ascertain the merits of my mode of administering mercury ; that those which he had made were in favour of my method ; and I am happy to say that the experiments, and the conclusions to be drawn from them, will in due time be submitted to public inspection.

I return my sincere thanks to this and other medical gentlemen, my worthy friends and correspondents, at different times for their obliging and useful communications, which I shall carefully preserve, and shall reflect always with pleasure on these honourable testimonies of disinterested regard and love of science.

I take this first opportunity of making my public acknowledgments to the ingenious Mr. Sheldon, Teacher of Anatomy, for the use of a curious preparation
of

of the *Villi* of the lips, an Engraving of which is to be had with the Third Edition of my Book, printed for T. Cadel in the Strand.

A Letter from Dr. BUCHAN,
Fellow of the Royal College
of Physicians at Edinburgh,
and Author of *Domestic
Medicine*.

To Mr. CLARE, Surgeon, *Chancery-Lane*.

DEAR SIR,

I Thank you for the present of your
Treatise on the Venereal Disease,
and likewise for the honour you have
done me in addressing to me your letter,
containing *Observations on the Nature and
Treatment of the Variolous Abscess, with
Remarks on the Modern Practice of Inocu-
lation*,

lation. You are justly entitled to the esteem and thanks of the public for the pains you have taken to alleviate the sufferings of mankind in two of the most dreadful diseases incident to human nature. The small-pox sweeps off one fifth of the human species in the state of infancy ; while the *lues venerea* commits its silent ravages on the flower and vigour of youth. Yet dreadful as these calamities are, they admit of more relief from the medical art than any other diseases with which we are acquainted. For the venereal disease we are in possession of a specific remedy, which if properly applied, will seldom fail to perform a cure ; and the small-pox, every one knows, may by inoculation be rendered so mild as hardly to deserve the name of a disease. To extend the practice of inoculation, and to point out the most safe and efficacious method of exhibiting mercury, must therefore be considered as two of the
greatest

greatest benefits that can be conferred on mankind.

Of all the various modes of exhibiting mercury that which you recommend seems to me the most safe, and I have no doubt but it will likewise be found the most efficacious. A false opinion has long prevailed that every medicine ought to be taken into the stomach. This has done much mischief. Many people have such an aversion to medicine of all kinds that they will suffer any thing rather than swallow a single dose. Others have such a debility of the *Viscera*, that though they can swallow mercury, yet it tears their stomach and bowels to pieces. Of this every medical practitioner must have seen many instances. There are few persons who have been so unfortunate as to take large quantities of this mineral in the usual way, who do not exhibit melancholy proofs of its baneful effects on the stomach
and

and bowels. By your mode of administering mercury these effects are obviated, while it is much more cleanly and agreeable than the common method of applying it to the skin.

With regard to your remarks on the modern practice of *Inoculation*, I have only to observe that they entirely coincide with my own sentiments on that subject. Inoculation can never prove a blessing to mankind till the practice becomes general, and that will never be the case while it remains in the hands of the faculty. Every attempt therefore to render this operation easy and familiar, and to shew that it's success does not depend upon medical skill and address, either in preparing the patient, or treating the disease, must be highly laudable. Indeed your whole pamphlet breathes a spirit of liberality and candor, which will not fail to place your name high in the list of those
generous

generous benefactors of society who have assisted in extending the advantages of this important discovery to mankind.

Wishing you all success in your endeavours to lessen the miseries of human life,

I remain,

DEAR SIR,

Most sincerely your's,

W. BUCHAN;

Norfolk Street, Strand,

Oct. 15, 1781.

Observations

Observations on the Nature and
Treatment of the variolous
Abscess, with Remarks on
the Modern Practice of In-
oculation, and a Review of
the principal Writers on that
important Subject.

THIS small tract is thrown into the form of a letter to Dr. Buchan, author of that useful and well known book intitled, *Domestic Medicine*; and very properly, because it pursues the same line of public utility, being calculated to facilitate the management of a disease, so common, that few families are without it, and in the treatment of which domestic skill and attention are frequently more requisite than medical prescriptions. Mr. Clare, in his former publications, has shewn himself to be the disinterested

terested friend of Nature, a sure indication (in a medical professor) of a liberal mind. Upon the present occasion, he expands the benevolent principle, by a rational attempt to deliver young children and other persons from the fatiguing, complicated preparations by diet, mercurials, and purges, which many eminent medical writers have judged necessary before inoculation. Baron Dimsdale among others. Dr. Buchan, on the contrary, has asserted—"that they know very little of the matter, who impute the success of modern inoculators to any superior skill either in preparing the patient, or communicating the disease. And, that whoever is possessed of common sense and prudence may perform this office for his children whenever he pleases, provided they be in a good state of health." Mr. Clare having been long of opinion, that preparation is not necessary, and having observed, that it sometimes

E

did

did mischief, was willing to strengthen his own authority by that of Dr. Buchan, and both combined, we imagine, must carry great weight with the unprejudiced. Baron Dimsdale and Dr. Buchan agree in giving the preference, as to the time of inoculation, to the ages of from two to five years; but as the former has hinted, that those who were inoculated under those ages *all did well*, and Dr. Buchan says, he has no objection to inoculating infants at the breast, Mr. Clare takes some pains to shew that this practice is attended with many advantages. He also expresses himself in strong terms against the pernicious effects of purgatives in the early stages of the distemper, and against all repellents, which prevent suppuration. There are many other judicious directions supported by the best authorities, such, for instance, as Dr. Mead, and by the practice of St. Bartholomew's hospital, during seven years, when

when Mr. Clare, attended it; tending to shew, that Nature should be permitted to do her own work, and that little or no medicine ought to be administered either preparatory to, or during the progress of the disease. The practice of inoculation under these circumstances, is likewise strongly recommended as a national benefit.

*Impartial Review of New Publications,
in the London Magazine, for October,
1781.*

SINCE the publication of my letter to Dr. Buchan I have been favoured from various parts of the country with accounts of the increasng and successful practice of Inoculation, and I am happy in an opportunity of assuring the public from the same authority, that the *preparatory process* is every where daily losing ground in this kingdom. DISPENSARIES are now established in several capital towns*, and meet with the greatest success. In defiance of the want of judgment in some and the narrow prejudices rooted in the minds

* In autumn 1781 a plan was submitted to the public in Liverpool for the general inoculation of the poor.—The faculty proposed to perform it *gratis* at half yearly periods, viz. March and October.—Their first trial was made in October last, when *out of four hundred and sixteen inoculated, only one was lost*.—Of these one hundred and forty-six were under one year old, ninety-one between one and two years, one hundred and seventy above two years but under puberty, and nine adults.

minds of others, daily experience evinces that these institutions are practicable, safe, and highly beneficial to the community. For these benefits, particularly the last, the public are indebted to the benevolent and indefatigable labours of Dr. Lettsom, the first institutor of them in this city, and to Drs. Buchan and Black, whose printed communications on this important subject will perpetuate their fame.—With respect to *preparation*, the dangerous evils of which practice have been repeatedly set forth, it's warmest advocates finding the ground untenable, have no longer the confidence to defend it against the accurate experiments of Dr. Watson, the weighty arguments of Drs. Black and Buchan, and the common sense of mankind.

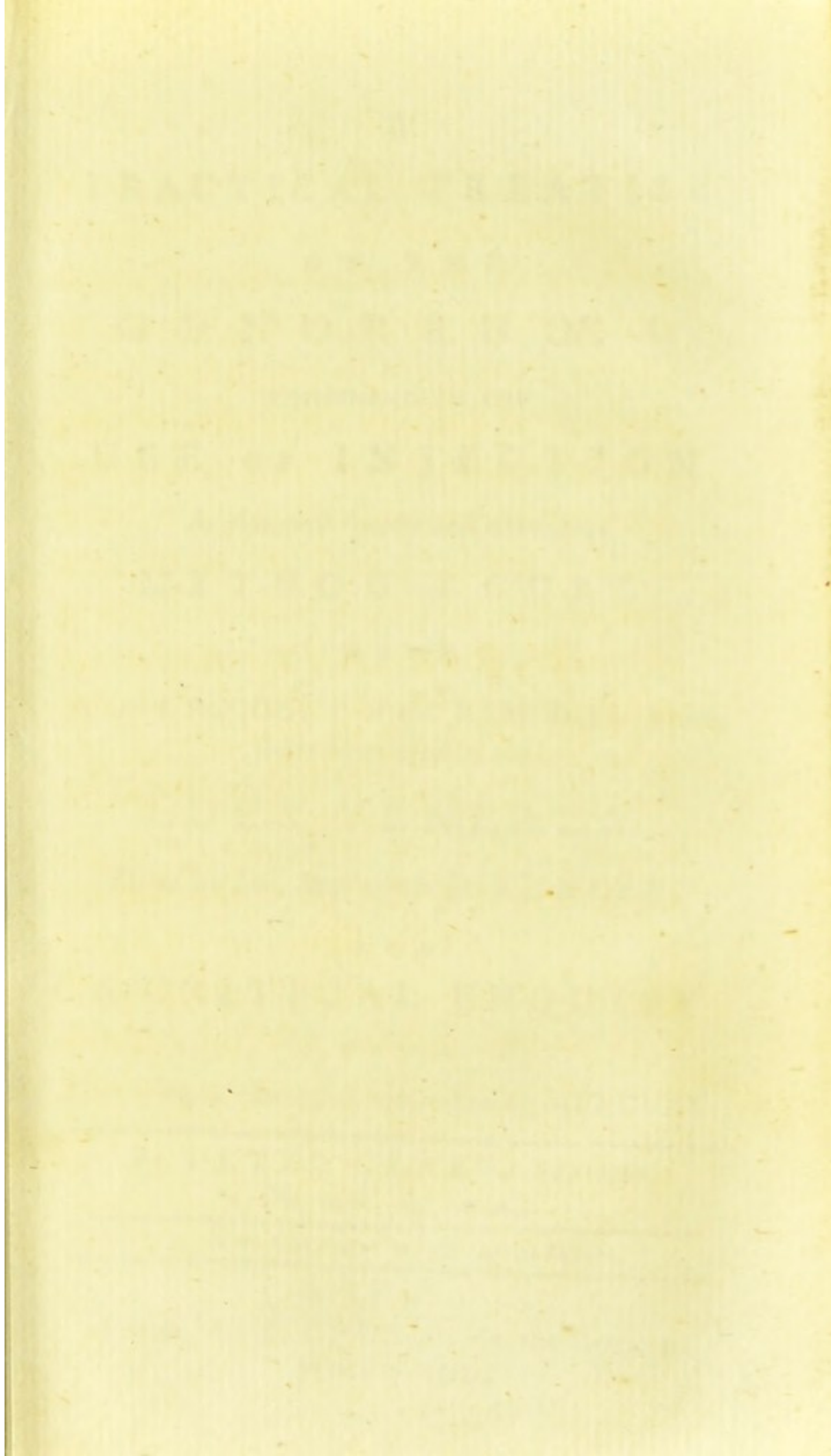
PETER CLARE.

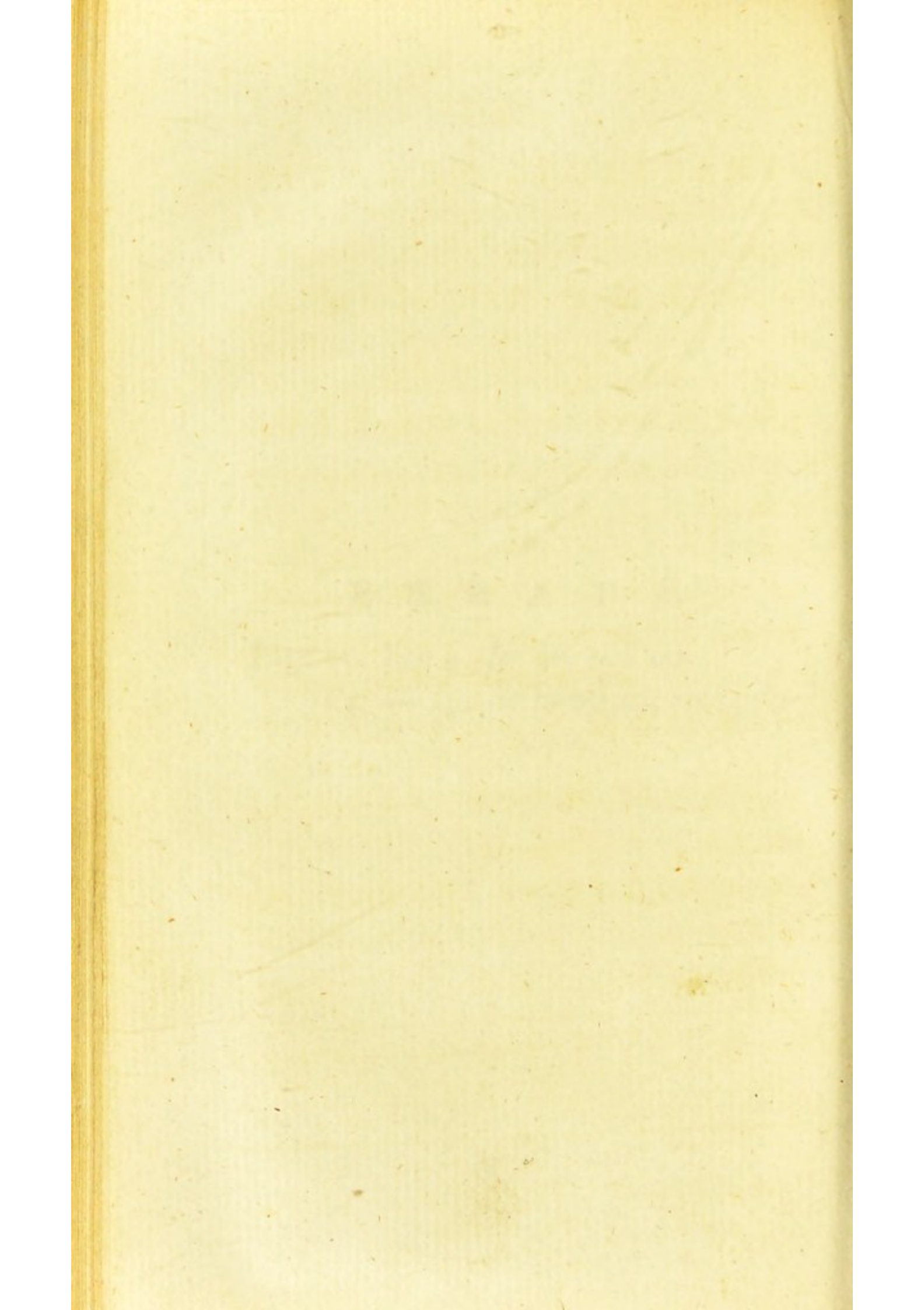
E R R A T A.

Page 20. line 4. *for de, read du.*

25. — 19. *for principal, read prin-
ciple.*

PETER CLARE





A
PRACTICAL TREATISE
ON THE
GONORRHOEA,
RECOMMENDING THE
USE OF INJECTION

As the most speedy and efficacious

METHOD of CURE

WITH

A brief ACCOUNT of the REMEDIES which
have been used in the

LUES VENEREA,

From its first Appearance in EUROPE;

AND

A CRITICAL ENQUIRY

INTO

The present MODES of administering MERCURY.

By PETER CLARE, SURGEON.

Non mihi, sed rationi.

A NEW EDITION WITH ADDITIONS.

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. CADELL, in the STRAND.

M DCC LXXXIII.

PRACTICAL TREATISE

ON THE

CONJUNCTION OF A

REPRODUCTION OF THE

USE OF INJECTION

As a means of curing and effecting

THE TUBERCULAR CURS

W. T. W.

A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE REMEDIES WHICH
HAVE BEEN USED IN THE

USE OF INJECTION

FROM THE APPOINTMENT IN EUROPE

A. D.

A CRITICAL ENQUIRY

INTO

THE TUBERCULAR CURS

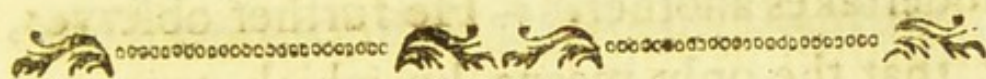
BY JAMES CLARK

AND

A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE REMEDIES WHICH

HAVE BEEN USED IN THE

USE OF INJECTION



P R E F A C E.

THERE are two very different methods of curing the Gonorrhœa, the one wholly by internal medicines, the other principally by injection. The former is generally a very uncertain and disagreeable process, the latter is both expeditious and safe, but dreaded by many persons on account of a false idea which has long prevailed. This ill founded notion it is my business at present to confute by several arguments supported by quotations from Authors of distinguished credit.

Mr. *Pott* recommends the advice given by Lord *Bacon* to a student, “ to consider one disease at a time, and to become thoroughly acquainted with that, before he

undertakes another." He further observes, "that the only means by which true and useful knowledge is to be obtained in every part of surgery, are a competent knowledge of the anatomical structure of the human frame, a close attention to the symptoms of diseases in the living, and a minute examination of the appearances in the dead: these are the great fountains of all medical knowledge." Mr. *Pott* has here pointed out, in a very judicious manner, the path which every chirurgical practitioner and writer should pursue, who undertakes to explain the true nature, seat, and cure of any bodily disorder.

Chancery-Lane,
January 1, 1783.

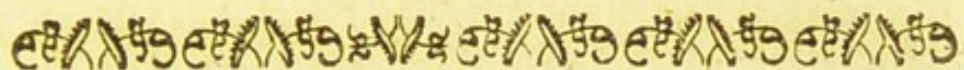


TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page
T REATISE on the Gonorrhœa.	1
On the Cure by internal Medicines.	10
Particular Observations on Nitre.	12
Injections strongly recommended.	17
Objections to them answered.	18
On the Difference between Pus and Mucrs.	20
Brief Account of the Remedies used for the Cure of the Lues. ———	25
A Critical Enquiry into the different Methods of administering Mercury. ———	29
Objections to Mercurial Pills, &c. ———	37
————— to Mercurial Ointment. ———	41
A Recapitulation of the Argument, with addi- tional Observations. ———	45

E R R A T U M :

Page 36, fifth line, *read* are often fo

ERRATA

Page 36. For "and" read "or".

A
T R E A T I S E
O N T H E
G O N O R R H O E A.

THE part principally affected by the Gonorrhœa is the penis, which consists of three parts; two of which are called corpora cavernosa, and lie on each side, and a third, which is situated underneath, named corpus spongiosum urethræ, consisting of the bulb and membranous part, continued on to the bladder, and terminating at the other extremity in the corona, or glans penis. The urethra has three glands, which were discovered by *Cowper*, and called mucous glands, from the tenacity of the liquor which they separate. There are also two, (or rather one,) about the size of a nutmeg, they lie at the neck
of

of the bladder, between the vesiculæ feminales and penis, under the ossa pubis, almost within the pelvis of the abdomen; they separate a limpid glutinous humour, which is carried into the urethra by several ducts, which enter near those of the prostatae. The two first of *Cowper's* glands are about the bigness of a French bean, of a depressed oval figure, and a yellowish colour like the prostatae, being on each side the bulb of the urethra, a little above it. Their excretory ducts arise from the internal surface next the inner membrane of the urethra, into which they open a little lower by two distinct orifices, just below the curvature of the ossa pubis in perinæo, where they discharge a transparent viscous liquor. The third mucous gland is a small conglobate yellowish gland, like the former, but somewhat less, situated above the angle of the flexure of the urethra, under the ossa pubis, in the perinæum, near the anus: it has two excretory ducts, which enter the urethra obliquely, a quarter of an inch below the two former, and discharges a liquor like them both in colour and consistence.

The seat of the Gonorrhœa in women is the vagina, which is affected with a discharge

charge like that of the urethra in men. It lies between the bladder and intestinum rectum, and has rugæ, under which are small glands, whose excretory ducts are called lacunæ. These glands separate a mucilaginous slimy liquor to lubricate the vagina, and are the seat of the Gonorrhœa in this sex, as the glands in the urethra are in the male. The meatus urinarius being a very short passage, the heat and scalding is consequently much less than in the men.

“ A Gonorrhœa from the urethra in a
 “ man, begins with an uneasiness about the
 “ parts of generation, together with an ap-
 “ pearance of a little whitish matter, about
 “ the orifice of the urethra, a little swelling
 “ and sometimes redness there, and a slight
 “ pungency upon the evacuation of urine.
 “ The whitish matter soon increases in
 “ quantity, the inflammation about the
 “ end of the urethra becomes more evident,
 “ and for the most part there is now a ten-
 “ sion and hardness through the whole of
 “ it, a swelling of the lacunæ, and a sen-
 “ sation of stricture in the penis, particu-
 “ larly on erection. The matter still in-
 “ creases, flows out, and grows thinner,
 “ loses all its adhesiveness, and is of a
 “ yellow, or greenish colour. There is
 now

“ now always a redness about the end
 “ of the canal; often a pain from the dis-
 “ tention of the urethra, during the eva-
 “ cuation of urine, and a much severer to-
 “ wards the orifice, from its stimulus, with
 “ an increase of the redness just after it is
 “ evacuated. The inflammation prevents
 “ the extension of the urethra in erection,
 “ so that the penis is at that time curved
 “ downwards with great pain, which is in-
 “ creased if it be raised towards the belly,
 “ and the stimulus occasions it often to be
 “ erected, especially when warm in bed*.”

I believe it would generally be esteemed
 good practice on this occasion to give nitre
 in considerable quantity, a purging elec-
 tuary, pill, or salts, and to take blood
 freely from the patient; also to direct large
 quantities of diluting liquors, and further to
 recommend a strict regimen and abstinence
 from particular meats, vegetables, and
 strong liquors. The question is, are such
 medicines and restriction necessary? In
 my humble opinion they are not, and
 they appear, upon the whole, to do more
 harm than good, as I shall endeavour to
 demonstrate from the experience of those

* Dr. Fordyce's Elements of Physic.

who are well qualified to give an opinion in a matter of this kind, and also from my own observation and practice.

Dr. *Cullen* remarks, "that purgatives not only inflame the rectum, but also extend their irritation to the urethra." May not chordee and priapism then often be attributed to this cause?

Dr. *Fordyce* recommends "increasing the secretion a little, by such gentle purgatives as procure only two or three evacuations a day."—But who can ensure his patient two or three stools only in a day? The intestines being once put into motion, will not accommodate themselves exactly to our wish or convenience. Happily for the patient, it is certain that even gentle purging may be dispensed with on these occasions.

He adds, "that severe purging often augments the inflammatory symptoms, brings on strangury and exulcerations, gives occasion to inflammation of the testicles, and other neighbouring parts, or it stops the running before the infection is washed off, and the Gonorrhœa either returns in a few days, or exulcerations take place."

The Doctor further observes, "that long continued purging is apt to weaken the stomach

stomach and intestines, to hurt the digestion, to produce obstinate gleets, and leave hypochondriacal symptoms, particularly in irritable or melancholic habits."

Many more authorities might be adduced in proof of the bad effects of a course of purgatives in these cases, which are generally of considerable duration, when treated in this manner. Neither are antiphlogistic remedies to be depended upon, as they sometimes produce the very contrary effect to what was expected from them: amongst the first of these is nitre, in inflammatory disorders. Dr. *Lewis*, a late writer of no small credit, reckons, that nitre often gives relief in stranguries, and heat of urine, proceeding either from a simple or a venereal taint; and indeed the greatest part of practitioners have always given it, and still continue to give it in the venereal *ardor urinae*.

" This practice, however, says Dr. *Hope*
 " in his lectures on the *Materia medica*, I
 " am apt to believe has taken its rise from
 " the name of ardor having always been
 " given to the pain in evacuating the urine,
 " during the time of a venereal inflammation
 " of the urethra, and the name and
 " virtues of a cooler, having always been
 " at-

“ attributed to this salt. But it is certain
 “ that the urine passed during the time of
 “ a venereal inflammation is no warmer
 “ than at other times, and therefore to
 “ prescribe a cooler to allay the heat of it,
 “ is absurd: and I am persuaded, that on
 “ a free and candid examination of this
 “ matter, it will be found, that nitre has
 “ not the smallest power of alleviating the
 “ pain which is then felt; for I have given
 “ it in all the different stages of this disease,
 “ in small and in large doses; but from the
 “ sole use of it in a great number of trials,
 “ have never been able to observe that it
 “ afforded the least relief. Nor, when we
 “ consider the cause of that pain, and the
 “ effects of nitre, have we any reason to
 “ expect it; for the pain certainly proceeds
 “ from the acrid salts in the urine, stimu-
 “ lating the inflamed or excoriated urethra;
 “ and a solution of nitre applied to any ex-
 “ coriated part always gives considerable
 “ pain. Experiments assure us, that on
 “ taking nitre into the stomach, the urine
 “ becomes impregnated with it. The larger
 “ therefore the doses are, the stronger will
 “ this impregnation be, and the greater
 “ stimulus added to the urine; so that we
 “ may sensibly conclude, that this salt will
 C “ rather

“ rather augment than diminish the pain in
 “ evacuating it. The Doctor further re-
 “ marks, that there are many weak and
 “ delicate stomachs which cannot bear
 “ the cold it produces, and others in
 “ whom it always creates sickness and
 “ nausea.”

Besides the disagreeable circumstance of taking great quantities of nauseous medicines, we find there is the greatest uncertainty as to their real effects on the diseases they are intended to remove. A powder or medicine of any kind, applied to blood in a basin, may visibly affect that fluid, and render it thin or thick; yet being taken into the stomach, and possibly from thence into the circulation, it may have a very different effect on the circulating fluids, or perhaps none, having undergone a material alteration in its course.

A late celebrated Lecturer on the *Materia Medica*, discoursing with his pupils on the powerful operations of mucilaginous medicines in the alleviation of the pain arising from the stone in the bladder, remarked that such medicines were extremely useful where the stone was of the mulberry kind, and apt to vellicate the coats of the bladder. He told them the ropy mucilage would

would envelope the stone, and make a uniformly smooth surface, entirely depriving it of its asperities, and consequently of its power of hurting the bladder.

It is difficult for one conversant with the mechanism of the human body, and the operation of medicine, to conceive, that a mucilage given by the mouth will arrive at the bladder in that state. We are certain that particular remedies will stimulate particular parts: balsam of capivi, for instance, being absorbed, is known to affect the kidneys and bladder, by the strong odour it imparts to the urine; but we do not find this, or any other medicine, except quicksilver, will pass off in the same form in which it is administered by the mouth. This balsam is very much esteemed for its great virtues, particularly in certain stages of the Gonorrhœa, but it is so very disagreeable, on account of its oily and bitter quality, as well as its smell, that some patients are soon disgusted with it, and others will not be prevailed upon to take it at all; we cannot therefore think it strange, that many gentlemen should often prefer injections to all other means, which do not appear to produce effects in any degree equal to the trouble which at-

tends them. It must be acknowledged that patients often suffer more from the remedy than the disorder; they are often more emaciated, weak, and pallid in their countenance, (circumstances which frequently lead to disagreeable discoveries,) from the operations of purgatives in the space of one week, than they would have been in a month, if there had been no attempt made to check the progress of this disorder.

There are many people who have not leisure to pursue the several directions and prescriptions given by practitioners; and if they could find time, they would have but little inclination to undergo so much fatigue and trouble. Such tedious processes are very ill contrived for the multitude, who must be, *and are daily cured by means much more easy, expeditious, and quite as effectual*; and if one class of men are cured in this manner, why should not all enjoy the same benefit?

I have asserted, that a regimen, or particular diet, is not necessary in the cure of the Gonorrhœa, when treated in the manner here recommended. Some have asked, if the disorder is not inflammatory, and if living low is not indispensibly necessary in

in every complaint of this kind? It may be said in reply, that this is a local inflammation, which yields at once to a cooling detergent liquid applied to the part; whilst internal medicines are commonly slow and uncertain in removing it.—When mercury does not pass into the stomach, there is no occasion to enjoin restrictions with respect to diet, since no disagreement can then happen; patients may live in the same manner as at other times, only avoiding excess.

Dr. *Hugh Smith*, who is an advocate for vitriolic injections, asserts, “That a Gonorrhœa, if taken in the beginning, may generally be cured in a fortnight, without any injury to the constitution, or any ill effects whatsoever*.”

I have met with the greatest success in the cure of this complaint from the same sort of injections, and find they answer much better than mercurial ones, which deposit a considerable sediment, and being conveyed into the urethra, cause irritation and pain in that tender passage.

The injection should be applied cold, rather than warm, (as cold braces and

* Dr. *Smith's* Formulæ Medicamentorum.

warmth relaxes,) which I find often completes the cure in much less than a fortnight, the time mentioned by the Doctor.

If the injection causes any more than a slight sensation of smart or pain in the passage, it is evidently too much impregnated with vitriol, and the solution must be made weaker, as the irritation of the liquor would increase the symptoms instead of diminishing them.

The great objection to this sort of practice is raised on the supposition that *Injections* are apt to produce *stricture* in the urinary passage, This idea, I apprehend, is not well founded; having enquired of many different people who have been troubled with *strictures*, if they had used injections for the cure, and was generally answered in the negative.—I am much inclined to think with Doctor *Fordyce*, “That when a *gonorrhæa* continues long, it sometimes produces a *stricture* in the part.” Inflammation is naturally disposed to produce contraction and *stricture* in the different sacculi and passages of the body, as well as in the *urethra*: therefore we may conclude, that evils are often attributed to *Injections*, which in fact owe their

their origin to other causes *. The same gentleman justly observes, that omitting the *injection* once or twice will often make it fail of curing, when it would have otherwise produced that effect †. He likewise remarks, that patients treated in this manner, are less liable to inflammation of the testicles, or of the glands in the groin (or to *chancres*) or *strictures*. These observations are certainly founded on fact. It is the general opinion, that small doses of mercury ought to accompany the *Injection*. See *Fordyce, Saunders, Smith*, and others.—Conformably to this idea, I give a grain of mercurial powder, and apply it to the cuticular surfaces of the lips, or the tongue, and at the same time make use of the *vitriolic*, in preference to every other *Injection*. Though I have made repeated trials of se-

* If the long duration of this distemper produces strictures and obstructions, then what removes the disorder quickly, must undoubtedly prevent the above evils, instead of causing them.

† If the *Injection* should not produce the desired effect, it will be right to enquire if the urine passes freely, and whether it divides into two streams, or more; or whether it comes out twisted, like a cork-screw. In these cases, it is not likely the *Injection* should effect its purpose, being unable to pass: recourse must therefore be had to the *Bougie* to restore the passage to its natural state.

veral,

veral, I know of no other which would remove the disorder in twice the time which this does; but there are some that would not succeed at all, and rather aggravate the symptoms.

It is now proved by a repetition of ingenious experiments, and generally admitted, that the discharge in a *Gonorrhœa* proceeding from the *urethra*, is not *pus*, but *mucus*. *Pus* is the matter which proceeds from wounds and ulcers, but *mucus* comes from surfaces not ulcerated, though sometimes inflamed. Dr. *Hunter* says, he has often dissected the *urethra* of persons who have died, having the *Gonorrhœa* at that time, and he adds, that he never discovered any ulcer in the passage. *Mucus* is, in itself, an innocent, mild fluid, but capable of acquiring virulence and acrimony from contagious infection.

The *Gonorrhœa* is an increased and virulent discharge from the *mucous* glands * of the urinary passage. *Mucus*, when untainted, is transparent like the white of an egg, appears as a drop sometimes at the orifice of the *urethra* next the glands, is of a mucilaginous viscosity, and its use is to sheathe and defend the passage

* Described in Pages 1 and 2.

from the irritating salts conveyed in the urine. It resembles the fluid in the eye, which is secreted in small quantity, but when the lachrymal gland is stimulated by grief, dust, or other offending substance, the discharge becomes copious and sometimes acrid.

Darwin observes, in his experiments on pus and mucus, " That whenever the secretion of any fluid is increased, there is at the same time an increased heat in the part." The same gentleman observes, that " the catarrhal humour from the nostrils of some who ride in frosty weather, and the tears which run down the cheeks of those who have an obstruction of the puncta lachrymalia, are easily distinguished from others, by their abounding in ammoniacal or muriatic salts, whence they inflame the circumjacent skin: thus in the catarrh, the upper lip becomes red and swelled from the acrimony of the mucus, and patients complain of the saltiness of its taste. The eyes and cheeks are red with the corrosive tears, and the ichor of some herpetic eruptions erodes far and wide the contiguous parts, and is pungently salt to the taste, as some patients have informed him."

When

When the mucous membrane of the nose is stimulated by a violent cold, or other cause, we often see an extraordinary quantity of discharge from that organ; yet no one suspects the existence of any ulcers there, and I have often observed, that the discoloured mucus of that part bears so strong a resemblance to the virulent discharge in the gonorrhœa, that it would frequently perplex persons conversant in these matters to distinguish two handkerchiefs, the one from the other, when stained with the respective mucus. Either of these fluids having acquired acrimony will inflame, and sometimes slightly excoriate irritable nervous membranes. These excoriations generally heal of themselves, and when they do not, no one hesitates to apply repellent and healing medicines to the part, without even the smallest suspicion of any bad consequence. With ulcers the case is very different, there being the greatest reason to apprehend danger from the absorption of matter into the circulation. Writers of good credit assert, that a drop of acrid pus, absorbed into the blood, affects all the fluids, stimulates the vessels, and is capable of producing violent disorders, such as putrid fevers,

vers, &c. Impressed with such a belief, no thinking man, in this or any age, would adopt a practice at once so irrational and dangerous: but as the discharge is merely mucus, and has no concern with the system or animal œconomy, it may be safely washed away, like any other *sordes*, or filth from the surfaces of the body, by injections, which are not only far more expeditious in producing their effects, but also appear, on a due comparison of the merits of each, to possess another advantage, that of being a more cleanly, safe, and agreeable method of cure, than any other whatsoever. I have only to add in this place, that I am confirmed more and more in the use of injections, which entirely answer the above description and commendation.

A
BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF THE
REMEDIES in USE for the CURE
OF THE
LUES VENEREA,
FROM ITS

First Appearance in EUROPE.

THE cure of this disorder, which has now prevailed all over *Europe* near three centuries, has not been so much improved by the profession as might have been expected during so long a period. It raged for several years uncontrouled, before an effectual remedy for it was discovered. After the antidote for this poison was found to exist in mercury, yet still so very unfortunate was the application of it, that many lives were lost by salivations, shocking to relate, in consequence.

quence of the want of sufficient knowledge of the nature and qualities of this mineral, in the practitioners of those times.

“ The first attempts of the cure of venereal maladies, by this remedy, were learned from the *Arabians*, who having recommended mercurial ointments in the *Leprosy* or scabies, gave a handle to the *Italian* physicians, to try their efficacy in removing the foulness of the skin from a new and terrible contagion: neither were they sparing of their liniments, which they continued to rub in for twelve, fifteen, nay, sometimes for above thirty days together *,” a very dangerous practice, which prevails too much even in the present age. Sarsaparilla, salisfras, guaicum, have all at different periods been in more or less estimation for their antivenereal virtues; but mercury is the only antidote for this poison, on which any age has reposed an entire confidence.

In 1685, Dr. Sydenham wrote on this amongst other subjects. His account shews, that although the use of the remedy was better understood, yet the cure of the disorder was but little improved.

* Mead on Poisons.

In 1731, Dr. *Turner*, a member of the College of Physicians in *London*, who had made the Venereal Disease his particular study, thought proper to communicate his observations and practice to the world. His drastic purges, and mercurial prescriptions, were such as might destroy the most robust constitution; what then must have become of those of a weak and delicate frame?

Dr. *Boerhaave* has advanced a system of his own, apparently less detrimental than former ones, and which has been very much adopted of late years. The Doctor's theory of the disease is, that it is seated in the fat; therefore evacuations which destroyed it, must, in his opinion, contribute greatly to the cure of this disorder; for which reason the Doctor recommended the most powerful sudorifics and purgatives, the former of which though hurtful, are less prejudicial to the constitution than the latter.

Dr. *Astruc*, a celebrated writer, has given a very sensible and accurate description of the *Lues Venerea* in all its stages, with directions for its cure; but the remedies are as violent as those recommended by preceding writers, and ought therefore to be exploded.

Baron *Van Swieten* recommends *The Corrosive Sublimate* to be given internally. It had hitherto only been used externally to *fungus* in wounds, on account of the violence of its nature. Even when administered in rum or brandy, to correct it, the stomach can seldom retain it, for which reason it has grown into disrepute, although it has a most astonishing and rapid effect in removing venereal symptoms.

Mr. Professor *Plenk* advises the giving *Quicksilver with gum arabic*, to prevent it from exciting a salivation. This is the least prejudicial of all the modes of administering mercury internally.

Fumigation, which is lately revived, I have often seen applied to sores with hardly any perceptible advantage, and sometimes it gave great pain, and did a manifest injury.

Two circumstances have conduced greatly to the better treatment of this complaint, within these twenty or thirty years; I mean, the extraordinary improvements in anatomy and chymistry: by the former we have acquired a better knowledge of the seat of this disorder, and by the latter, of the medicines employed to effect it's cure.

A

CRITICAL ENQUIRY
 INTO THE
 OPERATION OF MERCURY,
 AND THE DIFFERENT

Modes of administering it considered.

DIFFERENCE of opinion prevails with regard to the mode of administering mercurial preparations; the advocates for each, giving their reasons for that which they adopt in preference to any other. The *alterative* method is much in esteem and practice, and with some deviation and caution may be rendered very beneficial.

This appellation of *alterant* or *alterative* is given to all such medicines as correct the
 D 3 bad

bad qualities of the blood, and other animal fluids, without occasioning any sensible evacuation. According to Dr. Woodward, all that is commonly alledged concerning the change of principles or ferments of diseases by alterant remedies, is merely chimerical and imaginary; he remarks, that there is no change made to the advantage of the human body without a successive renovation and discharge of what is hurtful, and a supply of its place by something innocent.

The Doctor gives the preference to evacuants, as being the only medicines capable of freeing the machine from whatever incommodes it. Some take a contrary course, and ascribe even the salutary effects of evacuants to their alterative nature, which has been alledged of mercury in the cure of the venereal disease. Among alterant medicines there are several which change the scene of the symptoms, and others which suspend the action of the morbid matter for a time; but these remedies which hold the morbid principles captive pro tempore, are only palliatives, and even on some accounts dangerous, since they may as well captivate other principles necessary to life.

Dr.

Dr. *Fordyce* says, “Whatever preparation we employ, we should give it in such a manner, and in such a dose as to produce hardness, fullness, and moderate frequency of the pulse, with as little sensible evacuation as possible; for that the mercury cures sooner and with greater certainty, when the strength is but little, than when it is much reduced by it.”

Mr. *Plenck* is of opinion, “that mercury, together with the venereal virus, may be more conveniently and more easily evacuated by the ordinary excretions of sweat, stool, and urine.”

It seems to me much more safe to permit the gradual evacuation of mercury (after it has circulated some time, and subdued the virus) than to confine it within the body by opiates, or other means, so as to occasion hardness, fullness, and acceleration of the pulse. The saturation or surcharge of the system with mercury is very hazardous, as it sometimes terminates in a fatal diarrhæa. Surely it is most prudent to permit a little of the mercury to depart, and throw into the circulation such a proportion only, as may be altogether safe and yet

yet sufficient to keep up a gentle mercurial stimulus in the habit.

Mercury and wine operate somewhat alike upon the body. With a certain quantity of wine, hardness, fullness, and acceleration of the pulse will supervene, till at length in common an evacuation takes place; when it does not, and the wine is retained there, (like mercury exhibited as an alterative), it excites feverish heat, and does the constitution much more injury than when it passes off gradually by any of the ordinary evacuations.

Dr. *Fordyce* observes, “ it is never necessary to salivate a patient, unless he be so irritable, that the smallest dose of mercury immediately affects his mouth, or unless the disease be proceeding so fast that it would be hazardous to wait till it was checked by the remedy given in such a manner as to avoid salivation; or excepting when we cannot trust to his using it regularly. On the contrary, salivation renders the effects of the medicine uncertain.” The same author says, “ If, notwithstanding these precautions, a salivation should come on, we know of no remedy which will remove it with any degree of certainty, although.

although sulphur, camphire, and purgatives have been recommended for this purpose. If therefore the case be urgent, the best way is to let it go on, using the mercurial ointment as above described,"*

I have ever found those patients more easily cured, who were most susceptible of the mercurial stimulus. Let there be an affection of the mouth and cheeks, and an amendment of the complaint takes place at least nine times in ten; the mercury will run off in general very soon if the process is discontinued, which it must not be, but the tenderness of the mouth is to be kept

* Dr. Saunders says he has known patients who have had violent fevers excited by mercury in the form of unction.

The same author remarks, that a gentleman who had recourse to mercurial unction, being seized with a fever, sent for him, and communicated to him his venereal complaints. His pulse was quick and hard, he complained of pain in his back, headach, thirst, and other such symptoms as he had frequently seen arise from a mercurial course, conducted on the plan here prescribed."

Dr. Cullen observes,—that purging is never excited by any means, without spasms of the intestines, which, when the operation is continued, are apt to end in durable spasm and inflammation. These are attended with very dangerous consequences. Neither does the method of purging by unction answer much better (although perhaps more effectual), because it is attended with very great pain.—*Lectures on Materia medica.*

up to a certain degree, according to the urgency of the disorder, and to prevent a relapse, especially in chancres with hardness, and in other inveterate cases. It is not the mere quantity of mercury, but the method of directing its operation, which in my opinion is the chief circumstance to be relied on in the cure. I would certainly run the risk, if there was any, of *not immediately curing*, rather than expose my patient to the hazard of a large quantity of accumulated mercury ready at an hour's notice, or less, to emancipate itself from the body by stimulating the intestines, and thus exhausting life.

We may be amused with the theory of mercury circulating in the system in perfect equilibrium, not inclining more to one secretion than to another; but it is certain, this is a powerful medicine that ought not to be trifled with; we cannot say to it—So far shalt thou go, and no further. The most skilful pilot will find it difficult so to trim his vessel that it shall not sink or overturn when too heavily laden with mercury.

The ingenious *Plenck*, (to whom the world is so much indebted for the great improvements he has made by his experiments on mercury, and in the cure of this disease)

disease) says, that a salivation is a dangerous practice; for the famous *Astruc*, says he, asserts that there frequently supervene, violent fevers, diarrhæa, dysentery, hæmoptoe, an immobility of the jaws, and likewise a suffocation, and that too, when a salivation has been most properly conducted; and after him the most skilful *Locher* tells us the same.—

Several years since a practitioner had the misfortune to lose (within a short time of each other) two patients with chancres, for the cure of which he had raised very high salivations by mercurial ointment. Just as their complaints were healed, and salivation began to decline, one of the gentlemen was seized with a dysenteric flux, and expired within a few hours: his death was attributed to a piece of butter which the nurse had inadvertently put into his gruel. The other died also of a flux, arising from the sudden descent of the mercury overturning the equilibrium, and rushing through the patient's bowels with irresistible impetuosity.—

To form a just idea of a salivation, we should perambulate the public hospitals, where there are wretches miserable indeed!

mi-

miserable in having a sad disease, but much more so in having a cure to encounter which makes the unhappy objects call on death for a deliverance from their pains. Their head, face, and tongue so swelled, as to forbid their uttering a syllable. Their cheeks often torn to pieces, a salivary flux of two or three quarts a day, with breath extremely offensive, teeth loose, tongue and gums ulcerated and inflamed, attended with a severe unremitting head-ach; and this process is the same in all cases and seasons: it may truly be said, such remedies are worse than the diseases they are intended to remove. But this is not all the patient has to undergo; add to this, frequent severe cholicky pains, accompanied with diarrhæa and dysentery, which continuing, so often prove fatal. The patient can swallow no solid food during this severe operation, and indeed scarcely liquids, and is almost dead with hunger, having often an appetite without the possibility of indulging it. Thus are persons confined for several weeks, and when the process is finished, they are so reduced in flesh, as to be quite a spectacle, and frequently go into a deep decline.—
If

If these evils may be prevented, and that they may, we have daily experience added to the strongest testimonies, are we not all called upon by every motive of conscience, religion, and humanity, to preserve the unhappy from ruin, by rejecting so cruel a practice?

“ *Graviora morbis patimur remedia;*

“ *Nec Vita tanti est, vivere ut possis, mori.*”

If the surgeons who superintend the hospitals would make a trial of my method, I am convinced from experience, they would be able, without annoying the stomach, to convey any quantity of any mercurial preparation into the system in few hours, instead of weeks. This may be done by rubbing mercury on the back and middle of the tongue, and repeating the process at the shortest intervals. There is no occasion to wait for its operation as in the case of pills, but we may safely stimulate these surfaces as much and as often as we chuse, till we have actually produced the desired effect on the system. Let the mouth be well cleared of the saliva, and I know of no other impediment to the success of this process. Dr. Home, professor of physic at Edinburgh, has honoured me by making a variety of public experi-

E

ments

ments in the Edingburgh Infirmary, which will soon appear in the Doctor's intended publication. By these experiments it is proved, that mercury is more quickly introduced, with greater certainty, and with less prejudice to the constitution in this way, than by any of the other modes of administering it internally or externally.

*Objections to Mercury in the Form of Pills,
Bolus, &c.*

WITH respect to Pills, it is certain that many patients find a difficulty in taking them. First, it is hardly possible so to distribute the mercury throughout the mass, that there shall not be some difference and uncertainty in the dose when divided into pills; and secondly, they sometimes pass through the body undissolved. When they dissolve, they irritate, perhaps corrode, the stomach, an organ most essential to health. This circumstance has excited universal complaint and dread of mercury, which however being administered in my method, is so very mild,

mild, that it does not in the least impair the constitution, as the surface on which the mercury is laid, will bear a considerable degree of irritation without any sort of prejudice.*

“ The saline chrystals of mercury velli-
 “ cate and twitch the sensible membranes
 “ of the stomach to that degree, as excites
 “ them to an excretion of their contents
 “ and glandular juices upwards or down-
 “ wards, according as the force of irrita-
 “ tion is greater or less.”—*Mead on Poi-
 sons,*

“ Of all the various modes of admini-
 “ stering mercury, that which you recom-
 “ mend seems to me the most safe, and
 “ I have no doubt but it will likewise be
 “ found the most efficacious. A false opi-
 “ nion has long prevailed, that every me-

* A grain of mercury applied to the internal surfaces of the mouth is thence absorbed with the greatest facility, and operates kindly and with effect on the habit in general. Dr. Cullen justly observes†, “ that when we purge, we think we are operating on the common sewer of the system: but little advantage is to be found from the mercury employed in this way, as its virtues depend chiefly on its operation on the body in general.”

† *Lecture on Mercury.*

“ dicine ought to be taken into the sto-
 “ mach: this has done much mischief.
 “ Many people have such an aversion to
 “ medicines of all kinds, that they will
 “ suffer any thing rather than swallow a
 “ single dose. Others have such a debility
 “ of the *Viscera*, that though they can
 “ swallow mercury, yet it tears their sto-
 “ mach and bowels to pieces. Of this
 “ every medical practitioner must have
 “ seen many instances. There are few
 “ persons who have been so unfortunate as
 “ to take large quantities of this mineral
 “ in the usual way, who do not exhibit
 “ melancholy proofs of its baneful effects
 “ on the stomach and bowels. By your
 “ mode of administering mercury, these
 “ effects are obviated, while it is much
 “ more cleanly and agreeable than the
 “ common method of applying it to the
 “ skin.”—*Extract from Dr. BUCHAN’S*
Letter.

Dr. *Hunter* observes, “ that this process
 is preferable to pills or boluses, as the cal-
 lomel stimulates the *primæ viæ* much less,
 and therefore he adds, people with very
 tender bowels may bear it much better in
 this form than any other.” Therefore it is
 best

best for all constitutions, as every person has most undoubtedly tender bowels.

Dr. *Krohn*, in his letter to me mentions the case of a gentleman, “ who had a virulent chancre on the *frænum*, of which he was cured in a fortnight by this process, without the smallest inconvenience ; on the contrary, he found his bowels perfectly free from any attack on them, the usual attendants on former methods of treatment, which he had frequently experienced previous to this trial.”

“ How many originally, vigorous, deduce their present weak bowels, and crazy constitutions, from the mischiefs occasioned by the action of the Mercury on the *primæ viæ*.”—*Mr. Cruikshank's Letter*.

After ample trial of all the different mercurial preparations in common use, I find that any of them may be safely and expeditiously conveyed into the system from the surfaces of the mouth, and that those of the most subtle and active kind are equal to the cure of the most confirmed disease. Their stimulating quality supplies the place of friction, which is only necessary when any of the milder preparations are employed.

Objections to Mercurial Ointment.

“ The friction of Mercurial Ointment
 “ is to many people one of the most dis-
 “ agreeable things in the world. It’s
 “ leaden colour, contrasted with the skin,
 “ makes it look dirty. It has a particu-
 “ larly offensive smell, independent of that
 “ of the turpentine, or balsam of sulphur,
 “ which may have been employed in extin-
 “ guishing the quicksilver. From the cir-
 “ cumstance that half an hour’s friction,
 “ or even that of a whole hour, if ever so
 “ well performed, will not commonly ef-
 “ fect a total absorption of the ointment,
 “ the skin is generally left a little smeared
 “ with it : after the process is over, as it is
 “ oily it does not evaporate, or dry readily,
 “ and will easily stick to whatever it
 “ touches. Patients are obliged to sleep in
 “ flannel drawers to prevent the ointment
 “ from getting through and daubing the
 “ bed clothes. They must be frequently
 “ changing these drawers, constantly wash-
 “ ing the skin; or, as washing off the oint-
 “ ment would retard rather than forward
 “ the cure, they must remain dirty for six
 “ weeks, or perhaps three months toge-
 “ ther ; and if by accident any part of the
 “ oint-

“ ointment gets upon their linen, from
 “ it's colour it is very apt to give the
 “ alarm in families, and lead to disagree-
 “ able discoveries.”

Mr. Cruikshank's Letter.

Dr. Manning, in his Practice of Physic, on the subject of my mercurial process observes as follows; “ By this method we not only avoid the inconveniencies of unction, but the purgative effects that are often produced by mercury when taken into the stomach.”

With respect to a regimen in the treatment of the Lues, abstinence and low living certainly retard the cure. Persons afflicted with this distemper, are much subject to despondency, and living more freely now than at other times, raises the spirits of the patient, and contributes to his cure by co-operating with the medicine; therefore I shall continue to recommend that practice, at the same time should object as strongly as any other practitioner, to every indulgence that might be prejudicial. It has been said, that people under a course of mercury cannot be kept too warm, which is true only when the mercury affects the
 sto-

stomach or bowels, or greatly opens the pores of the skin; but from the very mild operation of mercury on the system in my method, patients are exposed to all weathers, without injury to the constitution.

Dr. Krohn on this subject says, "this mode agrees better with people who are debauchees, having had essential proof of this assertion in a patient who drank all kinds of strong liquors, was scarcely ever in bed for a week together, till break of day, and was much exposed to cold damp air."

A Recapitulation of Objections to the common Methods of administering MERCURY, accompanied with some new Observations, and conveying a short and pointed View of the Whole.

A Lues is a venereal infection in the mass of blood; and is to be cured by throwing a sufficient quantity of mercury into the system to expel it.

There

There are many ways of conveying mercury into the circulation of the blood.

The usual methods are by pills, boluses, and draughts, and also by outward application of mercurial ointment.

The first three are conveyed by the mouth into the stomach, where the mercurial particles are in part absorbed by the lymphatic vessels of that organ, and conveyed into the blood; also by the same vessels in the intestines, and frequently the greatest portion of the mercury escapes out of the body by this outlet, having first irritated the animal œconomy throughout the whole of the canal.

Mercury may be prevented from passing downwards by joining *opium* with it, which takes off its stimulus, and generally prevents its purgative effects; but this often creates sickness and reaching, and shakes the whole nervous system.

Two grains of mercury taken up into the blood by the mouth, will produce as powerful an effect on the system, as twenty grains thrown into the stomach, on the presumption that eighteen of the twenty make their exit downwards: we reckon only what gets into the system, for what passes through, is *lost*, and certainly better
had

had never been given. The stomach resembles a sink with a grate in it, and is not constructed to retain mercury.

Mercurial ointment cures by being taken up into the blood by the absorbents of the external skin, and when introduced there, by operating on the whole vascular system, and expelling the venereal poison by the different secretions and excretions of the body.

The objections to this mode of practice are, First, that it is dirty and disagreeable; that it is commonly slow and tedious: that it requires too much labour for persons in a weak state, and if the friction is performed by other hands than their own, that one half of the ointment, or more, must infallibly be lost to the patient, and may prove very injurious to the party who applies it.

Mercurial ointment affects the stomach or bowels, and brings on purging; inso-much that it is not uncommon for patients, both in public and private practice, to die under a course of unction, of violent cholics, accompanied by sanguinary and other fluxes, and this happens by the quantity of mercury absorbed proving an overbalance for the constitution.

Prac-

Practitioners do not accurately know what quantity of mercury may be given, and what quantity of it will take effect, as different constitutions require different doses. Five grains of mercurial ointment will take more effect on one subject, than fifty on another; after using it ten or fifteen days successively, no visible effect may be produced on the constitution; yet, on the eighteenth or twentieth, a salivary flux may commence, and continue for a fortnight or three weeks, and the patient's strength become exhausted. At this juncture should a diarrhæa unfortunately take place, it carries off the patient in a few hours, notwithstanding all the endeavours of the most skilful of the faculty.

I have made use of such arguments as have occurred to me in behalf of this new method, and have advanced nothing but what my repeated experience doth fully warrant. If the ideas of other practitioners do not coincide with mine, I shall be happy to see their avowed and printed sentiments on this important subject, divested of prejudice and delivered with candour.

Should it be asserted that this method sometimes fails, let not that declaration prevent the trying it, as this may be urged
against

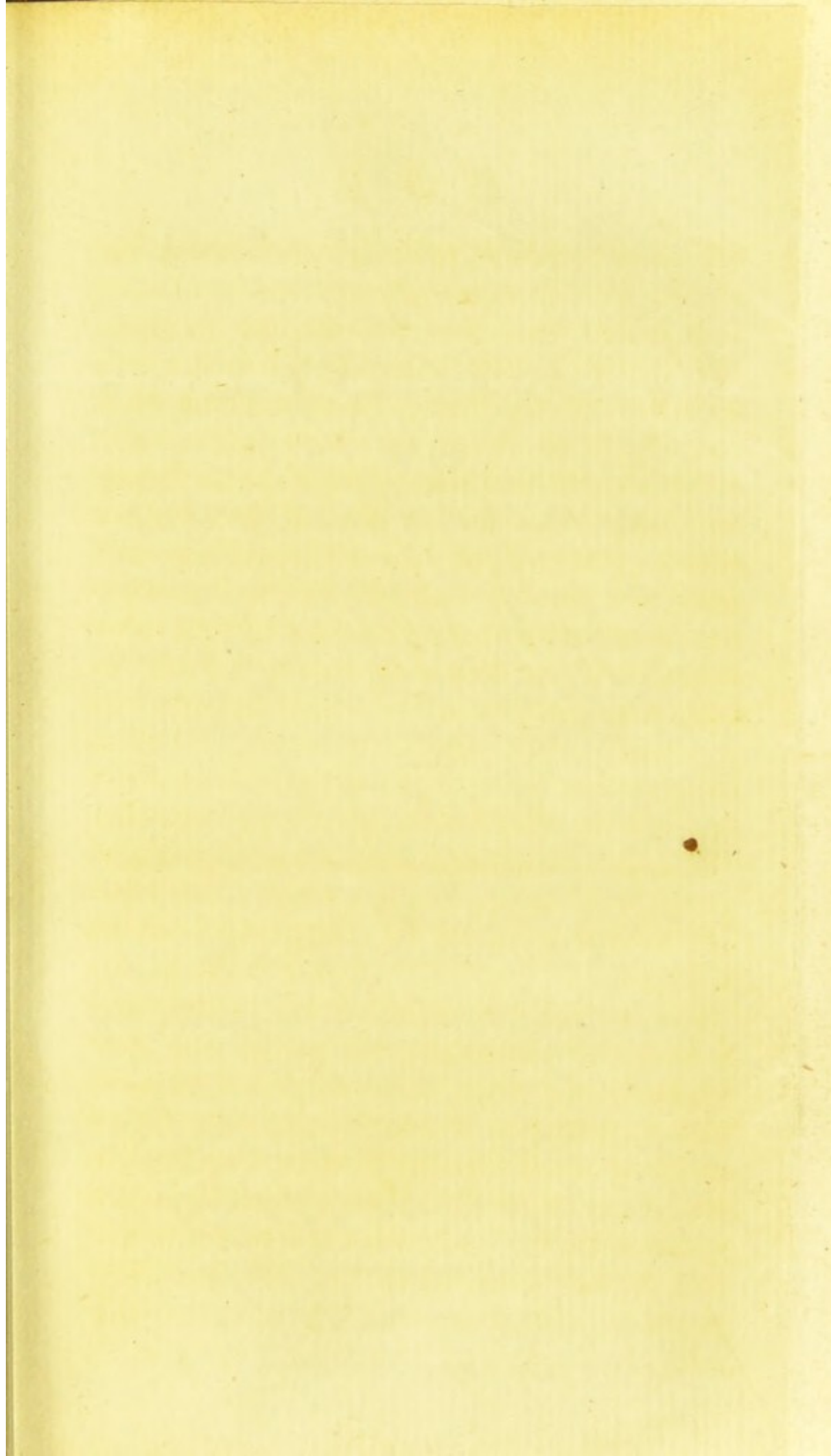
against all medical practice, and often, no doubt, with the greatest injustice.

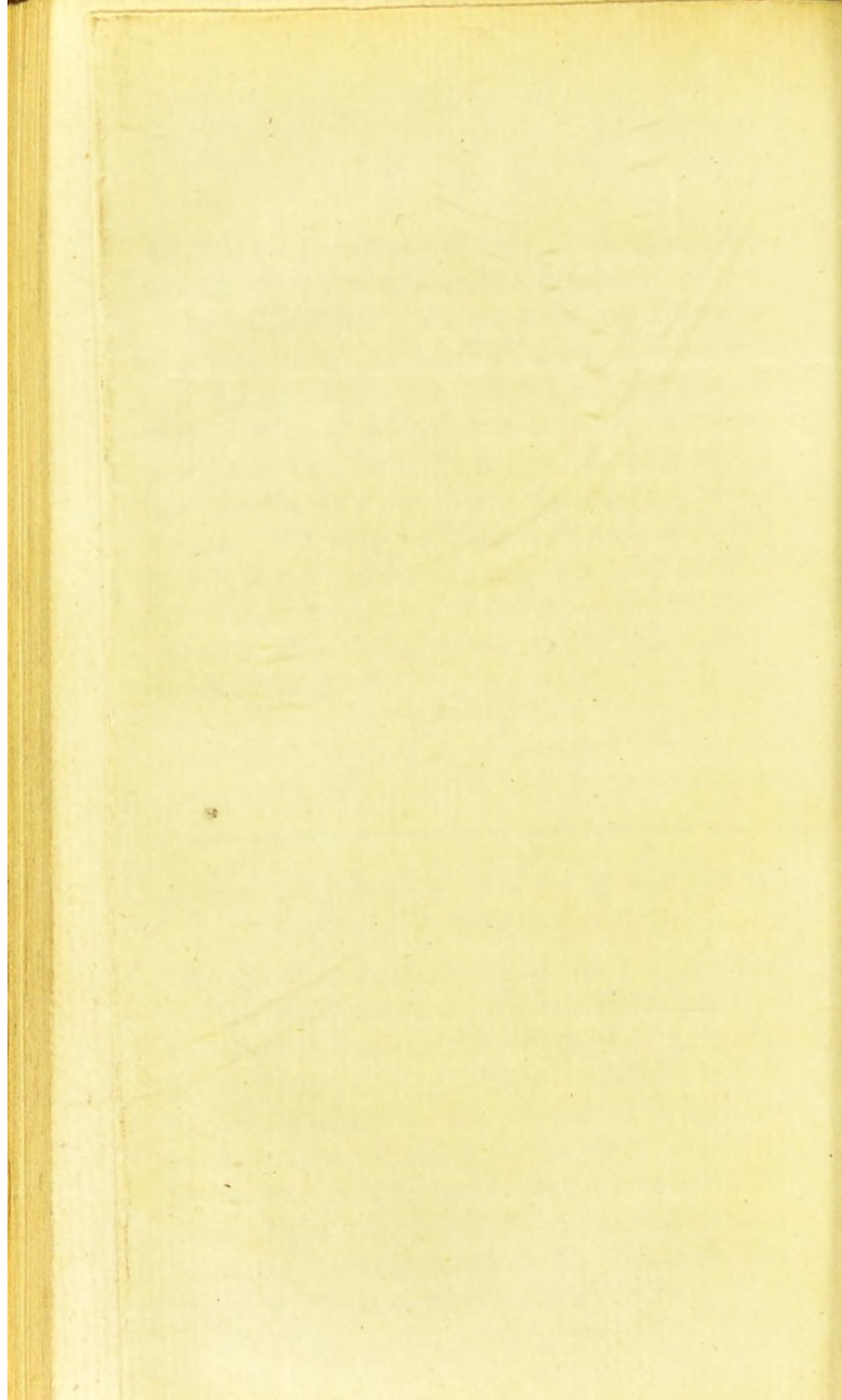
It is said that this process, by shortening the cure and lessening the medicines, will diminish the fee. The profession need not object to it on that account, as they are paid, not for their medicine, this being no object, but for their skill and judgment. Patients of liberal dispositions will always be pleased with dispatch and make a handsome return: and others will find their interest also in behaving in the same equitable manner.

F I N I S.

Published by the same Author, in two Pocket Volumes, in boards. Price 5s.

A New and easy Method of Curing the **LUES VENEREA**: with an Essay on **ABSCESSSES**, and other observations in Surgery. The 3d edition; to which is added a Letter to *Dr. Buchan*, on the Modern Practice of **INOCULATION**: also Miscellaneous Remarks by several Gentlemen of the Faculty in favour of the **NEW MODE** of administering Mercury: with anatomical Plates of the *Villi*, or Packets of Absorbent Vessels.





A
L E T T E R
T O
M R. C L A R E, S U R G E O N,
O N H I S
N E W and E A S Y M E T H O D
O F

Introducing M E R C U R Y into the S Y S T E M,
through the O R I F I C E S of the A B S O R B E N T
V E S S E L S, on the I N S I D E of the M O U T H:

A N D

Recommending it to the C O N S I D E R A T I O N of the
W O R L D in general, and the N A V Y in particular.

By W M. T U R N B U L L,

L A T E S U R G E O N O F H I S M A J E S T Y ' S R O Y A L N A V Y.

A L S O

R E M A R K S on the same S U B J E C T,

By W M. T U R N B U L L, M. D.

L O N D O N :

M D C C L X X X I I I .

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

100 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N.Y.

100 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N.Y.

100 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N.Y.

100 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N.Y.

100 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N.Y.

100 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N.Y.

100 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N.Y.

100 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N.Y.

TO

MR. CLARE, SURGEON,

CHANCERY-LANE.

SIR,

I communicate to You with that degree of pleasure and satisfaction which is easier to be conceived than expressed by generous and liberal-minded men, (whose grand object is Philanthropy,) a very obstinate Syphilitic case, which occurred to me in my practice at the time I was surgeon of his *Majesty's ship, Heart of Oak*. This case had resisted a thorough mercurial course, as recommended by Sir William Fordyce, and other men of eminence, and yielded at last to the elegant and agreeable mode discovered and recommended

by you in your late ingenious publication, which merits a candid reception from the public. This is due to every individual, who, like yourself, communicates his knowledge for the good of mankind.

Mr. *Bird*, at present surgeon to the gallant Lord Hood, was the first who advised me to make trial of your new method of applying mercury, having often tried it himself with the greatest success. I confess that at first thought it staggered me, but having seen and proved its good effects, I am now as much an advocate for it, as I was before doubtful of its efficacy. After I had perused with attention and maturely considered your Treatise on the subject, I was struck with the pertinence of your remarks and ingenuity of argument, being consistent with reason and founded on anatomical facts; at the same time I have been often a witness to the fallacy of *the Alterative Plan*, with the disagreeable and dreadful consequences arising from mercurial friction on the extremities. I have known on *ship board*, and on shore likewise, but more particularly in the former, dangerous fevers and fatal diarrhæas supervene from that manner of applying the mercury;—I am now
con-

confining myself entirely to sea practice ; and you will anticipate me in remarking, that the venereal disease constitutes a great part of it.—My objection to the Mercurial unguentous Frictions at sea must appear clear and obvious to every practitioner on that element, and is plainly this : The unavoidable exposure to the external air for the space of half an hour, while the process of rubbing in the ointment is performing in the Cockpit, the place allotted for the surgeons to examine the sick and wounded. The result of such treatment is an obstructed perspiration, which too frequently terminates in a dangerous febrile affection, and that of the putrid kind, and we are all sensible how fatally that disease ends on ship board, by perhaps being communicated to half the crew. Advocates and sticklers for this method of using mercury, have not, or will not attend to the above interesting particulars : they contend, that the mercurial ointment does not affect the alimentary canal, so as to excite them to evacuate their contents, and that it is easier conveyed into the circulation, than when taken into the stomach in form of boluses, mixtures, &c. that it sooner gets into the sanguiferous system, than when

taken in by the mouth. Be it so, yet experience assures us, that it often does affect the stomach, and will be as readily absorbed and carried into that useful organ in the animal œconomy, as the application of a *saturnine preparation* to an inflamed leg, which caused violent cholics, and other dyspeptic symptoms. A case of this kind lately occurred to a friend of mine, a very eminent practitioner in surgery in this metropolis; and therefore to reason from analogy and upon the same principle, mercury rubbed on the extremities I have often seen occasion very violent diarrhæas, which greatly reduce the patient.

I am sure I have said no more than what is just and founded on facts, and facts are stubborn things; but men of a certain description, biassed by particular methods or systems, too frequently prevent the advancement, and improvement of medical knowledge, and by establishing the whims, errors, and opinions of their respective Teachers, rather than advancing any new opinion to the improvement of their profession, go on in the old beaten track.— I know no character so truly despicable, or that deserves the reproach and indignation of society more, than the man who despises
the

the knowledge of rules of sciences in the practice of a liberal art, when the most invaluable and precious of all human blessings, health and its attendant comforts, are at stake.—Let us, as men professing a liberal science, shake off prejudice, and conscientiously and judiciously adopt that mode which is consistent with reason, and crowned with success.— I am convinced that the majority of the Naval Surgeons, candidly speaking, will strengthen these my just assertions, and conclude with me in observing, that your mode of using mercury is the *most agreeable, the most safe, and the most efficacious* of any practised since this direful malady made its appearance in Europe, which is now near three centuries ago. Happy will it be for mankind when generally adopted, and I hope soon to see it rise superior to the mean attacks of illiberal-minded men, who can bestow no praise but on themselves. If in these few and incorrect remarks I contribute in the least degree to make it more extensively embraced, I shall think it one of the happiest periods of my life: for nothing rejoices me more than to see men of merit meet with their desert. I shall select one of several successful cases.

A young gentleman, a midshipman, aged twenty years, came on board the *Heart of Oak*, on September the 20th, 1781. His symptoms were as follows, a violent head-ach, nocturnal pains in his bones, a large foul undigested ulcer in his left tonsil, a large chancre on the preputium, a heat in his urethra attended with a great scalding when he made water, but notwithstanding all these terrible appearances he was able to go about. Upon my requesting to be informed of every thing relative to the rise and progress of the disease; he told me that it was contracted at Portsmouth about four months previous to his being ordered on board the *Heart of Oak*. It first appeared with a very troublesome irritation in the urinary passage, which seized him about four days after this impure connection, and for some days encreased notwithstanding his immediate application to the surgeon of the ship he was then on board of, being a guardship at Spithead. He gave him, as he said, almond emulsions, with nitre, salts and manna, and ordered him to dilute freely with barley water, linseed tea, and other such *demulcents*. Venæsection was not omitted. In the course of ten days, mercurial ointment was used very liberally on his thighs,
for

for at least a month, with brisk purges at intervals—The running, he said, was very plentiful for the space of five or six weeks, and at the end of that period, he was thought to be cured; however, a few weeks after, his health was gradually on the decline, with a diminution of appetite, strength, and spirits; his sleep was interrupted by pains in his limbs, and nothing more was administered to him untill he came on board our ship.—I thought the above was a proper case to give your mode a thorough trial, and the result was as follows.

I directed him to rub two grains of calomel on the inside of his mouth twice in the day, and at the expiration of ten days, his mouth became tender and his breath affected: when that event took place, the chancre and ulcer in his tonsil put on a kind and healing appearance, granulated well, and were entirely healed in the space of five weeks after adhering to this treatment.—As for his other symptoms, the head-ach, nocturnal pains, &c. at the termination of seven weeks they were perfectly cured. I have one remark to make, that during this mercurial course, I kept up a constant foreness in his mouth, but took
care

care to avoid a spitting: this was accomplished by desisting from rubbing when the foreness ran too high. It was surprising, that from the first fortnight after he had used the calomel, he recovered his appetite and spirits, gathered strength daily, and became fat upon it.—I am afraid, Sir, I have encroached too much on your patience, but believe me I feel a sensible pleasure in the relation of these facts. This one of the many cases in which I have had an opportunity of proving its superior efficacy, alone is a sufficient incitement to prefer it above all other methods. That it may be attended with a constant uniform course of success, is the sincere wish of, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

Wellclose Square,
Jan. 15, 1783.

WM. TURNBULL.

P O S T S C R I P T.

A Lieutenant in the Navy, in the month of November, 1781, had contracted the Lues Venerea, for which he had been bled freely, had taken rough mercurial purges, and had been ordered to abstain from all strong liquors. By means of this severe treatment, and the disorder together, he was become greatly emaciated, in which state he applied to me; and by the use of your method, and a more
free

free regimen, he soon recovered his health. When I proposed his rubbing a little powder on his lips, he seemed much prejudiced against it, and turned it into ridicule, saying, "What can that do?" but on my explaining the nature and operation of the process, he consented to make a trial of it, and afterwards thanked me very kindly for my great attention and care of him.

I have been assured by several persons, that they have repeatedly cured themselves by following the directions given in your book, which in all probability will cause your method to be brought into general use, a circumstance most devoutly to be wished for the good of mankind.]

I may probably communicate to you, another time, the whole of this case, with some others, in which I have experienced its happy effects.

To sum up in few words the merits of your practice, I am convinced that many lives, which are destroyed by consumptions arising from a violent course of mercury, might have been preserved unhurt, by adopting your mild and salutary process.

WM. TURNBULL.

A Letter from WM. TURNBULL, M. D.
to Mr. CLARE, Surgeon.

DEAR SIR,

ON reading your late publication, with regard to the application of mercury, to the inside of the mouth, &c. with more advantage than from any other mode offered to the public, I was so pleased with the simplicity and neatness of the method, that I was determined to adopt it the first opportunity. I shall not trouble you with a narrative of particular cases, of which you have had many from different correspondents; I can, however, from several instances

stances assure you, that I have seen more speedy and salutary effects from your method, than from any other yet held forth to the public. With regard to the doctrine of absorption, I do not suppose any persons acquainted with the animal system, and the history of physic, will refuse their assent to it. And this being taken for granted, wherever the friction can be moderately used *to the thin cuticular inner surfaces* of the body, every person conversant with the subject, must rationally conclude, that *there* it will prove most effectual. Much might be said in support of your hypothesis, but after what those ingenious Gentlemen, Doctor Hunter and Mr. Cruikshank, have advanced in support of the doctrine of absorption, and in commendation of your discovery, it would be superfluous to urge any thing more upon the subject.--- Give me leave only to say, that I do not think there has been a greater discovery since SYDENHAM's time, except the modern treatment of inflammatory fevers, especially that of inoculation, in which improvement the candid Baron Dimsdale claims the greatest merit from the publick. No person of liberal sentiments will condemn your's or any other new method, until they make a fair trial thereof, especially as you have advanced nothing inconsistent with, or contradictory to the present practice, in the treatment of the Venereal Disease.---The exposing persons to the cold air, and indulging them in the free use of cold water for their drink, even in the natural small-pox, had far greater difficulties to struggle with, than the practice you have recommended.

If any thing that I have said in consequence of your liberal and ingenious publication can afford you any satisfaction, I will occasionally communicate to you in future whatever may fall under my observation.

And am, DEAR SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

Wellclose-Square,
Jan. 25, 1783.

WM. TURNBULL, M. D.

To Mr. C L A R E, Surgeon.

S I R,

SOON after the Publication I saw your two little Volumes. Your Hypothesis I immediately embraced, being irresistibly struck with its Rationality. I directly and clearly conceived how much easier Calomel and Saliva would be absorbed than the viscid Substance of an Ointment; and how much more eligible such a Mode must be, under the Ideas of Ease and Elegance. I moreover admired your Manner of applying it—How much more readily the internal Surface of the Mouth or the Lips must absorb than any external part of the Body, where Substances capable of being absorbed have both *Cuticula* and *Cutis* to pass! Besides, I was convinced of it, from the ready Entrance this *Virus* meets with, and from the speedy and effectual communication of its direful Effects, as in the Case of an Ulcer in the Lip coming into Contact with that of a sound Person. These, Sir, were my Reflections, on reading your Book; and I firmly hold them to this Hour. I cannot here omit mentioning your Sentiments touching my worthy Teacher, Dr. Hugh Smith's Injections; first, of Bland Oil, afterwards of a Solution of White Vitriol. You are the only Surgeon that I ever found would even bear the Mention of such an Injection; but it was because they never gave themselves Time to consider the Principles on which it was founded. But you have candidly considered, and handsomely defended them. I can only add my warmest Wishes, that your truly laudable and disinterested Pursuits may be succeeded by growing and lasting Fame and Opulence; who am, though not so happy as to know you, Sir,

Your obliged humble Servant,

S. SAUNDERS.

Boreham-wood,
near Barnet, Herts.

To Mr. CLARE, Surgeon.

S I R,

A Lieutenant in the Navy, in the Month of November, 1781, contracted SYPHYLIS, for which he had been bled freely, taken rough Mercurial purges, and been ordered to abstain from all strong liquors. From this severe treatment, and the disorder together, he was greatly emaciated; in which state he applied to me. By the use of your method, and a free regimen, he soon recovered his health. When I proposed his rubbing a little powder on his lips, he seemed much prejudiced against it, saying, "What can that do?" But on my explaining the nature and operation of the process, he consented to make a trial of it; and afterwards thanked me for my great attention and care of him.

I have been assured by several persons, that they have repeatedly cured themselves by the directions in your book; which will, in all probability, cause your method to be brought into general use; a circumstance devoutly to be wished for the good of mankind.

To sum up the merits of your practice in few words, I am convinced that many lives, destroyed by consumptions, arising from violent courses of Mercury, might have been preserved by the adoption of your mild and salutary process.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

Wm. TURNBULL,

Surgeon of his Majesty's Royal Navy.

"Hoc ore *absorpto* fugiunt pallorque fitusque,
"Membraque luxuriant."

OVID METAM.

“**T**HERE are few Maladies, the effects of which are more felt by society than those of the Venereal Disease. The other evils which attack mankind, very often affect only individuals. This seems to include the species in general. *They* are, perhaps, only felt at intervals, whereas *this* is every day renewed.—It taints as it were the very source of life, and descends from one generation to another.—And what adds to it's horrors is, that in proportion to it's propagation, it disguises it's appearance, and eludes all the pursuits of Art. No object seems more worthy than this to fix the attention of Government. To preserve the present generation to the State; and to prepare it a future race, which shall be more healthy and strong, are the objects of medicine, in the treatment of a disease which attacks men in the prime of life, and deprives their country of those services, and of those descendants from them, which she had a right to expect. Diminished population, degeneration of the species, weakness in the State: These are the effects of this cruel disease.”

OF MERCURIAL FRICTIONS.

“**I**F the patient rubs in the mercury himself, he soon tires, and the friction is incomplete.—If it is an assistant who does this, the same inconvenience may happen.—It often occurs that the texture of the skin prevents the particles of mercury from penetrating through it's pores, and the ointment which keeps them divided becomes an obstacle to their passage.—Hence it may happen that *too little mercury* will be introduced into the blood, and there will be always uncertainty as to the quantity that is absorbed, and very often little or no diminution of the symptoms. On the other hand if the

texture of the skin is very loose, and the ointment is applied with force, the particles of the mercury will be easily absorbed, and will be liable to stimulate the secretory organs more or less, according to the temperament of the patient &c. Even in this method, *from too much mercury*, there will often be excessive Salivation, Diarrhea, &c. which will weaken the patient, and render it impossible for him to receive the necessary and proper quantity of the remedy. As we are often obliged to repeat the frictions after the ointment has been rubbed on every part of the body, the grease and filth which remain upon the skin, are often an obstacle to the farther admission of mercury. We may add to this that the patient's linen becoming imbibed with grease and sweat, incommodes him by it's fetid odour, and infects the air he breathes. These are not the only inconveniences of this method.

Of MERCURY taken internally.

“THE efficacy of mercury being once known, it was easily conceived, that it might be possible to introduce it into the mass of blood through the *primæ viæ*. This system gave rise to all the various preparations which have been at different times, introduced into use, such as *Calomel*, *Panaceas*, different kinds of *Æthiops*, *Cinnabar*, and various *precipitates*, &c. But it was soon acknowledged by the most discerning, that all these remedies being almost wholly insoluble, acted chiefly on the organs of digestion so that commonly only a very small portion of them passed into the mass of blood. Sometimes indeed it happened that by a particular disposition of the absorbing vessels, by the assistance of a more abundant fluid, too much

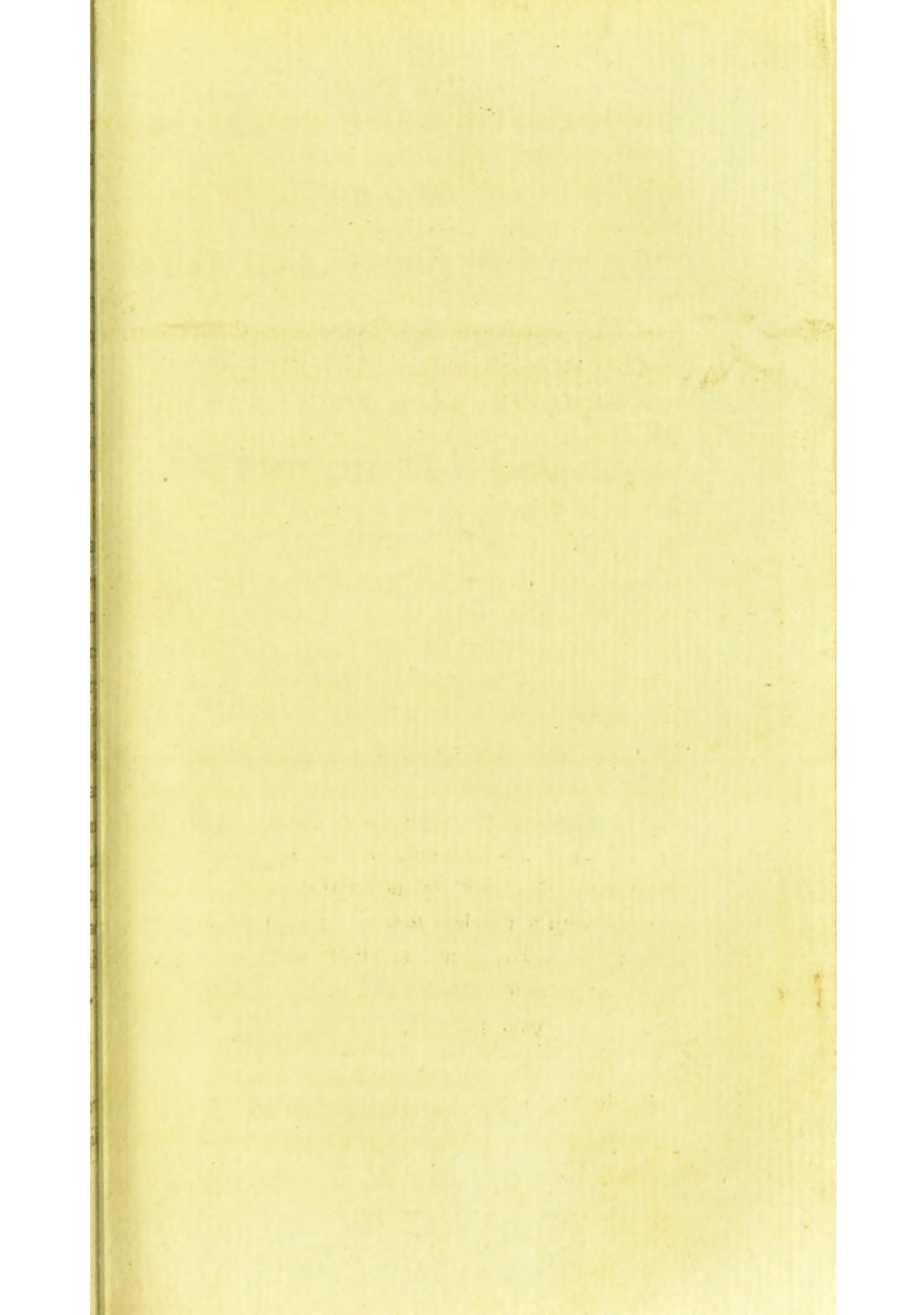
them was taken up, and thus occasioned swelling of the glands, erosions of the mouth and tongue, and very often salivations, which were difficult to be stopped. If on the other hand the medicines remained too long in the stomach or intestines, they produced disagreeable accidents, such as nausea, vomiting, colic, diarrhæa, dysentery, erosions, and even ulcerations, throughout the whole intestinal canal."

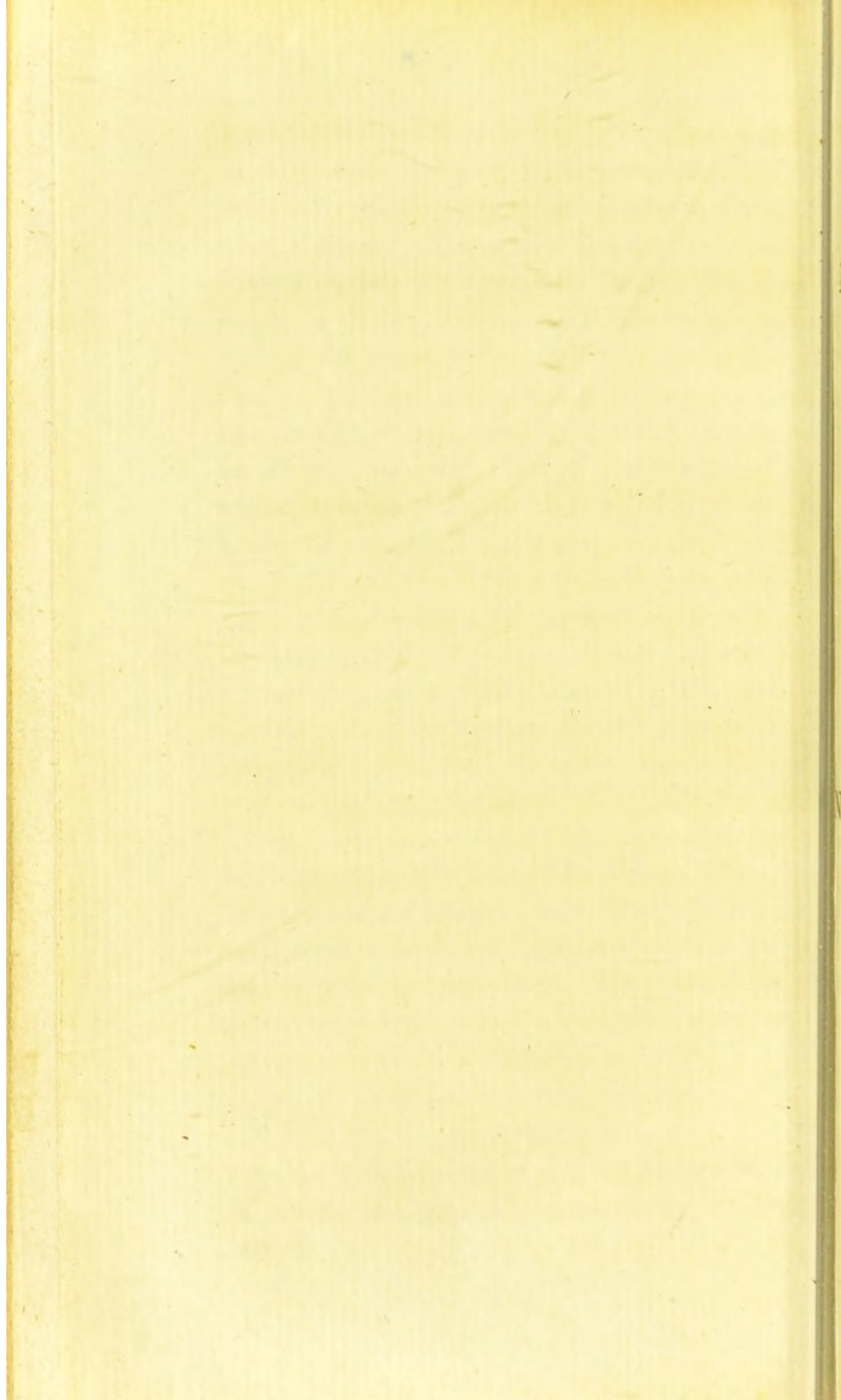
"BOERHAAVE had mentioned corrosive sublimate, as a powerful remedy which might succeed in some desperate diseases. He recommended it, indeed, to be directed only by the hands of experienced and prudent Physicians, but he ought surely to have foreseen, that it would not fail to be administered by the rash and the ignorant. When applied to the flesh, glands, or bones, the sublimate occasions an *eschar*, and destroys their organization. If it is dissolved in a small quantity of water, it produces the same effects, though more slowly. What is thus effected externally, is the picture of what is going on within. Ought we then to be surprized if the sublimate, when received into the stomach, should so irritate and stimulate it's delicate and sensible membranes, as to injure it's functions, and occasion nausea, vomitings, violent colics, and sometimes even convulsions? We may say more than this, we may add, that so far from resolving the inspissated Lymph, it will produce a contrary effect by tending to condense it still more, and thus occasioning effects very opposite to the intentions of the Physician. All this is proved by the easiest experiments, if we add only a weak solution of the sublimate to the lymphatic part of the blood, and expose it to the degree of animal heat, it will very quickly condense and coagulate. I have had occasion

occasion to see a great number of patients, who had used it with great precaution, and yet were attacked with nausea, colics in the epigastric regions, and sometimes through the whole abdomen. The venereal symptoms had, perhaps disappeared, but the patients were languid; their appetite was depraved; they had nausea, great difficulty of digestion, a slow fever, and constantly complained of pains about the stomach. At length, in some cases, there came on an almost total retention of the aliment, occasioned by a resistance of the *Pylorus*, or lower orifice of the stomach. I have opened the bodies of several who have died in this way, and I have in some found the pylorus so contracted, that it would hardly admit a common probe; it appeared like an *Eschar*; and this sometimes extended to the *Duodenum*, which was affected in like manner. I have sometimes found the *Mesentery* and *Mesocolon* indurated and thickened, and even the coats of the intestines themselves so imbibed with this caustic liquor, that I was able to remove them with great ease, as it were by layers. The *pancreas* was hard, schirrous, and in some degree friable: In others who had died consumptive after taking the sublimate, I have found the lungs hard and schirrous, with all the bronchial glands tumified and hardened, and the internal surface of the lungs covered with a purulent *fanies*. The glands of the mesentery, the axillary glands, and those which accompany the jugular veins were likewise enlarged and extremely hard.

Vide *Lalonette on Fumigation*.

By the NEW MODE OF ABSORPTION the above disagreeable and pernicious consequences are happily avoided.





A
L E T T E R

FROM A
MEDICAL PRACTITIONER

In L O N D O N,

TO A
FRIEND in the Country,

WITH AN
A C C O U N T
O F

MR. C L A R E's

New Mode of administering MERCURY

By A B S O R P T I O N,

FROM THE
INTERNAL SURFACE
Of the M O U T H.

THE SECOND EDITION.

Printed in the Year, 1785.

A
J. E. T. E. R.

FROM A
MEDICAL PRACTITIONER
IN LONDON

TO A
FRIEND in the Country,
WITH AN

A C C O U N T
OF
MR. C. L. A. R. E.'S

new Mode of administering Mercury
BY ABSORPTION

FROM THE
INTERNAL SURFACE
OF THE MOUTH

The Second Edition.
Printed in the Year 1785.

Dear Sir,

THE human mind is delighted with investigating the origin and progress of any useful invention, but as it is generally impossible to find out the casual hints which give rise to discoveries, or trace the steps by which they arrive at perfection, this desire can seldom be satisfied. With a view, however, to gratify your curiosity in this respect, I shall present you with an account of the discovery of a new mode of administering Mercury in the cure of the Venereal Disease, at present a subject of much conversation and interesting debate in this metropolis.

It is now almost generally allowed, that the virulent poison of this contagious Disease was brought into Europe about the close of the

B.

fourteenth

fourteenth century, by the first adventurers who discovered the continent of America : And it is doubtful whether the introduction of an evil, which so immediately affects the origin of life, does not more than counterbalance all the advantages that have been derived from the discovery of that quarter of the globe. The contagion of this direful malady quickly diffused itself over all Europe, and has ever since continued to extend its ravages among the inhabitants of these regions. This fell disease, however, is not without an effectual remedy. Mercury, if judiciously administered, is probably capable of curing it in every stage; and it is remarkable, that the antidote is produced in greatest abundance in those very regions whence the bane originated. The power of this mineral in expelling the Venereal *Virus*, might have still remained unknown had not PARACELSUS arisen at the very time of its introduction into Europe, a bold empiric, who contemned the timid practice of former physicians, and professed to perform wonderful cures by means of chemical preparations.

parations. By this man, the virtues of mercury, in curing this and other diseases, were first demonstrated. Since that time physicians have been constantly employed in inventing various preparations, and trying different modes of administering this remedy. But they found that, like all other active medicines, when *taken into the stomach*, altho' it might cure the disease, it materially injured the constitution. Mercury, when chymically prepared, is said, by antient chymists, to be composed of *Spicula*, or sharp pointed crystals, which vellicate and wound the tender coats of the stomach. The moderns define it to be an acrid saline quality in the mercury. The injurious effects, however, are the same in either case.—The vegetable kingdom was then explored in quest of a milder antidote for this disorder, but without success; for altho' some plants may assist in the cure, yet in this country none can be depended upon *alone* as an *effectual* remedy.

Whatever may have been alledged to the contrary, this assertion is but too well sup-

ported by the present deplorable situation of the inhabitants of the newly discovered islands in the southern ocean.

The European baneful thirst of curiosity, has introduced among those, previously innocent and happy people, a horrid and loathsome disease, rapidly diffusing misery and death, and whose extensive devastations they are possessed of no means to oppose.

The deleterious effects of mercury, when taken into the stomach and intestines, being but too evident, some more safe mode of introducing it into the habit was much to be desired. The only way, however, hitherto employed, of effecting this, by any other surface than that of the intestines, is by rubbing mercurial ointment upon the skin. But this process is found to be attended with so many inconvenient and disagreeable circumstances, that the practice can never be universally employed.

Mr. Clare's situation afforded him opportunities of seeing a variety of cases, where
either

either an extreme irritability of the stomach and bowels, or an insuperable repugnance to swallow medicine, prevented the internal exhibition of mercury; at the same time the method of *inunction* was found to be very disagreeable. This naturally induced him to search for some more easy mode of introducing mercury into the system. An acquaintance with anatomy pointed out the internal surface of the mouth, as a part from whence a very great number of absorbent vessels originated, and easily suggested the idea that mercury applied there would be absorbed with facility, and quickly conveyed into the circulation. He candidly resolved to make the experiment first upon himself. Accordingly he applied small quantities of calomel, at intervals, to his tongue, and the inside of the cheek, around the orifice of the salivary duct, (where the absorbent vessels are distributed in great abundance) then rubbing it well with his tongue; and being careful not to swallow the saliva, he found to his great satisfaction, its powerful influence on the system, and that it produced the desired effects

feels much sooner than an equal quantity taken into the stomach. The peculiar fitness of this surface for absorption being thus established, he began to give mercury in this way to his patients, and the event fully confirmed his own ideas of the propriety of this practice. Having found that mercury administered in this manner, was as efficacious as when taken into the stomach; and at the same time free from all the bad consequences of that practice, as well as the inconveniencies attending the mercurial ointment, Mr. *Clare* has ever since continued to employ this method.

Various preparations of mercury have been applied in this manner, and absorbed, although not with equal advantage. Some of them, stimulating the vessels, are taken up with greater rapidity than calomel, but their acrimony, when not very carefully corrected, is apt to inflame and irritate the parts to which they are applied.

Upon

Upon the whole, Mr. *Clare* appears to give the preference to *calomel*, and *mercurius calcinatus*, as being absorbed with sufficient facility, and without injury to the surface of the mouth*. Nor does he find that *mercury* when duly administered in this manner, tends to run off by the intestines, a circumstance which frequently renders it inefficacious when taken into the stomach.

This salutary practice is not merely confined to the administration of mercury, other remedies, as the *salt of bark*, James's *powder*, &c. when applied to the surface of the mouth, are found to be absorbed, and to produce their beneficial effects upon the constitution. This points out an effectual

* Mr. CLARE's general directions are, to rub half a grain, or a grain of *calomel*, or *mercurius calcinatus*, according to the urgency of the complaint, on the surface of the tongue and lips, two or three times a-day. The patient, he says, is not under the necessity of observing any regimen, or submitting to confinement.—The ease and secrecy, with which this method of cure may be conducted, are obvious.

method

method of administering medicine in various diseases, which frequently prove fatal either from the patient's repugnance to drugs, or total inability to swallow; consequently it is well adapted to the convenience of children as well as adults.

When this *new mode* of administering mercury was made public, like all other improvements, it met with considerable opposition from many of the faculty; while others equally respectable, being convinced of its utility, gave it their patronage and support. It would be presumptuous in me to decide upon its merit, after the public testimonies which Dr. *Hunter*, Mr. *Cruikshank*, and other eminent medical gentlemen have given in its favour.

Mr. *Clare's* other publications are, a *Treatise on the Gonorrhœa*; *Remarks on the Benefit of extending Inoculation*, in a letter addressed to Dr. *Buchan*, *Author of Domestic Medicine*; *Observations on the lenient Method of treating Wounds and Ulcers*; on the *Nature and Cure of Abscesses*, and the great Utility of MEDICAL SURGERY.

I am, Sir, &c.

the content of the

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

Printed by J. Streater, at the

Sign of the Sun in St. Dunstons Church

in the Strand

1679

Vol. I

Page 1

THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

Printed by J. Streater, at the

Sign of the Sun in St. Dunstons Church

A LETTER from Dr. KIRKLAND, to Mr. CLARE.

“ DEAR SIR,

Ashby, Aug. 18, 83.

I Am greatly obliged to you for your Pamphlets, and for the honorable mention you have made of me. I have read them with pleasure, and approve of the practice of using injections in the cure of the gonorrhœa. It is the ready way to work, nor does it deny the assistance of internal medicines, when virulence or neglect has made them necessary. I sincerely wish you success in decrying the use of *large quantities* of mercury in the cure of Siphylis ; it is perfectly unnecessary, always injurious, and I do believe it has killed multitudes, and destroyed the health of millions. I hope to see the horrid practice of daubing with loads of extinguished quicksilver, laid aside, and I mean to assist in expunging a method founded in erroneous principles. I am glad also to see you turn your thoughts to Medical Surgery ; and if Surgeons in general would look the same way, they would be doing essential service to mankind. Wishing success in your inquiries,

I am, Dear SIR,

Your most humble Servant,

THO. KIRRLAND.”

TO DR. KIRKLAND.

DEAR SIR,

PERMIT me to return you thanks for the honour of a letter, in which you have been pleased to express your approbation of my method of curing the Gonorrhœa and Siphylis, and also of my attention to Medical Surgery. Nothing can give me more pleasure than your additional testimony, which must have great influence with the public, and the faculty, by whom your knowledge and judgement is held in the highest estimation. It is incumbent on me to announce to the world, that your Sentiments, Sir, coincide with those
of

of my other Medical Friends, who have come forth and declared their entire disapprobation of the common, disagreeable, and injurious modes of administering mercury, and whose voluntary and candid attestations, where health and life are concerned, can never be too much valued and admired. I shall take the earliest opportunity of conveying you the third edition of my book, with an anatomical engraving of the Villi of the Lips, which probably you may not have seen, and which I beg you to accept..

I agree with you in thinking, that " if Surgeons in general would turn their thoughts towards Medical Surgery, they would do essential service to mankind."

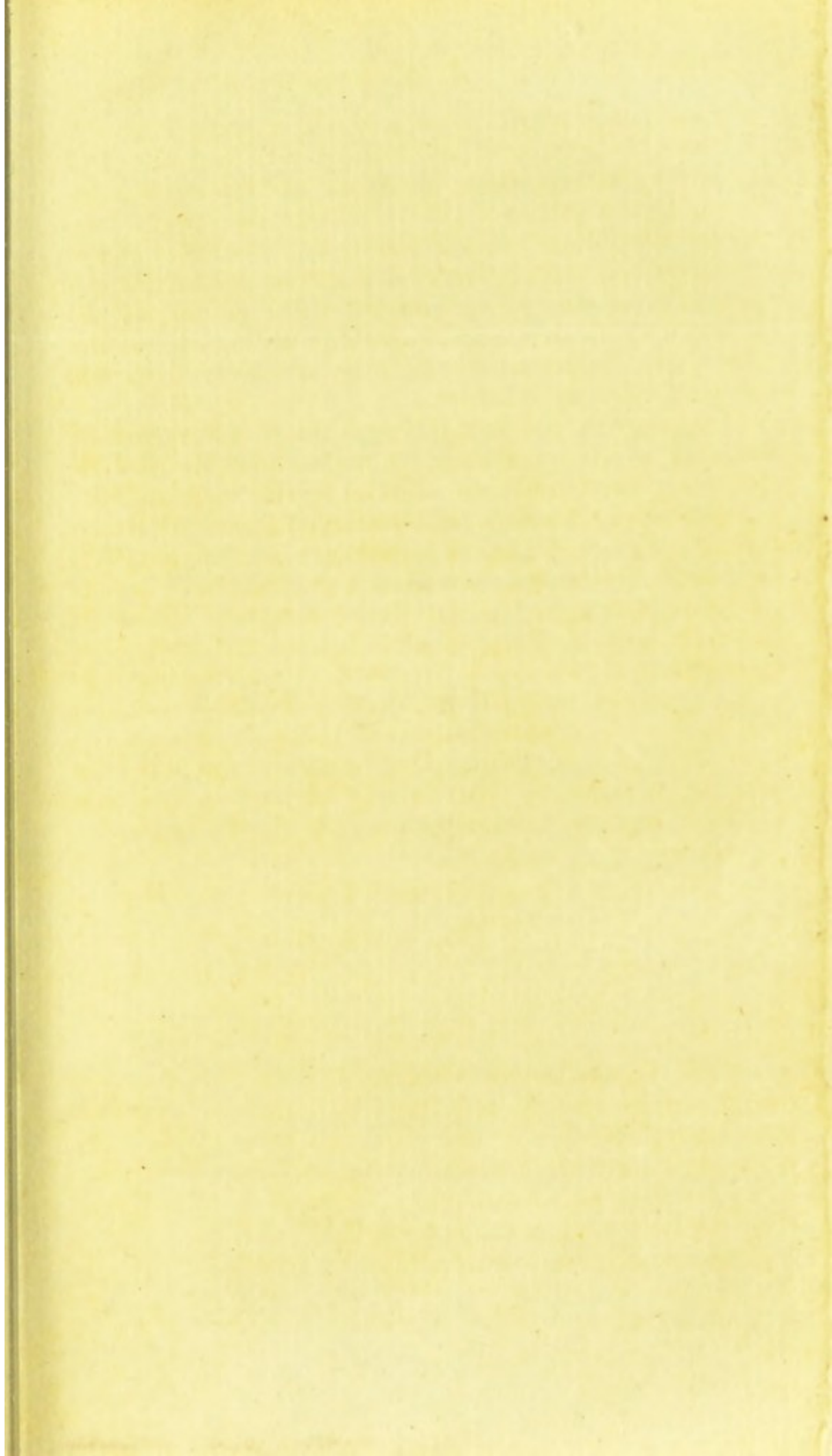
The knife (however great its merit) seems to have arrived at its *ne plus ultra* of perfection ; and the most sanguine cannot expect more from it than has been already experienced ; but Medical Surgery may be still in its infancy, and there are, in all human probability, some remedies not known ; and others, though known, yet never happily applied, which may hereafter furnish a cure for cancers, and other disorders at present ranged in the class of incurables. Our attention and diligence should therefore be particularly engaged in this most rational pursuit, from which we have nothing to fear, and every thing to hope.

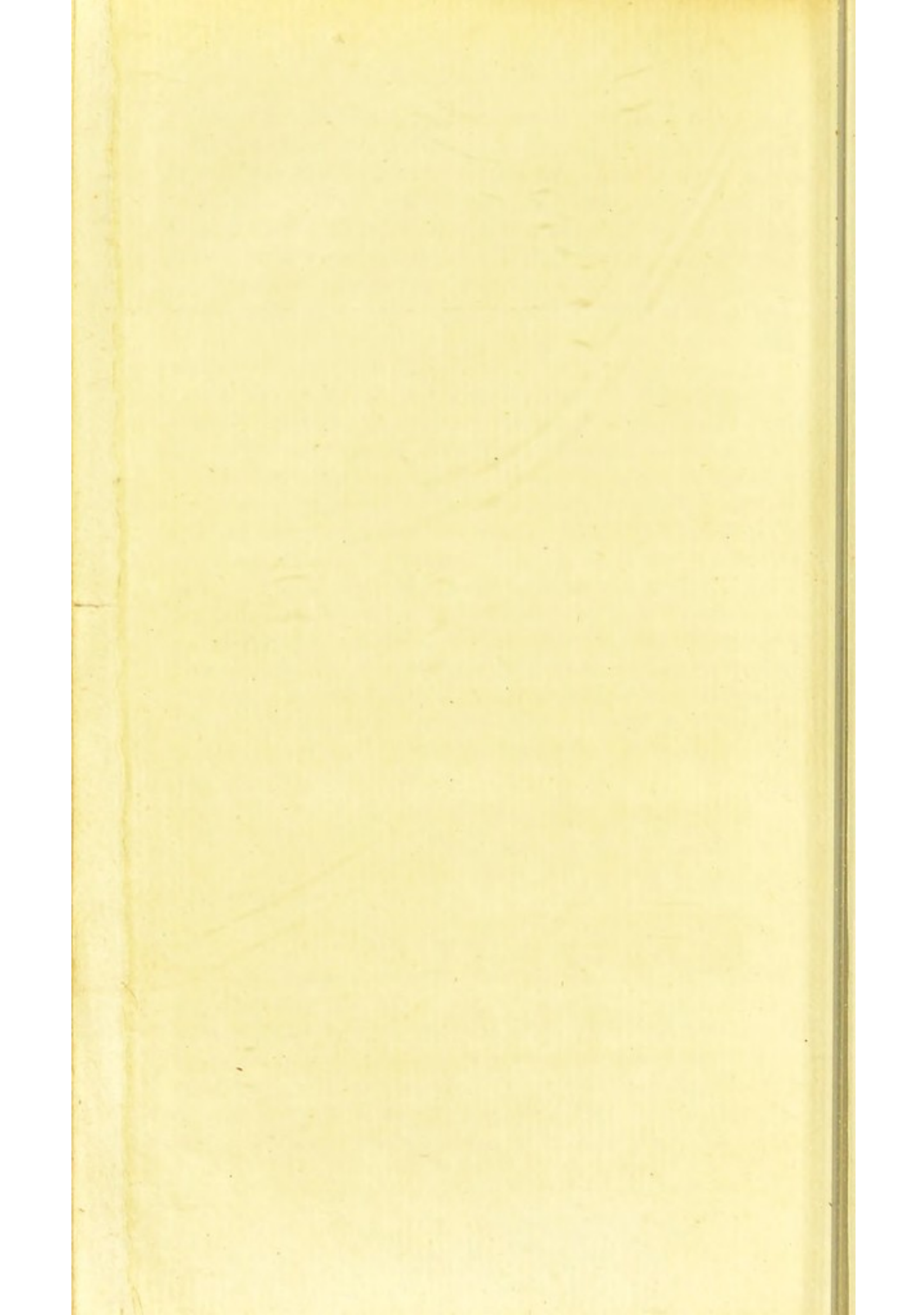
I am, Dear S I R,

Your most humble Servant,

P. CLARE.

P. S. It may be worth observation, that great advantage attends the use of saline preparations of mercury, which dissolving, are more quickly absorbed than other powders not soluble, and rising against their own weight. The most acrid of this class, when properly mixed, may be safely applied to the upper surface of the tongue, observing, for some time, not to swallow the saliva.





OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

NATURE AND CURE

OF

ABSCESSSES,

AND OF

WOUNDS IN GENERAL;

WITH

A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT

OF THE

ART OF HEALING,

AND THE GREAT UTILITY OF

MEDICAL SURGERY.

Chiefly Selected from Authors who have
written on this important Subject.

By PETER CLARE, SURGEON.

——— *Quæ profunt omnibus artes.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for the A U T H O R.

M DCC LXXXIII.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

CAUSE AND

PREVENTION

OF

WOUNDS

AND

A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT

OF

THE

MEDICAL SURGERY

OF

THE

ARMY

BY PETER CLARK, Surgeon.

LONDON

Printed for the Author.

1794

M.D.CXCIV.

IN a former Edition of an ESSAY ON THE CURE OF ABSCESSSES, &c. I took notice that it was a frequent observation of Mr. Pott, that many Gentlemen who came to the Hospital to finish their education, were too apt to fix their attention on the operative part of Surgery only. Operations, he observed, would seldom occur to them in practice, in comparison with the common business of Abscesses, Wounds, and Ulcers, and as these must daily come under their care, he wished them to endeavour particularly to make themselves masters of the *Healing Art*.

From an early initiation in Surgery at the Hospital, I became a friend to lenient applications, instead of such as were of an irritating nature, which, I observed, gave great pain, and did much mischief. Mr. Pott's practice, contrasted with that of others, afforded an opportunity of comparing the different effects, and the pupils in general, whose young minds had not yet been tinctured with strong prejudices, were soon convinced which method ought to be pursued.

It has been proverbially said, that a Surgeon should have a steady hand and a hard heart; the first, is a qualification highly expedient, the latter, I fear, is often productive of much mischief; persons having been educated to Surgery, for reasons which ought for ever to have excluded them,—because, they

were by nature cruel, and loved to torment. That there are, and have been, too many of such dispositions, in every age and in every country, cannot be denied; and this has probably been the reason that Surgery has made such slow advances towards perfection. I have seen a person seared with a hot iron, which threw him into a fever, and he died in consequence. Other instances of unjustifiable severity have occurred, even of late days, and some are entered on record; thus much is advanced for truth's sake, and in justification of what I have before asserted; to say more, however just, might seem invidious.

To the honour of many modern Surgeons, the art has been improved in all its branches, but in none so much as what concerns the healing province. Surgery has, in all ages, been accounted a *DIVINE ART*; which it then only is, when conducted on right principles, and made to conduce to the ease and preservation of mankind.

—I hope the liberty I have taken in the following pages, of extracting from the works of others, will not give them offence, or be imputed to me as a fault; my principal Motive is to furnish Instruction and Improvement from their ingenious labours, not meaning in any respect to injure them.
—By borrowing rays from *LUMINARIES*, we extend the influence without diminishing their *LUSTRE*.

Chancery-Lane,

S E C T. I.

Of Abscesses; their Nature and Cure.

AN Abscess is a collection of matter commonly seated in the cellular or adipose membrane, and sometimes terminates in disperſion. Its formation is attended with pain and fever; and generally with ſhiverings, all which are the ſymptoms of a conſtitution labouring under ſome morbid attack, and being critical, ſhould not be repelled. Emollient poultices, and anodyne fomentations poſſeſs a relaxing power, take off tenſion, and give eaſe. Bleeding, under certain circumſtances promotes maturation; but this muſt be followed with caution.—Absceſſes, in old people, in dropſical, and bad habits, tend to a mortification. When ripe, they ſometimes break and do well; but as the orifice is apt to cloſe too ſoon, it may be found neceſſary to keep it open by frequent and gentle preſſure, and ſometimes by a ſlight touch of lunar cauſtic. Surgeons, however, uſually prefer larger openings by the knife or cauſtic paſte.* With reſpect to the pain from a cauſtic, compared with that from the knife, it is but little, eſpecially when applied to a cool, uninflamed ſkin, as when we make an iſſue; or, when the matter is quite formed, and the ſkin thin, ſoft, and eaſy to the touch. On an inflamed part, the cauſtic muſt undoubtedly be painful;† yet if we may
B 3. judge

* Cauſtic : mitius, Pharm. Lond..

† Should it be neceſſary however, in ſuch a ſituation to employ the cauſtic, it may be mixed with *opium*.—" With-
 " in this laſt twelve-month only, ſays Mr. Elſe, we
 " have mixed *opium* with our cauſtic, and we have re-
 " ſon to think it greatly leſſens the pain, inſomuch that
 " ſeveral patients have fallen aſleep during its operation,
 " and all have owned that it was very eaſy to bear; nor
 does

judge from what our patients say, and appear to suffer, it is by no means so severe as the knife; I mean altogether considered. Neither is there any of the terror that accompanies the knife, a circumstance of great moment with timorous minds; fear being as great an evil as pain itself. A caustic of the dimensions of a six-pence is generally sufficient for the largest Abscess, and makes a free vent for the discharge of matter. I have known many Abscesses near the *rectum* opened thus in a depending part, and cured in a very short time with the greatest ease, and as effectually as if there had been an incision of several inches in length; and often Abscesses here will break, and having no communication with the intestine, will cure themselves without the assistance of an artificial aperture. When they become fistulous, the case is altered, and a division of the *sinus* is required. This is best performed with the probe-pointed knife, recommended by Mr. Pott in preference to the scissars, which being intolerably painful, ought therefore to be discarded. Wounds made by a caustic have no jagged lips, or callous inverted edges, nor *sinuses*; being quite open, they are dressed with the greatest ease, but not, when made with the knife, these being both painful to dress and difficult to cure. As the wound heals, where a caustic has been applied, the circumjacent skin draws in, and very little new skin is wanted. One caustic does the business, but rarely doth one incision suffice. I knew a surgeon who lost a patient some years ago, by insisting on making one incision more in his posteriors; the gentleman would

“ does the *opium* appear in the least to destroy the virtue of the caustic.” Mr. Else recommends the caustic in the cure of the *hydrocele* in preference to the knife, altho’ he was a dexterous operator. Caustics sometimes give so little pain, that having been applied as common plaisters, and represented as such to the patient, he has not known that he has undergone this operation. This can never be alledged in favour of the knife, the pain from which is generally very acute.

would not submit, but took a certain quack medicine of the cordial invigorating kind, and the *sinus*, which the surgeon had desired to lay open with the knife, got well without it. The patient exulting on the occasion, and giving the merit of the cure to the medicine, the surgeon observed that he had done the business by the knife. "It may be so, (replied the patient) but it is plain you was mistaken then, and by the same rule, you might be so before." The knife which ought to be the last resort, is too often the first, with those who are fond of displaying it; though a good and necessary instrument in many cases, in the hands of an expert, judicious, and humane surgeon; yet when employed by others, it is too often the reverse, proving both mischievous and cruel. The safe and proper use of it can only be acquired by first seeing the operations of others, and afterwards by practice, but never from books alone, without anatomical skill, and manual experience.

Mr. Pott attributes many of the cures, said to be performed by quack medicines, to the effect of Nature alone. "Without intending any thing upon an honest or a rational principle, says he, Empirics, for want of knowing what to do properly, dress with some superficial ointment or plaister, and leave the conduct of sores to Nature, who, when the impediments of dressings (which often offend either in quantity or quality) are removed, will do much more than her too officious assistants believe." Is it not possible that such a medicine might casually restore a bad constitution? I should conceive it might; if so, it shews the utility and necessity of *Medical* * Surgery, which, I believe, if more attended to in practice, and better understood, might often effect cures in disorders where the manual exercise of the knife had failed, and brought discredit on the healing art. The propriety therefore of having the best medical aid on these occasions

* See Dr. Kirkland's Enquiry into the Present State of Medical Surgery, including the analogy between external and internal disorders, and the inseparability of these branches of the same profession.

cations will not be denied. I entirely agree with Mr. Pott, "That the boast of universal specifics, of remedies infallibly preventative of diseases, and of means whereby chirurgical operations may be rendered *totally unnecessary*, is the language of quackery, and not of science."

"The preservation of any part of the human frame, says Mr. P. has, at least, as much merit as the most dexterous manner of removing it; and there are many disorders strictly within the surgeon's province, the management of which will require more real skill and judgment, than are necessary for the mere performance of any operation whatever; not to add, that the power and capacity of a practitioner, are full as often shewn by preventing an operation, as in performing it."

"Surely, says Dr. Kirkland, the suffering the medical practice of surgery to degenerate, is disgraceful to the science, and highly injurious to society. For he who omits to inform himself in the methods of preventing operations, will perform more than are necessary; and many a limb, which might, I am persuaded, have been saved, has been taken off, because the operator had never attended properly to the *art of healing*. Every blockhead *can amputate a leg*; but how much more praise worthy is he, whose skill enables him to effect a cure, and preserve the limb? The discerning part of mankind will esteem him; he will ever be distinguished from the herd who are incapable of giving Nature proper assistance under difficulties, and his own reflections will fully reward him for the pains he may have taken in gaining that knowledge his profession requires."—These observations, founded in truth and humanity, are powerful arguments to induce pupils to attend minutely to every circumstance which may advance the healing art, an art of the greatest importance to mankind, and by a proper and early attention to which, the worst of misfortunes may often be prevented.

S E C T. II.

*From Mr. POTT's * Remarks, &c. shewing his reasons for opening Abscesses by Incision.*

“LET us, says he, first suppose the matter to be fairly formed; to have made its point, as it is called; and to be fit to be let out.”

“Where such point is, that is, where the skin is most thin, and the fluctuation most palpable, there the opening, most certainly, ought to be made.”

“Some of our predecessors, either from a fear, which almost necessarily accompanies the want of anatomical knowledge, or from an awkwardness attending the disuse of a cutting instrument, adopted the method of opening these (as well as most other abscesses) by caustic.†”

“With all due deference to authority, I will venture to say, that it is in general wrong; and particularly so in the present case.”

“It often gives unnecessary pain; and it produces a loss of substance, and a kind of cicatrix, which is not only unseemly, but frequently proves a lasting inconvenience.”

“Some of the patrons of potential fire, do, indeed, give a specious kind of reason for its use; viz, that it makes a more large and free opening for the discharge; and that by the time the eschar is separated, the hollow underneath is generally more than half filled up.”

“In a few (very few) particular cases, where the destruction of glandular parts may become necessary, after the eschar is thrown off, (as in the case of venereal bubos) there may be some force in this argument; and caustics may be found useful; but in the present case, and in most others, in which they are freely and fre-

* Fistula in Ano.

† Comment.—The late Mr. Else, Surgeon to St. Thomas's Hospital, was celebrated for his dexterity as an operator, and taught anatomy; yet he preferred the caustic to incision, in the cure of the hydrocele

frequently applied, they appear to me to be highly improper; as they necessarily occasion a loss of parts, and a kind of eschar; which is, in general, an indelible blemish, to say no worse. And with regard to the particular circumstance of the hollow being filled almost up, by the time the eschar is separated, if the surgeon will dress an abscess, opened by incision, in the same easy superficial manner he does one opened by a caustic, he will find the consequence to be the same. But, I know not why, a notion has long prevailed, that an abscess opened by a knife must be immediately crammed, and stuffed with dressings, while that, on which a caustic has been applied, must be let alone, until the eschar casts off. Let the one be treated as the other is, (and as they both ought to be) and the event will be found to be alike in each: excepting this material difference in favour of the knife, that it will not necessarily occasion any destruction of parts, loss of substance, nor any deformity which is at all comparable with what must follow the use of the caustic."

Mr. Pott strongly objects to the use of scissars, because, as he justly observes, "they pinch at the same time that they cut, and occasion a great deal of unnecessary pain; and he concludes with saying, they are upon all occasions, where mere division is required, a very bad instrument; they may assist an awkward or an unsteady hand, but are more fit for a farrier than a Surgeon."

On the Dressing of Sores.

"Mr. POTT asks, how suppuration is to be produced and maintained? Not, says he, by thrusting in such applications, as by their quantity distend, and by their quality irritate and destroy; but by dressing lightly, and easily, with such as appease, relax, and soften."

"Where

“ Where there are large sores, or considerable cavities, a great deal will depend on the patient’s habit, and the care that is taken of it; if that be good, or if it be properly corrected, the surgeon will have very little trouble in his choice of dressings; all that he will have to do, will be, to take care that they do not offend either in quantity or quality: but if the habit be bad, or injudiciously treated, he may use the whole farrago of externals, and only waste his own and patient’s time.”

“ The first dressing after an operation, should be permitted to continue, until a beginning suppuration renders it loose enough to come away easily; and all the future ones should be as light, soft, and easy as possible: consisting only of such materials, as are likely to promote kindly and gradual suppuration.

By means of escharotics and painful dressings, cases, which at first, and in their own nature, were simple and easy of cure, are rendered complex and tedious.”

Mr. Pott observes, “ that cures, which are thought, by several practitioners, to have been brought about by a multiplicity of dressings crammed in tight, and endeavoured to be kept so, by all the caution of compress and bandage, are very frequently effected by the constant and generally successful endeavours of Nature, to thrust them forth again: or, at least, so to displace them, that she gradually gets opportunities of doing her own business, in spite of the impediments of art. The business of good surgery is to assist nature; but she will sometimes get the better even of the worst.”

S E C T. III.

*Observations on the Nature; and the Dressing of Wounds.**

“**T**O conceive rightly of the nature and treatment of wounds under the variety of disorders they are subject to; it will be proper first, to learn what are the appearances in the progress of healing a large wound when it is made with a sharp instrument, and the constitution is pure. In this circumstance, the blood vessels, immediately upon their division, bleed freely, and continue bleeding till they are either stopped by art, or at length contracting and withdrawing themselves into the wound, their extremities are shut up by the coagulated blood. The hæmorrhage (bleeding) being stopped, the next occurrence in about twenty four hours, is a thin serous discharge, and a day or two after, an increase of it, though somewhat thickened, and offensive in its smell. In this state it continues two or three days without any great alteration, from which time, the matter grows thicker and less offensive; and when the bottom of the wound fills up, with little granulations of flesh, it diminishes in its quantity, and continues doing so, till the wound is entirely skinned over.”

“The first stage of healing, is called *Digestion* : †
the

* See Mr. Sharp's Introduction to a Treatise on the Operations of Surgery.

† Comment——In the first Stage, that of *Digestion*, which is the formation of good *pus* on the surface of a sore, oily dressings are applied warm, but never should be hot, as they would be painful; and mild easy remedies only are proper. It may be doubted if there are any applications which actually promote digestion; but these may be considered in effect digestives, since they give no Interruption to Nature in this business; whilst painful dressings, falsely called digestives, defeat the very purpose they were

the second, or filling up with flesh, *Incarnation* :* and the last, or skinning over, *Cicatrization* .†

“In recent wounds made by a sharp instrument, dry lint is generally the best dressing throughout the cure. At first it stops the blood with less injury than any styptic powders, or waters; and afterwards, by absorbing the matter, which, in the beginning of suppuration, is thin and acrimonious, it becomes in effect, a digestive: during incarnation, it is the softest medium that can be applied between the roller and tender granulations, and, at the same time, it is an easy compress upon the sprouting *fungus*.”

“Over

were intended to promote. This is an act of the constitution, and when that is in a good state, digestion advances properly. When the circulation is languid, and the *Vis Vitæ* defective, nature must be assisted by cordial restoratives, which are of more service at this time, than any external applications whatsoever.

* OF INCARNATION.—The second Stage, that of *Incarnation*, is when the wound begins to fill up with granulations of flesh, and when these are of a florid complexion, it is a good symptom. When they are luxuriant, and rise above the edges of the wound, this appearance is called a *fungus*, and it has been customary to apply corrosive medicines to reduce it to a level with the surrounding skin. These gave great pain, and protracted the cure. Formerly surgeons were used to pare away fungous, and callous edges, with the knife; and what was the consequence? after this most excruciating operation, they returned with increase of pain and misery.—Mr. Freke, in his *Essay on the Art of Healing*, recommends, with equal humanity and judgment, warm emollient poultices, which he observes, soften the callous edges of ulcers, and dispose them to heal, by removing the stricture of the skin, and promoting a free perspiration in the part affected. By this treatment, and a horizontal position of body, the most inveterate sores in the lower limbs have been happily cured.

† Comment.—*Cicatrization* is the last stage, and completes the cure of wounds. Sores are covered over by the surrounding skin, and when that is deficient, by the forming of a new organization; and sometimes from different small points (like islands) which in this case cicatrize fast.

“ Over the dry lint may be applied a pledgit of some soft ointment spread upon tow, which must be renewed every day, and preserved in this situation by a gentle bandage. In all large wounds, after the accident or operation, the first dressing should not be applied in less than three days, when the matter being formed, the lint separates more easily from the part; in the removal of which, no force should be used, but only so much be taken away as is loose, and comes off without pain.”

“ The frequency of dressing will depend on the quantity of discharge; once in twenty-four hours is ordinarily sufficient, but sometimes twice, or, perhaps three times is necessary. We ought not to be scrupulously nice in cleaning a wound; it is worth remarking, that a sore should never be wiped by drawing a piece of tow or rag over it, but only by dabbing it with fine lint, which is a much easier method for the patient. Surgeons should not, on all occasions search into the cavities of wounds or sores, with the finger or probe,* as it often tears them open, and indisposes them for cure.”

“ It will frequently be in vain to pursue the best means of cure by *topical* applications, unless we are assisted by internal remedies; for, as many ulcers are the effects of a particular indisposition of body, it will be difficult to bring them into order, while the cause of them remains with any violence; though they are sometimes, in a great degree, the discharge of the indisposition itself, as in the plague, small-pox, &c.

S E C T.

* This is sometimes owing to ignorance, sometimes to cruelty of disposition; at other times to an affectation of knowledge and discernment, to gain credit with some, who think a man cannot be a good surgeon, who knows not how to give his patient pain, and does not probe the wound well to the bottom.

These sort of practitioners are continually searching for *sinuses*, and if they do not find any, they often make them with their probes. Wherever you can pass a probe, say they, you must follow it with the scissors. I have seen this absurd advice carried to a high degree of cruelty, and a recent

S E C T. IV,

From Dr. KIRKLAND'S Enquiry into the present State of Medical Surgery.

DR. KIRKLAND gives an instance where poultices, of various kinds, and fomentations were applied to a small wound in the leg of an old man. At the end of three weeks or a month, it was thought adviseable, says the doctor, to pursue a different method. "The man appeared to be of a very irritable habit, of a hot temperament of body; and it was imagined that the turpentine dressings and fomenting had occasioned all the mischief. This conclusion was justified, for when a mild sedative digestive was applied, *and a cooling ointment* covered the inflamed parts, a sudden alteration for the better appeared, and a happy termination of the disease was the consequence."

"There is some danger of running from turpentine, and heating dressings into the opposite extreme, and a fashion, I see, is arising, of leaving nature to accomplish her own work, under the application of inactive remedies incapable of giving her assistance. No man is a greater advocate for simplicity in remedies, than I am, but *intention* should at the same time be pursued. Former practitioners certainly did right in employing different remedies for different Intentions, as the cases might require; for though nature cures diseases, she must be assisted by art, and though avoiding painful applications is a main object to which the surgeon should always attend, yet if we only have in view the choice of those remedies, which, by their simplicity and mild disposition, are incapable

recent wound in the hand, has been enlarged with scissars, the probe being first passed in the cellular membrane underneath the skin. This was done by a disciple, one, who too rigidly adhered to the precepts of his master.

incapable of giving pain, we extend our refinements too far, as such practice is equally capable of doing mischief, with attempts to subdue diseases by storm. In one instance, the efforts of nature are overpowered and stifled; in the other, she is destitute of help; and I will venture to affirm that the most simple and healthful ulcer, will frequently degenerate into an exceeding bad state, under the long continued use of ointments made of wax and oil, poultices, or fomentations. For these things, by relaxing, occasion the Vessels in the affected part, to be distended and overcharged; the stagnating juices become acrid, vitiate and inflame, and I have seen the worst consequences under this treatment."

"It is not always sufficient then, that remedies are mild, and lie soft and easy upon the part; they should frequently have a power, as we shall occasionally shew, of preventing inflammation, of easing pain, of removing obstructions, of correcting acrimony, of taking off that kind of irritability which emollients increase. For these purposes, the neutral salts, preparations of lead, the different kinds of native balsams, either in their natural state or divested of their heating property; warm gums, opium, the essential oils properly corrected, antiseptic liniments, the application of peruvian bark, alum, cold water, spirit of wine, and a variety of other things have the preference to each other under different circumstances, and different combinations of these assistants, produce distinct and necessary Effects.*"

"The

* Recent, sweet oil, either in it's liquid form, or modified with wax or diachylum, is an approved and useful application to sores of many kinds. Oil serves as artificial pus, and comforts the tender wound. When the discharge is acrid, it occasions pain and mischief, in which case oil mixing with it, corrects it's pernicious quality, and gives ease. When the Matter is redundant and of a mild quality, dry lint is better than oil, as it absorbs the moisture, and makes the sore clean and comfortable for some time. It should be laid light and thin on the middle, not covering the edges of the wound, lest it should adhere, and not be easily removed.

“ The appearance of the fore, and the symptoms attending it, will ever point out, to a careful observer, the exact state of the patient ; will best direct what internal medicine is to be chosen, and whether a combination of medicines are necessary. People used to the cure of venereal complaints, will soon discover a venereal ulcer by it's aspect ; the method of cure to be pursued, immediately follows ; and just so it is with all other ulcers. Bark, steel, opium, eliacampane, elm bark, mercury, nitre, acids, lime-water, and a variety of other medicines have been found serviceable in the cure of ulcers ; but in what kind each of these are proper, words cannot describe. The look of the ulcer only can determine this point ; and unless the knowledge of distinguishing one ulcer from another, and the effects of the different medicines upon them, be acquired by careful attention, all proceedings are conjectural and uncertain.”

“ Physicians, as well as Surgeons, should attend to the dressing of ulcers, as the very manner of dressing, with the same remedy, often either forwards or prevents a cure. For instance, in many habits, the epulotic cerate, though properly prepared, spread thick, continues the running of sores ; whereas, when it is spread thin upon lint, and suffered to dry before it is used, it frequently heals them. It is the same with Digestives ; and different degrees of pressure, the Dr. observes, produce very different effects on sores.”*

* Comment.—The healing of a sore is the act of the constitution, and depends on internal impulse, not on the specific quality of unguents. These, when of a lenient kind, and fresh made, do good, by keeping the part moist, and defending it from the air ; when rancid, they do mischief, though composed at first of ingredients perfectly mild and innocent.

S E C T. V.

The CASE of a COMPOUND FRACTURE, as it was related verbatim, by the late celebrated Dr. HUNTER, at his Lectures.

SPEAKING of the nature and cure of *simple* and *compound* fractures, Dr. Hunter observed, in his lectures, that in treating the *compound*, many Surgeons did mischief, and irritated the wound, by their officious and artificial manner of dressing it. Instead of that practice, he recommended treating the *compound*, as much as is possible, in the same way as the *simple* fracture: and in confirmation of that practice, used to relate the following well attested case, which was always heard with great attention, because the instruction was conveyed in the way of pleasantry.

“ A maniacal patient, Mr. G ———, who was confined in the Infirmary at *Edinburgh*,” (betwixt thirty and forty years ago), “ seeming to have recovered a calm and rational state of mind, was allowed to take an airing in the garden by himself. Here he took the resolution of making his escape; and got over the garden wall. In dropping himself from the wall, which was very high, he pulled a large capstone along with him, and suffered a very bad *compound* fracture in his leg. He was carried round, and lodged again in the Infirmary, in this unhappy condition; and the surgeon, who was presently brought to him, set the leg, dressed the wound, applied the eighteen-tailed bandage, &c. in the usual way. After all this, the patient appearing to be very calm, the surgeon gave some proper directions, went away, and the patient was left alone to get some rest, which was thought proper, and seemed to be his own desire. His madness now took a singularly whimsical turn: he knew very well that he had got a miserable broken leg; but his crazy imagination made

made him believe, that the surgeon had mistaken the leg, had bestowed all his cunning upon the sound leg which required no attention, and had left the shattered limb to shift for itself. Under this firm persuasion, convinced that his surgeon was too ignorant to perceive his blunder, too conceited to be set right, and too proud to suffer such humiliation, he thought it would be most prudent, in his present state of subjection, for the Cure of his broken leg, to make the best use he could of the judgement and dexterity which God had given him. He removed the whole *apparatus* from the broken leg, with great attention, that he might be able to apply it to the other leg, so exactly in the same manner, that the surgeon should not be able to discover the alteration; and, lest any suspicion should arise and lead to an enquiry and discovery, he thought he should be still more secure by secreting or hiding the other leg, that it might not be found, and appear in evidence against him. He therefore tore a large hole in the sheet and featherbed, and buried the wounded leg among the feathers.

“ The next day, when the surgeon visited him, he said, that for a while he had been in pain, but that by a fortunate and accidental motion of the foot, the pain went off, as by a charm; that he had continued perfectly easy ever since; and therefore was resolved to keep it as steadily as possible in the same situation. The surgeon finding him easy, the pulse quiet, and no symptom whatever of fever, went to the foot of the bed, and lifting up the clothes, said, Let us just see how the foot and leg look. The patient seemed much alarmed with the proposal, and entreated him for mercy's sake to desist; because, he said, the least motion in the world would disturb it, and bring all his pains back again. The surgeon assured him that the bed-clothes touched nothing but the cradle, and that the lifting of them up could not in the least move either the leg or foot; and then, observing to the students, that the appearance of the foot was as favourable as he could wish, he expressed his satisfaction and went away. Every day's visit,

after

after this, turned out equally satisfactory, both to the surgeon and patient, till the fifth or sixth day, when the surgeon grew very anxious to see the wound, lest any lurking mischief should be concealed, and was determined to remove the dressings. This the patient resisted, first with prayers, and then with imprecations and rage; but at last was obliged to submit. The surgeon, with a cautious and tender hand, removed the bandages, and, as he went on, expressed the pleasure which he felt on seeing the skin, both above and below the wound, in so natural a condition. At length he lifted up the dressings, which he found were quite loose, and, seeing a leg now perfectly sound, which, a few days before, he had seen in such a lamentable state, you can better conceive than I can tell how he looked. After a short pause, he passed his fingers along the *tibia*, and then said, I only know that a fracture and wound there certainly was, and now there is certainly neither. Presently he recovered himself enough to recollect that it was the other leg which he had set and dressed; and said, Where is the other leg; turning off the bed-clothes at the same time. Lunatics are quick in resources, not easily put out of countenance, and imagine that nobody can doubt what they assert. Mr. G——. sensible now that the leg would be discovered, drew it out from among the feathers, saying, with great expression of resentment and rage, that he would now expose the surgeon's ignorance to the whole world; that he always knew surgeons to be a set of ignorant fellows, though they wore large wigs; and now he would prove it, by a shocking instance, to the satisfaction of all present. This leg, said he, holding out the broken leg, with a great cake of blood and feathers crusted over and round the wound, this leg, thank God! is as sound as any man's:—there, pointing to the other, is the broken leg,—you see what a desperate condition it is in;—and that fellow being called did nothing for it:—he was called to set a broken leg; but he did not know a broken leg, and bound up this. After venting some more of his indignation.

tion and rage in sarcastic and coarse language, he begged that some of the young surgeons would bind up his broken leg, (meaning the sound one), for that it was in great pain, was much disturbed with this impertinent examination, and, if not taken care of, would make him a miserable object, at best a cripple for life. The surgeon seeing his patient's imagination so strongly perverted, and being convinced, by the agitation which that misapprehension had raised, that it would be, upon the whole, safer to indulge him in his wild conceit, with humanity as well as good sense, desired the young men to humour him by putting the *apparatus* on the sound leg. From that time he was calm, and, in all other things, reasonable. The cure went on with perfect success ; — the scab of feathers dropped off ; — the wound was found to be healed, and the callus compleated : A memorable lesson for surgeons, and a striking instance of the weakness of human reason, of the imperfection of our boasted art, and of the power of Nature ! *

M I S.

* Observation with respect to a *fractured clavicle*. — Mr. Pott remarks, “ that the prominent part of a broken *clavicle*, that part of it which is next to the *sternum*, is just where it should be, and that the inferior part, that which is connected with the *scapula*, is out of its place, by being drawn down by the weight of the arm ; and therefore, instead of loading, as is usual, the prominent part with quantities of compresses, which never can do any service, the surgeon, by a proper elevation of the arm, will bring the lower end upward into contact with the other, and thereby, with very little trouble, accomplish what he never can do in any other manner, however operose. The same thing will happen from the same principles, in the leg and thigh, &c.”

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.

“THE Lips of recent, superficial wounds, being brought into close contact with each other, and kept so, will often heal at once, *by the first intention*. The blood is the best balsam we can apply, and gives no pain.” Wounds are said to heal *by the first intention*, when they unite without going through the stages of digestion, &c.

Sinuses are often cured by counter and depending openings, judiciously made, and assisted by compress and bandage.

There cannot, in my opinion, be a more absurd or cruel practice, than to take away a circular, oval, or indeed, any piece of the sound skin in an abscess, after making a puncture or an incision. Crucial incisions, and then removing the lips, is a horrible practice, and is happily grown into disrepute.

Abscesses in the breasts, are now often cured by small apertures, (instead of large incisions, which are a terror to the patient) and the application of emollient poultices: these should be made thick and adhere to the spoon; they will then be found of service when they are of a proper consistence. They seem to me of little or no use, when they are put betwixt cloths, and do not come into actual contact with the part affected.

Mr. Sharp has described the mode of applying caustics, in the following manner. “Let an orifice be cut in a piece of sticking-plaister, nearly as big as you intend to make the eschar, which being applied to the part, the caustic must be laid on the opening, and preserved in its situation by a few slips of plaister placed round its edges, and a large piece over the whole.” A bandage also is necessary; notwithstanding which, the caustic usually spreads one third beyond the limits prescribed by the plaister.

The caustic being continued three hours, will commonly do its office in that time. It causes, by its heat, a mortification of the integuments, and a separation of the mortified part, commonly happens in
five

five or six days. Some Surgeons apply hot terebinthinate dressing, imagining, that these draw, and assist the separation of the eschar, on mechanical principles; which is not the case. This event is produced by the granulations arising in the wound, which gradually thrust out the part which is perished.

On the Necessity of AMPUTATION in certain Cases, and under certain Circumstances; by Mr. POTT.

“ I am satisfied, says Mr. Pott, that the propriety of Amputation, in certain cases, stands upon as fixed, and as rational principles, as any part of Surgery. A contrary doctrine has, within a few years, been boldly and industriously propagated, not without some very indecent, as well as untrue reflections, on the profession in general, and on those who have the care of hospitals in particular. I am convinced, that such doctrine has been employed to the prejudice of mankind, by covering ignorance and timidity, and also for serving the base purpose of malevolence.”

“ Mankind, says Mr. Pott, are rather too apt to form their opinion from events only; success with many, constitutes propriety, and the failure of it, is often, very unjustly set to the account of misconduct, or want of knowledge.”

“ The cases, in which, under *certain circumstances* Amputation *may* become necessary for the preservation of the patient’s life, are several, but I will confine myself to four.

These are, first, a Compound Fracture.

Secondly, Some kind of scrophulous joints.

Thirdly, Some kind of Aneurisms.

Fourthly, A Caries of the whole substance of the bone or bones composing a Limb.

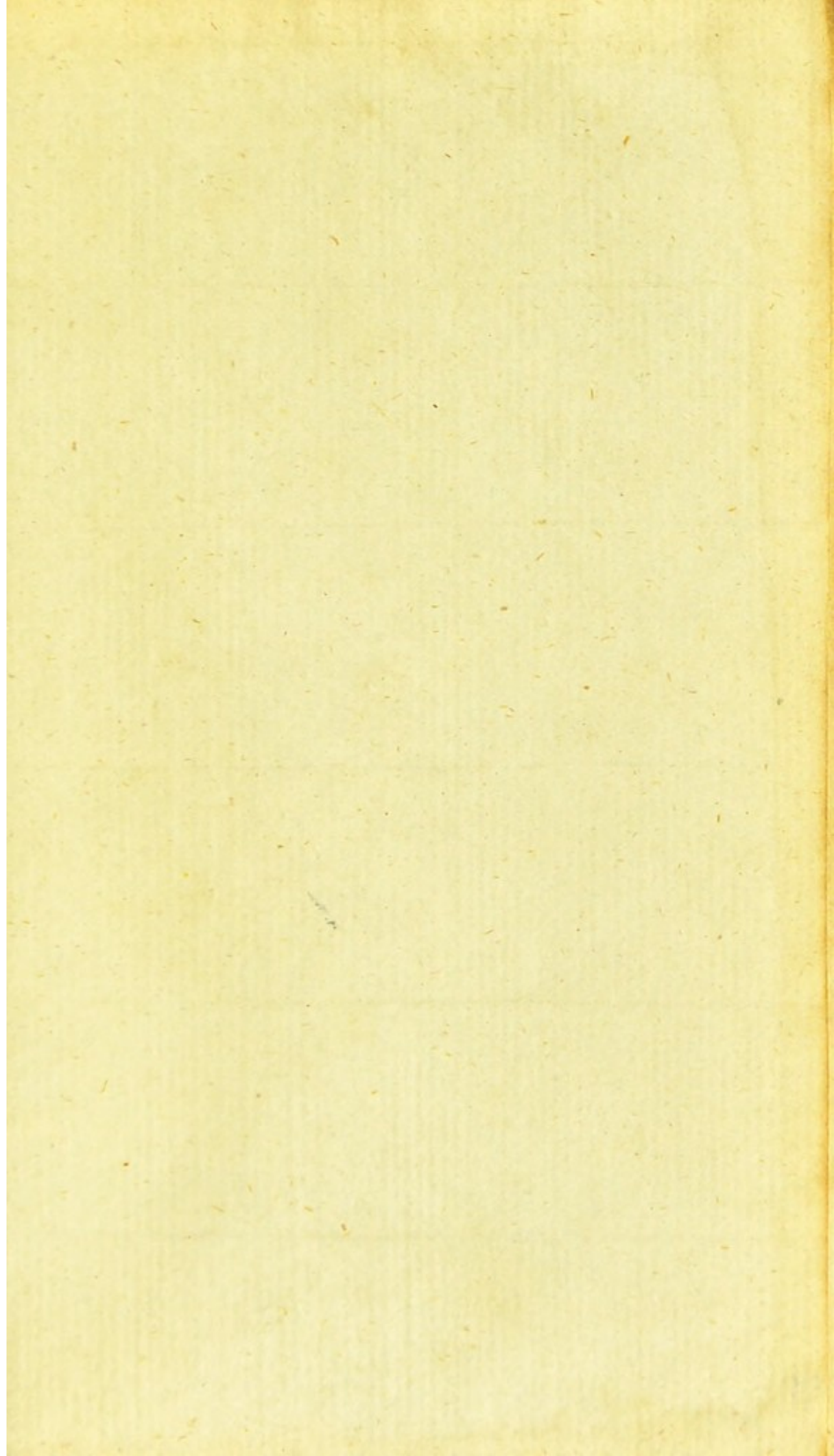
In all, and each of which, it may, and does, sometimes so happen, that the patient’s life can be only preserved, by the loss of the Limb.”

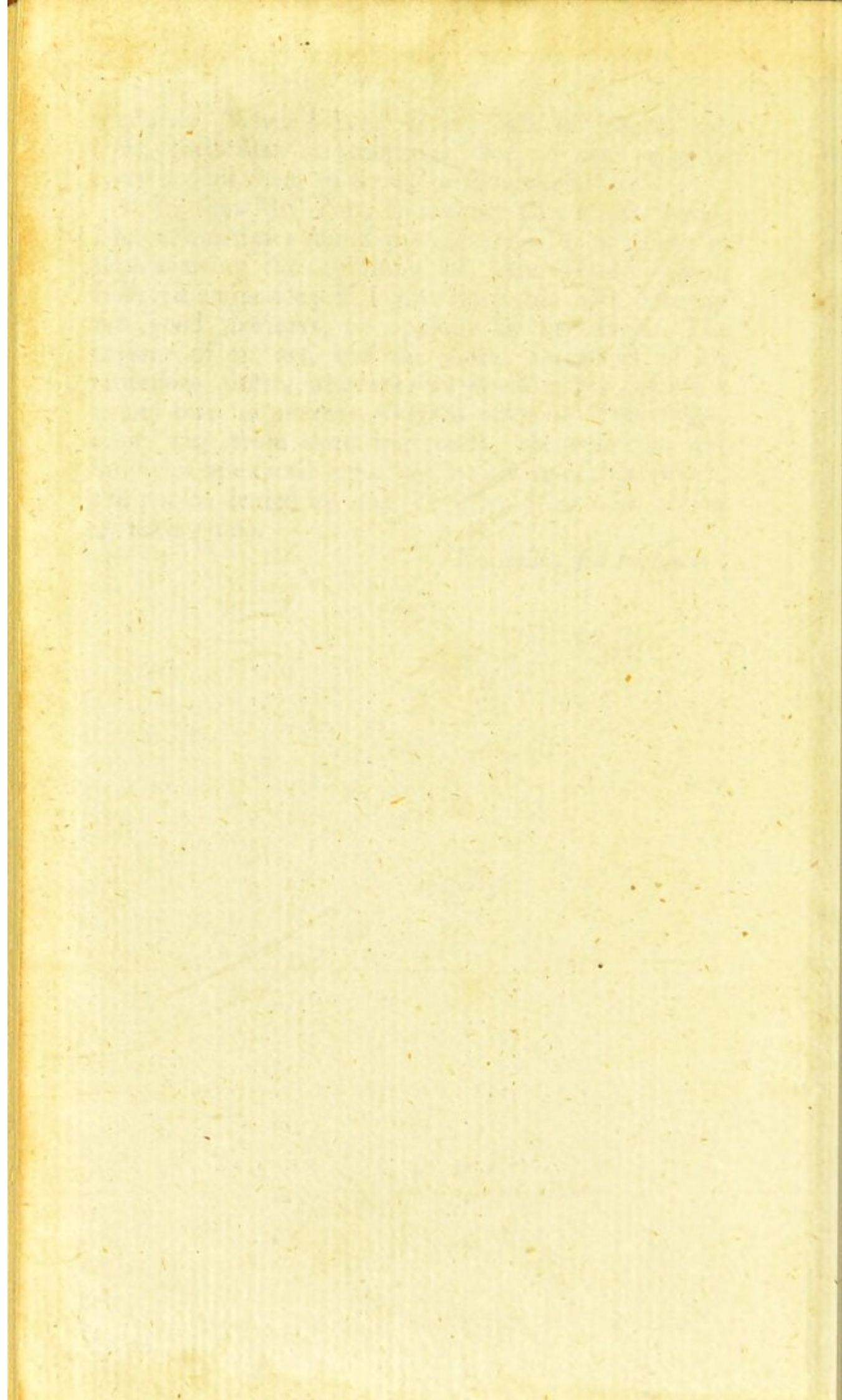
“ I should be very sorry, says Mr. Pott, to have it supposed, that I was either so unknowing, or so brutal, as to think of Amputation, before every thing had been fairly and fully tried, and found ineffectual

effectual. When I hear people talk of specific balsams, particular fomentations, &c. I can only be sorry to find them so weak, or so wicked."

"If, says Mr. Pott, in another part of his works, I have sometimes found myself under a necessity of controverting the opinions of some Gentlemen of deserved eminence; if I have done this with decency and good manners, no apology is necessary. The honour of our art, and the moral characters of it's professors, suffer, whenever we pay so blind deference to any one, as prevents us from using our own judgement, and from declaring freely, the result of our enquiries or experiments."—The justice of this remark, will not be denied by any of those who take reason for their guide.

Non mihi, sed rationi.





30
4

1937-1

Background

1/2

