

**Descriptive account of a new method of treating old ulcers of the legs / by Thomas Baynton, Surgeon, of Bristol.**

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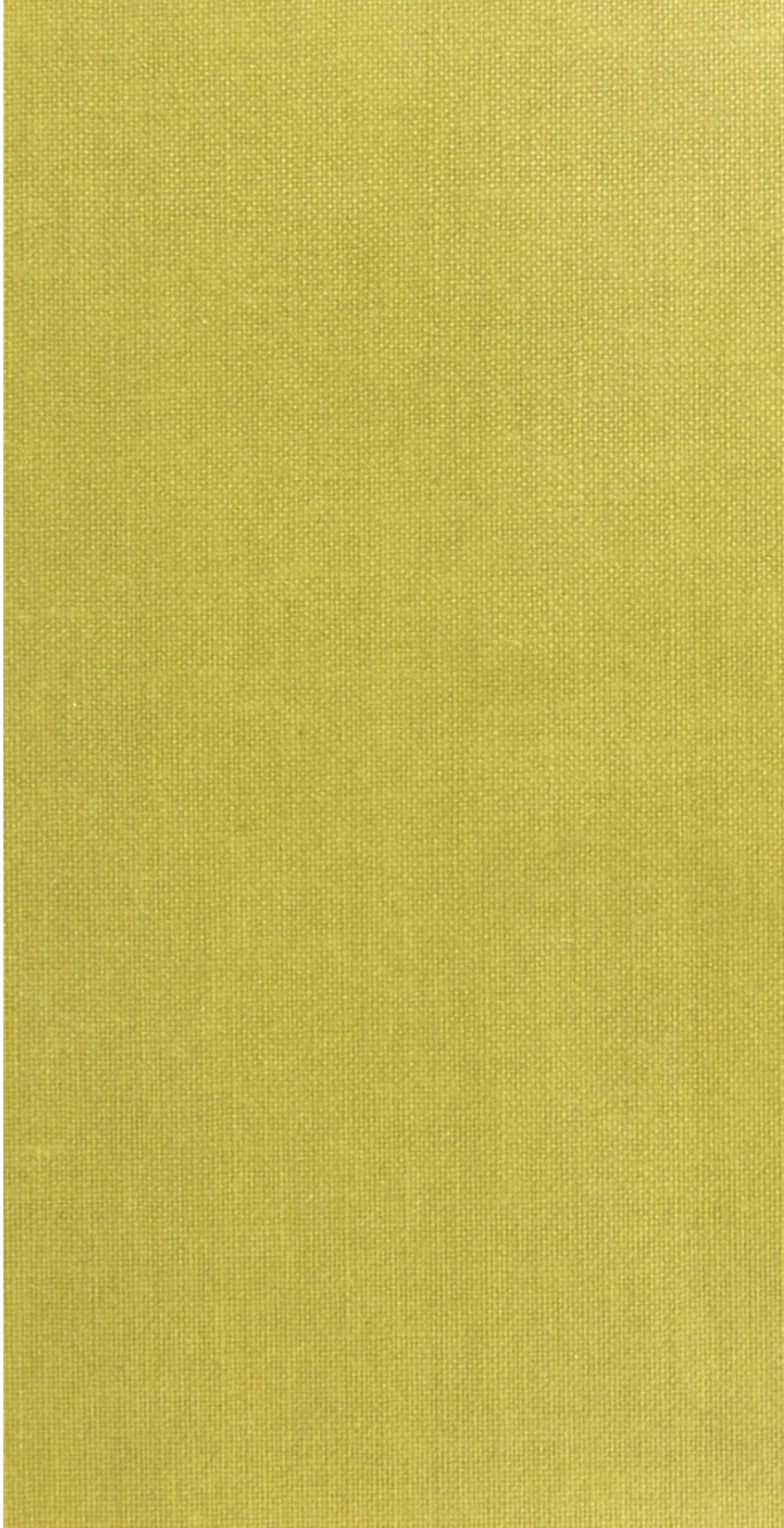
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*Descriptive Account*

OF A

NEW METHOD

OF TREATING

OLD ULCERS

*Of the Legs.*

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By THOMAS BAYNTON,  
*SURGEON, of BRISTOL.*


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1797.







*TO DOCTOR A. FOTHERGILL, F.R.S.*

*Member of the Royal College of Physicians, and  
of the Medical Societies of London, Edinburgh,  
and Paris; and Honorary Member of the  
American Philosophical Society.*

*DEAR SIR,*

*If I were to neglect the only publick  
opportunity that may ever be allowed me to  
testify my gratitude, for the preservation of the  
valuable life of my nearest Relation, I should  
become inexcusable to myself; therefore I take  
the liberty of addressing to YOU, who have so  
often by your Writings distinguished yourself as  
the friend of the human race, a few Sheets,  
that have been written for the benefit of those  
unfortunate persons, who may labour under the  
disease therein described.*

*I am, Sir,*

*Your much obliged Friend,  
and very sincere Servant,*

*THOMAS BAYNTON.*

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To DOCTOR A. FORTMELCHER, M.D.

Member of the Royal College of Physicians, and  
of the Medical Societies of London, Edinburgh,  
and Paris; and Honorary Member of the  
American Philosophical Society.

DEAR SIR,

If I come to visit the only fitting  
opportunity that may ever be offered me to  
visit my country, for the preservation of the  
valuable papers of my father, I shall  
be most anxious to see you, and to  
consult with you on the subject of  
the preservation of the human body, and  
the best way of writing for the benefit of  
the human race, and the best way  
of writing for the benefit of the  
human race.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
JAMES BAYLOR

JAMES BAYLOR

# NEW METHOD

OF

## *TREATING ULCERS.*



THE common methods of curing old ulcers are so tedious, troublesome, and uncertain, and they so often become dangerous in their consequences, that I think it will be admitted, that, any attempts calculated to lessen the sufferings of the Patient, and the trouble of the Surgeon, will be entitled to attention; as it is known by all practitioners of experience, that very few of  
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those maladies which compose the catalogue of human misery, occasion in many instances more perplexity to the one, or distress to the other, than *this disease*.

A similar reflection may have occasioned some of the numerous publications on this subject, within the last fifteen or twenty years; indeed, it will be perceived by the writings of Wiseman, Elfe, Bell, Underwood, and other Surgeons of eminence, that the disease has been considered so well worthy *their attention*, as successively to employ *their pens*.

Had not Wiseman's success with the laced stocking been made public, *it is possible* that Surgeons might, in the present day, have

been unacquainted with the advantages derived from supporting the returning vessels; and it is probable, that the disease under consideration, might, even at this time, have been less within the controul of art, than it is supposed to be; as the principal merit of the work of every man, who has written upon the subject since his day, will be found to consist in those directions, that enforce the necessity of supporting the parts by bandage.

I have said that the common methods of cure are tedious, troublesome, and uncertain; it will also be found, that those people are most liable to such diseases, who are least able to attain, or submit, to the means of

cure. If a man in affluence, or in circumstances that enable him to pay for advice and assistance, meets with such an accident, he by rest and proper care, obtains a cure:— If a labouring poor man experiences such a misfortune, which it must be allowed he is very liable to, he is obliged to pursue his occupation, for support, as starving is a greater evil than even *a continual ulcer*; thus, a complaint, that might have been cured, becomes every day worse, and at last often ends in what *has been deemed* an incurable disease.

The means I have to propose will in most instances be found sufficient to accomplish cures for the *worst cases* without pain, or  
 confinement.

confinement. And thus the poor man, who is now by the circumstances of his situation almost deprived of a rational hope, may in future be enabled to procure his family sustenance, whilst he pursues the means that are calculated to restore him to health. These advantages, with many others, so obvious as not to need publication, when the whole stock of healthful ability that a country contains may be put in requisition by its wants,<sup>(a)</sup> have induced me, and not the vanity of authorship, to make known what I think

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(a) It is expected that many brave seamen and soldiers will be restored to their country by these means, that otherwise would have continued useless to themselves, and to the community.



the experience of all will prove to be a material improvement in the art of Surgery. And when it is considered that our acquaintance with *nature* is every day increasing, it will not be arrogant to suppose that those who write last upon subjects connected with *it*, may, without being possessed of any uncommon share of sagacity, make discoveries that escaped the penetration of those who had written upon the same subjects with fewer data.

Improvements in the *healing art*, must, like all those sciences that depend upon a knowledge of the *laws* of nature, be necessarily slow; and perhaps, can only be advanced by a faithful record of facts, the liberal inter-  
change

change of ideas between those who practise *it*, and a candid submission to the test of general experience, of those *new remedies* that have succeeded, where others had failed, to produce the desired effects: such an assertion, in the present day, will not I hope be supposed to favour empiricism, as that only can acquire currency which will bear the assay of reason.

About the commencement of the year 1792, after having experienced repeated disappointments in my endeavours to obtain permanent cures for some patients, with whom I had taken more than common pains, and for whom I had tried rest in a  
horizontal

horizontal posture, <sup>(a)</sup> exercise, precipitate, <sup>(b)</sup> bandages, <sup>(c)</sup> and every other remedy I was acquainted with, that authors had recommended, both alone, and conjoined with the most approved internal medicines : *I determined on endeavouring to bring the edges of those ulcers, that might in future be placed under my care, nearer together, by means of slips of adhesive plaister ;* having frequently had occasion to observe, that the probability of an ulcer continuing found depended much on the size of the cicatrix

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(a) See Bell's Treatise on Ulcers. (b) Underwood's Treatise on Ulcers of the Legs. (c) Elfe's Method of treating fore Legs.

that remained after the cure appeared to be accomplished: and well knowing that the natural shield of the part, the true skin, was a much more substantial support and defence, as well as a better covering, than that frail one, that is obtained by the assistance of art <sup>(a)</sup> in the common methods of cure.—At that time I had in view to lessen the probability of those ulcers breaking out again, that might be healed

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(a) “ Thus all the mild styptic powders and washes, by contracting or corrugating the extremities of such vessels as have been divided, and by producing an exsiccation of that inorganic cellular substance in which these are enveloped, tend to induce over the surface of sores that delicate thin covering termed cicatrix.”

*Mr. Benj. Bell's Treatise on Ulcers. p. 181.*

healed by the means I proposed to make trial of, as well as an expectation of being able, if the application could be borne by my patients, to gain some time in the cure.

Little did I think that a method so simple as the mere application of a slip of adhesive plaister, *in a particular way*, would prove the easiest, most efficacious, and most agreeable of all applications, to a wound so proverbially irritable as an ulcer; much less could I expect that it would lead me to the discovery of a method of curing with ease, those diseases that had so long exercised my patience, and defied my industry: It had never in that species of sore, I believe, been tried, therefore it is no wonder, though every surgeon  
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must acknowledge his obligations to it in recent wounds, that I then adopted it as a very doubtful remedy.<sup>(a)</sup> Opportunities to try it were not long wanting, and although the cases that first presented were of an unfavourable description, I had the pleasure to perceive that it occasioned very little pain in the application, sat easily upon the wounds, gave my patients great satisfaction, and in every instance

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(a) “ The particular practice of procuring adhesion belongs to no one person, but was passing continually from hand to hand, from one friend to another, the common doctrine and discourse of the day. It was gradually extending in its application, and growing strong, like every practical doctrine, by slow degrees. It was applied first to amputation; then to trepan; then to the extirpation of cancerous mammæ; then to all great operations; then to all recent wounds.”

*Mr. John Bell's first Discourse on Wounds.*

instance materially accelerated the cure. I had also the pleasure to observe that the chief purpose of its application was obtained, namely, that the size of the cicatrices were much less than they would have been, had the cures been obtained by any of the common methods.

My success, however, was not quite perfect, as I was not able in many instances, to remove the slips of plaister, without removing some portion of the adjacent skin, which by occasioning a new, though very trifling wound, proved a disagreeable circumstance in a part so disposed to inflame and ulcerate, as the vicinity of an old sore, in a situation so far removed from the source of circulation,

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as one of the lower extremities. I therefore endeavoured to obviate that inconvenience, in the cases that next presented, by keeping the plaisters and bandages well moistened with spring water, some time before they were removed from the limb. I had the satisfaction to observe that the inconvenience was not only prevented, but that every succeeding case justified the confidence I now began to place in the remedy. I discovered also, that moistening the bandages was attended with advantages that I did not expect; that my patients were rendered much more comfortable in their sensations while the parts were wet, and cool, and that the surrounding inflammation was sooner removed, than I had before observed it to be.



The diseases that had hitherto occurred, were mostly small irritable ulcers, about the ankle joint, and upon the tendons that pass over the superior parts of the foot; situations, that I believe would have occasioned them to have resisted in a considerable degree, most, or all of the other known methods of treating such diseases, though they yielded so readily to this, as to confirm my opinion of its decided superiority over every other method of cure, in the earlier instances of its application.

All of these patients were at first enjoined to keep the affected part as much at rest as possible, but as it happened that many of them were, from the nature of their occupations,

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tions, obliged to work, and stand a considerable part of the day, I soon discovered that their recovery kept equal pace with those who confined themselves to their beds ; this circumstance, so contradictory to my own, and the almost universal experience of Surgeons, at first excited a considerable degree of surprize ; but if the modern theory of inflammation be just, is it not likely that the equal pressure which will be applied to the mouths, and sides of the divided exhalants by these means, when assisted with a proper bandage, may as effectually prevent that disproportionate flow of serum, and coagulating lymph, which constitutes the discharge of ulcers, as absolute rest in a horizontal posture ? and when it is considered that the health of

a wound is very frequently affected by the quantity of its discharge, I think it will appear probable, where it is too great, that the means proposed may produce their good effects by preventing the distention of the vessels, and in that way obstructing the supply of fluids that they had been accustomed to receive and pour out, which it will be recollected were generally increased and vitiated, in proportion to the exercise of the part, and will now be found to be in an equal or greater degree diminished and improved by the plan that is recommended; indeed so remarkable will the difference be found, that in many of those neglected ulcers that I have met with among the poor, the discharges, which upon the removal of their dressings had fallen in a stream from the part, have in two or three

days, at farthest, been reduced to the quantity that is usually afforded by the healthiest fores; the difference in the quality will be equally remarkable, as it has been in almost every instance observed, that those ulcers which before the application of these means were so offensive as to leave an intolerable foetor when they were dressed, have in the same space of time, or nearly as soon, become perfectly sweet and inoffensive.

It has generally happened that the distress of the sufferers has been also much lessened, and I have been told at the second, and very often at the first dressing, that they had experienced more ease in that short period, than they had known for

for many preceding months. I am now speaking of those persons whom I have found in the most *miserable situations*, and have taken under my care to put the proposed plan to the severest trials. The success that I have experienced has been so uniform, that I think I can safely assert there will in future be found but a very small proportion of those ulcers that are unconnected with morbid poisons, diseased bones, or constitutional affections, as syphilis, caries, scrophula, &c. that may not be cured in a shorter space of time than will readily be believed, without much pain, or any confinement, if the plan be pursued with steadiness and the requisite care. Need I say that if it becomes as successful with others as it has been with me, it will prove a source of benefit beyond calculation ?

I have already remarked, that the discharge will be lessened, that the offensive smell will be removed, and that the pain will abate in a very short time; these advantages, though so great, are not all that belong to this simple innovation; the callous edges will in a few days be levelled with the surface of the sore, the growth of fungus will be prevented, and consequently the necessity for painful escharotics be much lessened, if not entirely done away, the condition of the ulcer, however large, will be so much bettered as to annihilate those constitutional effects, that in *large ulcers* often occasion an increase of misery, and sometimes end in death.

The progression of the cure will, I believe, be uniform; and those who adopt the plan,

will not again find the labour of months destroyed, by a new action of the fore in a few days, *as it has always happened, that the advantages gained by me in this way, have been preserved till a cure has been obtained,* <sup>(a)</sup> and lastly, the probability of a relapse will be  
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(a) Every Surgeon, who has frequented large Hospitals, knows and laments the difficulty of cure; for though rest and an horizontal posture, with any simple application, may effect it in any recent sores, and good constitutions; yet where the ulcers are of long standing, or have hard callous edges, or happen to such as are in a bad habit of body, we daily see them resist every usual method. Sometimes preparations of mercury, such as calomel, or Van Swieten's solution of sublimate, have seemingly produced a good effect. At other times I have thought sea-water of use; and have often seen the bark prescribed with advantage. But I have frequently known these fail. It is no uncommon thing,

very greatly diminished, as the remaining cicatrix, where the ulcers are situated in yielding parts, will be so small (*if care be taken to endeavour to bring the retracted skin nearer together at each time of dressing,*) that there will be little risque of its again giving way.

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after bringing an ulcer into such a seeming disposition to heal, as to flatter us with the hopes of a compleat cicatrix in a few days, to see it become painful, inflame, look foul, spread, and even gangrene; and when, by the use of antiseptic fomentations and poultices, the bark and opium, the spreading of the sore is stopped, and the sloughs cast off, the ulcer is probably larger than it was when we first began to treat it. By a continuance of these means, we may bring it again into a disposition to heal; and probably see the same scene acted over again."

*See the Works of the late Joseph Elze, F. R. S. P. 109.*



Any reasoning upon facts that are so well established by the subjoined cases may seem unnecessary ; it is therefore not my intention to trespass on the time of those who may peruse this little tract, further than is needful to illustrate the principles whereon the improvements are founded, that are here described. And it will I hope appear that what is said in that way will be the result of induction from the following incontrovertible cases, rather than from any reasoning a priori.

I had long known that the skin suffered much less in the progress of those ulcers that were occasioned by original violence, or that depended simply upon a division of parts, than in many of those specific diseases that are occasioned by morbid poisons ; whose

actions are in some instances directed almost exclusively to the skin, as in some stages of syphilis, phagedæna, &c. and I had supposed that the enlarged diameter of ulcers was in many instances occasioned as much by that ferous swelling termed Oedema, which causes a separation of the divided parts, and *a retraction of the skin*, or more than by any effects of the ulcerative process; I also too frequently had observed the insufficiency of *that inorganic substance* that is afforded by nature *in its stead*, to defend and preserve parts that had been healed by the means generally used. <sup>(a)</sup>

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(a) " This new cutis, and indeed all the substance which had been formerly granulations, is not nearly so strong, nor endowed with such lasting and proper actions as the originally formed parts. The living

The advantages that might be obtained by the free use of cold water, as an application to such diseases, an accidental circumstance brought to my knowledge. I had long been sensible of the good effects that resulted from the use of the aqua vegeto mineralis

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principle itself is also not nearly so active; for when an old sore once breaks out, it continues to yield till almost the whole of the new formed matter has been absorbed or mortified."

*Mr. Hunter's Treatise on the Blood, &c.*

mineralis; and had without reflection ascribed them to those specific virtues that its inventor says it possesses,<sup>(a)</sup> whilst I believe I had overlooked the real, or at least the more probable causes of those consequences that have been so universally observed to follow its use.

It has been proved that a larger quantity of blood circulates through parts that *are inflamed*, than they were accustomed to transmit in a state of health, that the diameter  
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(a) See Goulard's Treatise on Lead.

of the vessels of parts in *such a state* is considerably enlarged, and that the discharge of wounds and ulcers is nothing more than certain parts of the blood, somewhat altered in their properties by the action of the vessels.<sup>(a)</sup> Under such a view of the disease, is it not probable, that the good effects of the aqua vegeto mineralis may be better explained in the following manner, than by the unphilosophical acknowledgement of specific virtues that never have been, and I think never can be  
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(a) See page 280 of Mr. J. Hunter's "Treatise on the Blood, &c."

demonstrated ?<sup>(a)</sup> It is now known that the heat of a part is greater or less in proportion to the quantity of arterial blood that passes through it; that the heat of animals is occasioned by the abstraction of caloric, or  
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(a) Mr. John Hunter says, in page 350 of his "Treatise on the Blood &c." that "applications which can weaken should never be applied to an irritable inflammation, especially if the irritability arises from weakness." He says, "I am certain I have seen lead increase such inflammations particularly in many inflammations of the eyes and eye-lids; and I believe it is a bad application in all scrophulous cases." If it be necessary to add more to such respectable evidence, it may be obtained from the acknowledged natural properties of some of the ingredients of the Vegeto Mineral Water. It is prepared by dissolving lead in vinegar, and then adding water to the solution.

Its

the matter of heat, from the atmosphere, by the *lungs* in the act of respiration, that it is communicated from *them* to the blood in the pulmonary *veins*, by *them* transmitted with the blood to the left side of the heart, from thence thrown into the Aorta, and by  
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Its principal ingredient is one of the most debilitating poisons that science has any knowledge of. The menstruum of that ingredient, (vinegar) derives its menstrual power from the oxygene which it absorbs from the atmosphere in its change from the inflammable to the acetous state. Now it has been proved by the justly celebrated Dr. Ingenhouthz, that oxygene is unfriendly to wounds and sores, as may be seen in his Letter to Dr. Beddoes, in the first part of his Considerations on "The Medicinal use of Factitious Airs." Water then, the remaining ingredient, appears to be the only useful as well as innocent article of the composition.

its branches conveyed to the remotest parts of the body.<sup>(a)</sup> It is also known, as hath been observed before, that parts in an inflamed state have their vessels distended, and receive more blood than parts in a state of health.—From these considerations it must appear that the heat of parts in an inflamed state must be greater than similar parts of the same body in a state of

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(a) "We cannot therefore sufficiently admire the infinite wisdom of the supreme Being, who has made heat be generated in the lungs from that very element which draws off heat from every other part of the body.—We cannot also but admire the diffusion of heat through the entire system by means of the blood."

*See a dissertation on respiration translated from the Latin of Dr. Menzies.*



of health. Is it not probable then that the good effects of the aqua vegeto mineralis have resulted either from the abstraction of the increased heat of the part, by means of its cooler temperature, or that by the sensation of cold, which such applications convey to the parts inflamed, a contraction of the vessels may have been occasioned,<sup>(a)</sup> and a supply of that most stimulating material heat diminished; as well as  
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(a) "Cold produces the action of contraction in the vessels. Its action on an inflamed part may be similar to its action on a frozen part by restraining action, and keeping it within the strength of the part in the one case, so as not to allow death to take place from over action, and in the other to keep it within bounds."

*Mr. Hunter's Treatise on the Blood, &c.*

the undue flux of those parts of the blood that constitute the discharges of ulcers? Or may it not produce its good effects in each or all of those ways? It has been astonishingly useful in some ulcers that afforded acrid discharges, I believe, by simply diluting, and in that way diminishing the corrosive quality of such discharges.

If the foregoing reasoning be consistent with truth, how decidedly superior, as an application, must be pure water, to that preparation of lead that has been considered. I mean not to assert that cases cannot occur wherein it may prove useful; but I design by relating the result of my experience, which in these cases hath been rather

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extensive,

extensive, to direct the attention of practitioners to a remedy that with me has proved, upon many comparative trials, to be more useful than the one that has been so long and so generally adopted ; which perhaps will sufficiently appear, if the good effects produced are referable to the abstraction of increased heat, to the contraction of the vessels and a consequent diminution of the flux of an ulcer, or to its power of rendering acrid discharges mild by dilution ; as it is not possible to apply effectually the aqua vegeto mineralis more than once or twice to a part, without a removal of the bandages, as the calx of the lead is left in the interstices of the linen or flannel that is employed when the water evaporates, so as to render  
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it impervious: and thus that which when applied was an easy application, that readily transmitted any watery fluid to the part affected, and that was chosen on account of its softness and the support it afforded to the diseased parts, becomes (if the roller be at all displaced) a hard ligature, in no respect calculated to produce any of those beneficial effects that were expected from it as a bandage.<sup>(a)</sup> Many other advantages might be pointed

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(a) It is scarcely possible for those who wash the bandages that have been wetted with the solution of lead, ever to render them perfectly clean, or free from the calx that is retained in their interstices, and thus, an unhealthy atmosphere, that has been occasioned by the excretions that nature designed to throw off, is confined with the discharges by an impervious bandage.

pointed out, that sufficiently establish the preference due to pure water. I shall however observe only, that the one is a poison, which in the hands of unskilful or careless persons may do harm in various ways; that the consequences of its absorption would be in many instances dreadful<sup>(a)</sup>—and that the other, though so innocent, is capable of producing all the advantages that are obtained by the use of the former, in a more effectual manner, in consequence of the ease with which it is conveyed to the parts without removing the bandages.

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(a) Particularly in those cases of colliquative Diarrhœa, that are occasioned so often by the sympathizing of the stomach and intestines, with large and irritable wounds.

I shall now attempt to describe the *manner* in which the principles above alluded to are applied. And as it must be perceived that there is little more in the materials recommended than Surgeons have been long in the habit of using, it must be also perceived that the difference in the effects produced must be in a great measure ascribed to the *manner* in which those materials are applied. Therefore, as the success of the *means* very much depends upon the *mode of their application*, I shall be more particular in my description of *them* than may perhaps to many appear necessary; but as I am convinced that almost every thing that can be wished may be obtained in such cases, if the principles are kept in view, and a proper application

cation of the means persevered in ; I wish, by the fulness of my description, to spare those who may adopt the plan, the inconveniences and disappointments that may be experienced, if the steadiest attention does not direct their application.

The parts should be first cleared of that hair that is sometimes found in considerable quantities upon the legs, by means of a razor, that none of the discharges by being retained may become acrid and inflame the skin, and that the dressings may be removed with ease at each time of their renewal, which in some cases, where the discharges are very profuse, and the ulcers very irritable, may perhaps be necessary twice in the  
 twenty-four

twenty-four hours; but which I have in almost every instance been only under the necessity of performing once in that space of time.

The plaister should be prepared for spreading by melting in an iron ladle over a slow fire four ounces of common plaister or diachylon, with half a drachm of yellow refin; when melted it should be stirred till it begins to cool; and then spread thinly upon slips of smooth porous callico of a convenient length and breadth, by sweeping it quickly from the end that is held by the left hand of the person who spreads it, to the other end that must be held firmly by another person, with the common elastic spatula



spatula that is used by apothecaries ; the uneven edges must then be cut off, and the pieces so prepared cut into slips of from two to three inches in breadth, and of a length that will, after being passed round the limb, leave an end of about four inches.

The middle of the piece so prepared should then be applied to the sound part of the limb that is opposite to the inferior part of the ulcer, so that the lower edge of the plaister may be placed about an inch below the edge of the sore, and the ends should then be drawn over the ulcer with as much gradual extension as the patient can well bear ; other slips should be secured in the same way each above the other, until the  
whole

whole surface of the fore and the limb are compleatly covered with the plaister at least an inch above and below the diseased part.

The whole of the affected parts should then be defended with pieces of soft callico, three or four times doubled, and very evenly applied; and a callico bandage of about three inches in breadth, and four or five yards in length; or rather as much as will be sufficient to support the limb from the foot to the knee, should be applied with as much firmness as can be borne by the patient; and as much evenness as can be obtained by the attention of the Surgeon, by passing it first round the leg at the ankle joint, then once or twice round the foot, and afterwards  
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up the limb till it reaches the knee, observing that each turn of the bandage should have its lower edge so placed as to be about an inch above the lower edge of the fold next below.

The whole of the parts that are at all affected should then be well moistened with cold spring water, poured from a large tea-pot; and it should, if the parts be much inflamed, or the discharges either acrid or profuse, be renewed as often as the heat of the parts may indicate, or perhaps at least once in every hour.—The patient may then take what exercise he pleases, as I have been generally told by mine, that they have been easier when they have walked much; and  
have

have as generally found that their cures have not been retarded; but on the contrary most times accelerated by their exertions in that way. I do not attempt to assign any other than the preceding reasons for a circumstance so contradictory to the experience of almost all Surgeons. But I think it will be obvious, that cures that are obtained under such treatment will be much more lasting than those that are accomplished in any way where the patient is confined to his bed.

I have chosen to apply the means here recommended to those cases that have fallen under my care, at an early hour in the morning, that is, before the Oedema has

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come on which so frequently attends such cases; first, with a view to restore the tone of the refluxent vessels, by supporting their sides when in a *natural state*, and secondly, with the expectation of being able to bring the divided edges nearer together, whilst the parts are in *that situation*, and the skin relaxed, than it would be possible to do when the parts are distended by tumefaction.

I have also preferred the use of callico to linen, from much experience of its superiority in very many respects: it does not subject the parts to that inconvenient and undue stricture that is experienced in the use of linen; it is more pervious, and consequently prevents the formation of sinusses which might  
be

be occasioned by a compleat retention of the discharges, if accompanied with the pressure so much recommended ; it appears to possess more of the accommodating properties of the true skin, and by its elasticity is well calculated to yield a little to muscular action, whilst it affords sufficient support to the parts ; and lastly, it is much more cheap, which, to a person who is in the daily habit of using so much as myself, is a consideration of some consequence.—I have before said, that porous callico will be found most useful, and I prefer that which being smooth and free from inequalities, is to be bought at eleven pence or a shilling a yard, to that which is more expensive and consequently less pervious.

As a bandage too, I think it much preferable to either linen or flannel ; it is more elastic, soft and accommodating, than the former, and besides being less cumbrous and more cleanly than the latter, possesses the additional advantage of being a much better conductor of that morbid heat which so constantly affects inflamed parts, and which it is essential to remove.

Having thus endeavoured to explain the principles that directed my practice, and the manner of applying the materials that I have used, with, perhaps, too much minuteness, I shall now endeavour to reward the patience of the reader, with an account of several  
deplorable

deplorable diseases, that were cured by the means recommended, after a compleat failure of all others.



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CASE I.

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HANNAH WEBB, aged 32, servant to Jofiah Hill, Esq. of Bedminster, applied to me by the desire of her master, on the 24th of November, 1792, for the cure of two ulcers on the left leg. One situated on the outer and lower edge of the soleus muscle was about two inches long, an inch wide, and very deep. The other situated a little below the external malleolus was an inch long, half an inch wide, and of a triangular form.—The edges of both were callous, the  
discharge

discharge thin, and the surrounding parts very much inflamed. She said, that she had suffered very much for upwards of two years, being obliged to walk and stand a great deal; that she had been twelve months under the care of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who, beside great personal attention, gave her considerable quantities of alterative, and other medicines. That she had also the occasional assistance and advice of other gentlemen before she made application to him: and it seemed by her account, that she had tried every remedy, except absolute rest in bed (which was only occasionally resorted to) that could be suggested, without any advantage. The adhesive plaister spread on slips of callico were applied to the lower

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ulcer,

ulcer, and secured by its adhesive property as well as the situation and shape of the ulcer would allow. The upper ulcer was treated in the same way, with slips of the same kind drawn firmly round the limb, so as to bring the retracted edges nearer together; which was not difficult to accomplish, as that wound was situated in a yielding part, and was also very deep. The parts were then defended with pieces of callico, and a bandage of the same kind, three yards in length, was applied spirally with some firmness round the limb. She was directed to keep it constantly well wetted with cold water poured from a tea-pot upon the parts, to live sparingly, and to take what exercise she pleased. At my next visit, the 25th,

I was very much surprized at the change that had taken place in only twenty-four hours: the edges were much reduced, the discharge was much better, the inflammation much less, and she said that she had experienced more ease than she had known in the same space of time for many preceding months. She was dressed every day in the same manner; and by the ninth of the following month, a period of only fifteen days, both wounds were perfectly cured.

The celerity of this cure may be ascribed to the patient being of a spare form, and possessing much loose skin upon her leg, which permitted the divided parts to be brought nearly into contact. Thus with no  
other

other internal medicine than one aperient draught, which perhaps was unnecessary, this person in only fifteen days was cured of a disease that had resisted the art of Surgery upwards of two years.

It may be necessary to remind the reader, that in all of these cases a kind of *fulcrum* has been formed, by applying the middle part of the adhesive slip exactly opposite to the ulcer on the sound part of the limb, to enable the *moving power* that is applied to bring the sides of the ulcer nearer together when the ends of the plaister are drawn over the affected part.

CASE

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C A S E II.

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MR. JAMES HARRIS, Shopman to Mr. Dowell, Iron-Merchant, applied to me by his Master's desire, with several large and very irritable ulcers, on different parts of his leg, which from the knee was so diseased by inflammation and ulceration, that I could have entertained no hope of being able to cure him by any of the common methods of treating such diseases.

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He said " that in the year 1783, being employed at a Tin-plate Manufactory, he had the misfortune to plunge his leg into a pot of boiling greafe, and that on turning down the stocking, a great part of the skin and flesh came off, that he was immediately placed under the care of a Surgeon of reputation, and continued with him nearly two years, at the end of which time, having a callous obstinate ulcer of the size of the palm of the hand, he applied to another eminent Surgeon, and remained under his care ten months with little advantage ; that he was under the care of no regular practitioner, but continued to try every thing that was recommended by his friends and neighbours for a year from that time ; that he then got admiffion into a  
hospital,

hospital, and after ten months was discharged nearly in the same state that he was in when first admitted: he also said, that afterwards he was attended by different practitioners without experiencing any relief.”

At the time he applied to me, his case was in every respect one of the most hopeless I had ever seen. It had been occasioned by the effects of *fire*, a cause that ever stamps the character of obstinacy on wounds that are so occasioned; it had been of more than nine years standing; it had resisted the skill of many gentlemen that I knew to be experienced in the practice of surgery; very much of the common covering was destroyed, and what remained was so thickened by inflammation,



mation, that it would have been presumption to hope that a cure could be obtained. But as I expected that relief might be afforded, I for some months unremittingly endeavoured to assist him by all the common methods I was acquainted with, except absolute rest in bed, without the least advantage. The high degree of inflammation that constantly attended this disease, seemed to put the plan of the adhesive out of the question, as I had not ever yet tried it in so desperate a case; but after much loss of time, and a complete failure of all the means that had been used to procure relief, the adhesive was applied, the parts supported by a callico bandage, and the whole leg, on account of its very inflamed and diseased state, kept constantly well wetted.

ted. His relief was immediate, his pain, which before was very great, ceased in a few days, and without the interruption of a day or the confinement of an hour, he gradually amended till the whole was skinned over, which happened in about four months after the new plan was adopted, and about nine after the time of his first application to me; during all which time he performed his part of the business of a retail shop in full trade.

The very large extent of ulcerated surface in this case, together with the nature of the patient's engagements, which often prevented his regular attendance, as well as the very diseased condition of the parts that surrounded the ulcers, will sufficiently account for the  
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disproportionate length of time that was employed in the accomplishment of this cure, which though disproportionate to the time that has been necessary to perform any other, yet scarcely amounted to half as many months as years had been before unavailingly employed in search of relief.

CASE

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CASE III.

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WILLIAM PREEN, of Tetbury, in Gloucestershire, aged 49, applied to me the 25th of April 1794, with two large ulcers on the outside of the left leg, near the middle of the peroneus longus muscle; one about three inches in length, the other that was situated a little below, somewhat less than two inches, both were rather long than broad, and in so bad condition, that a stream of very thin offensive discharge escaped, when I removed the dressing that was upon it. He appeared

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very

very thin and emaciated, and gave the following account of himself:—that about the age of 18, he fell as he was sliding upon some ice, on the outside of his leg, that an abscess followed, which extended from his knee to his foot; that he became an inpatient to the Gloucester Infirmary for it, and after remaining there somewhat more than a year, during which time a large exfoliation had been thrown off, he was dismissed with a perfect cure; that after some years, in consequence of an accident as he was at work in a gentleman's garden, the cicatrized part gave way, and that he could never afterwards get it healed, though he said that he had received the assistance of several eminent practitioners in that part of  
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the county, and had been under the constant care of some Surgeon the greatest part of the preceding five years; he mentioned the names of some whose reputation I was no stranger to, and added, that having tried all the old methods, his last Surgeon had applied a new one, and had kept the parts constantly covered with rhubarb and other powders<sup>(a)</sup> with no better success than those who had preceded him; he subjoined also, that he had lived very freely and should continue to do so, "that he could not eat, therefore would drink."

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(a) According to a plan that has been recommended by Everard Home, Esq.

He was dressed with flaps of adhesive, and the leg was firmly supported with the callico bandage. In consequence of the very irritable state of the fores, and the general inflammation of the limb, he was directed to keep the parts not only constantly wet, but also cold by the very frequent application of water poured from a large tea-pot upon the part ; and after very strict directions as to temperance, he was directed to call on me the next day ; he did so, and the wounds in that short period were manifestly improved ; in a few days his ulcers became healthy sores, his pain and every other inconvenient symptom left him, and by the twenty-fourth of the next month (May) he was perfectly cured ; when he very candidly told me, “ that I had cured him in despite of himself,

himself, that he had lodged at an Inn the whole time that he had been under my care, had drank freely every day, and had been intoxicated every night."

These sores were situated in yielding parts, and to that circumstance may be ascribed a cure so speedy, under circumstances so disadvantageous. Had this person applied to me before I discovered the advantages of the method that I now use, it will be perceived that with his licentious habits, it would not have been in my power even to have relieved him by any of the means that were then in use; but it seems that the processes of re-union and skinning, which were both necessary in this case, could not be prevented



by the irregularities of the patient, when the retracted skin was brought forward, and the other means applied which have been so often recommended.

CASE

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## CASE IV.

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**JANE POWELL**, aged 27, a poor woman in the work-house of the Out-Parish of St. Philip and Jacob, was taken under my care on the 14th of August, 1796. She had an ulcer on the outside of the left leg, partly situated on the peroneus longus muscle, and partly upon the lower external edge of the soleus; it was two inches and a half in length, two inches in breadth, and very deep, the discharge was thin and profuse, the inflammation considerable, and she described herself

as suffering so much pain from it as to occasion her sitting up and giving way to tears some hours every night. She was dressed as usual with the adhesive, and the parts kept constantly cool and moist, by means of water poured very frequently upon them ; in less than five weeks she was cured, with little more remaining cicatrix than would have occurred if the parts had been recently divided and again united by the first intention. This disease had been nearly in the same state fifteen months. She had been in a Hospital eighteen weeks, and had been discharged from thence without relief ; her cure was now accomplished without pain or confinement in the before mentioned time.

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CASE V.

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JAMES GANE, aged 63, a poor man in the work-house of the Out-Parish of St. Philip and Jacob, had two ulcers on the outside of the right leg, exactly upon the ankle-joint. One the size of a shilling, the other somewhat less; he had also two larger ulcers almost opposite to the others, on the inside of the same leg; the surfaces of these fores were on a level with the surrounding skin, the parts were much swollen and inflamed, the joint had nearly lost its mobility,

bility, and the limb appeared as if the greatest part of it had been in an ulcerated state at some former period. He said that the disease had been occasioned by the bite of a moschetto fly, at the siege of the Havannah, in the year 1762; that he had been under the care of many Surgeons, and had been three times in Hospitals, but that he never could obtain a serviceable cure, though it had been several times skinned over; before I put him upon the new plan, I tried every other remedy that I was acquainted with, not excepting absolute rest in bed upwards of six months, without advancing in any degree towards a cure.

On the 14th of August, 1796, he was first dressed with the adhesive, and the parts were

directed to be frequently wetted with cold water, his relief was as sudden as had been experienced in any of the preceding instances, and in five weeks, he was perfectly cured.

The surface of this man's fores being upon a level with the surrounding skin, and the limb much hardened by inflammation, prevented my being able to cover the denuded parts with it; nevertheless, the skinning process was completed, and his cure satisfactorily accomplished in the period above mentioned. And thus four ill-conditioned ulcers upon a leg that had been diseased upwards of thirty-four years, were cured for this poor man (whose age was very unfavourable) in the short space of five weeks. On account of his appearing much older than he

really was, and his being much emaciated, I did not think proper to establish any substituted discharge. Yet at this day, Jan. 27, his leg continues perfectly sound, and he is in much better health than he was before his cure was accomplished.

CASE

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CASE VI.

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JOHN PONTIN, of the parish of St. George, in the county of Gloucester, aged 55, was taken under my care on the 25th October, 1796.

About 18 years since, as he was riding a spirited horse which he was unable to manage, from the circumstance of having lost one of his arms some years before, by the bursting of a gun, it happened that as the horse passed swiftly by the side of a cart, the calf of his  
leg



leg was caught by the hook of the cart, and the whole of it torn away. He was immediately taken to the Bristol Infirmary, and placed under the care of a gentleman whose patients I dressed at that time, being then an apprentice at the house. A dangerous mortification succeeded to the injury, and it was not without difficulty that his life was preserved. He remained in the hospital 37 weeks, and was confined to his bed 27 : at the expiration of the former period, he was dismissed, with a large ulcer, on account of some irregularity in his conduct. It continued to embitter his life from that time to the day he was taken under my care. I then measured it ; it was six inches and a half in length, and five and a half in breadth ; it occupied the part  
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that had formerly been covered by the gastrocnemius externus muscle; the edges were nearly a quarter of an inch thick; the discharge which was very thin and offensive, fell in a large stream when I removed his dressings; the contraction of the tendons was so great, that he could only touch the ground with the points of his toes, and the limb was so generally diseased and hardened by inflammation, as to make it apparent that any attempts to bring forward the skin must prove abortive. His pain was so distressing, that he could neither eat nor sleep; and his health was so much affected, that he appeared very much emaciated. I did not however, under all these discouraging circumstances, despair of being able to cure him, as my almost un-

interrupted

interrupted success had given me the greatest confidence in the plan that I have described. On that day the adhesive flaps were applied, and rather forcible endeavours made to bring the sides of the ulcer nearer together by drawing the ends of the flaps over it, and securing them when so drawn. The limb was then defended with soft callico, and firmly supported with a bandage of the same; and the patient directed to keep it constantly cool by means of water. His relief was as speedy and remarkable, as had been observed in any instance; in three or four days the callous edges were levelled with the surface of the ulcer; the discharge was rendered inoffensive, and healthy as that of an issue; and the skinning process commenced: from  
that

that time to the present, his cure has uniformly advanced, and in two or three weeks his wound, which is only an inch and a half long, and about half an inch wide, will I believe, be perfectly healed.

I have the satisfaction to add, that the limb is become almost as soft and healthy as it ever was; and that in consequence of the daily application of warm animal oil to the contracted muscles and tendons, he is now enabled to tread much more plainly upon his foot, and to walk some miles every day with ease and convenience.

Does not the history of this dreadful disease afford reason to hope that few will

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hereafter

hereafter be found that may not be easily cured by a proper application of these means?

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I have chosen to record only six cases, though the practice has been successfully applied to more than thirty that are not brought forward; many of which were as remarkable as those that have been related. Nothing further can be wanting to prove the advantages of the plan; therefore a greater number might appear ostentatious, or only serve to gratify my own feelings. For these reasons I have declined to insert more, and will only add, that in *fair cases* I doubt whether any disappointments will in future be experienced. As the few  
 which

which I have not been able to cure by these means (paradoxical as it may seem) have rather served to convince me, that where the dressings can be applied in *the way* that has been asserted to be necessary, compleat success may be generally expected; it may not be amiss to add, that the only unsuccessful case I at present recollect, was an ulcer about an inch long, and less than half an inch wide, so situated beneath the outer ankle, that it was impossible by any contrivance to secure the adhesive slips, so as to assist the divided edges of the ulcer in their advances towards each other. The long diameter of the sore, was in a line with the outer edge of the foot, and its short diameter lay between the protuberance of the ankle joint, and the edge of the sole;

so that it was not possible to contract the length of the ulcer by flaps applied to the side of the foot, nor to diminish its breadth, on account of the projection of the joint;—and thus this case, which in every other respect appeared more likely to be cured than most of those whereon the plan had been tried, could not (for the reasons above stated) be relieved by merely covering the ulcer with the same kind of dressing, though it was regularly applied many weeks.

It has been thought necessary to direct those persons who have been cured, to keep the limb carefully supported by bandage some months after the cures have been accomplished, or until the part has afforded proof  
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that the returning vessels have recovered their tone ; by displaying no tendency to swell.

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Cases I. III. and IV. prove, that old deep ulcers, situated in yielding parts, may by these means have their sides brought into contact, and be cured almost as readily by the *second intention* as recent wounds ; with very little remaining scar, and consequently with a diminished probability of a relapse.

Cases II. V. and VI. go much farther than the preceding ; they establish the superiority of this method over every other that has been yet known ; and they prove that speedy cures may be obtained in the worst, and oldest



ulcers, of the poorest people, even where the true skin cannot be brought forwards so as in any degree to cover the denuded parts.

The advantages that belong to the true skin can never be communicated to that which is formed in its stead, yet as the cases of this kind that have been cured by these means, have mostly remained sound, and those that have yielded have not ulcerated in that rapid way that new-formed parts are apt to do, but have been healed again almost immediately upon the re-application of the same means ; I am convinced that the danger of a relapse will be lessened even in *these cases* ; as the *vascularity* of the new-formed parts, upon *which* the ulcerative process much depends, must be less in cases that are treated in this

manner, than it is in parts that have been healed by the common methods of cure.

It was observed in the beginning of this tract, that I was induced to apply the adhesive application by the hope of being able to bring the retracted edges of the divided skin nearer together, and by the expectation of some other of those advantages that have been found to follow its use; but it must be perceived in the cases of *Harris*, *Gane*, and *Pontin*, whose ulcers were so extensive, and whose limbs were so hardened by the effects of long-continued inflammation, that no care or skill could have ever brought the diseased skin that remained on their limbs, to cover wounds so extensive; nevertheless it appears

that their cures were accomplished almost as soon in proportion to the extent of their ulcers, as any of the others that are related, whose diseases were situated in yielding parts, and who for that reason seemed so much more likely to be relieved by these means.

——To what circumstance then are we to ascribe these remarkable facts? they cannot surely be referred to the ingredients of the adhesive plaister, to the effects of bandage, to the exercise that was used, nor to any constitutional interference, as the *same* effects have always followed the application of these *principles*, whether the patients have been young or old, robust or emaciated, temperate or disorderly; whilst ointments, composed of the same ingredients as the  
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adhesive plaister, bandages, exercise, and all the means, except the *endeavour to bring the divided parts nearer together*, to which it may be supposed the cures can be attributed, had been tried in every way by different practitioners in most of these cases; and many times by myself, without any such advantages being obtained. To answer this question, it will be necessary to take a view of the process of nature, in accomplishing the cure of divided parts, as described by that accurate observer of the phenomena of animal life, whose opinions I have so often quoted; as well as the appearances that have been observed by others, in the dissection of parts that had been divided, and that were afterwards

wards healed: <sup>(a)</sup> in so doing, I think it will be discovered that a great part of the advantages that have been obtained by this practice, and that may in future be expected to follow its adoption, will be found to depend upon an imitation of nature's process, in that  
 mechanical

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(a) Thus after the cure of a stump, every vessel even the largest, is almost entirely obliterated for a considerable extent; at least, nothing is found to remain of them, but the thin membranes that composed their coats, shrunk into very small inconsiderable cords; the fibres of the different muscles are, in the same manner, greatly diminished; and the cellular substance seems frequently to be almost entirely annihilated. Several opportunities have occurred for dissecting the stumps of patients after death, and the appearances were uniformly as above related.

*See Mr. Bell's Treatise on the Theory and Management of Ulcers. p. 162.*

mechanical contraction of the granulations, which is a consequence of the application of the adhesive, in *the way* that has been recommended.

Mr. J. Hunter says in page 477, and the following, of his Treatise on the Blood, &c.  
 “ That granulations, and this new-formed substance, are an accretion of animal matter upon the wounded or exposed surface : they are formed by an exudation of the coagulating lymph from the vessels, into which new substance, both the old vessels very probably extend, and also entirely new ones form ; so that the granulations come to be very vascular, and indeed they are more so than almost any other animal substance.”——

“ Granu-

“ Granulations have the disposition to unite with one another, when found or healthy ; the great intention of which is, to produce the union of parts, somewhat similar to that by the first intention, or the adhesive inflammation, although possibly not by the same means. The granulations having a disposition to unite with each other upon coming into contact, without the appearance of any intermediate animal substance, perhaps is in the following manner : when two sound granulations approach together, the mouths of the secreting vessels of the one, coming to oppose the mouths of similar vessels of the other, they are stimulated into action, which is mutual ; so that a kind of sympathetic attraction takes place, and as they are solids,

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the attraction of cohesion is established between them ; this has been termed inosculation. The vessels thus joined, are altered from secreting to circulating ; or it may be in this way, viz. the circulatory vessels come to open upon the surface, and there unite with one another, and the two become one substance ; or it may be asked, do they throw out coagulating lymph when they come into contact, and have a disposition to heal ? And does this become vascular, in which the vessels may inosculate, similar to union by the first or second intention ?”

*“ Granulations are not only weaker in performing the natural or common functions of the parts to which they belong, but they would appear often to be formed, with only stated periods of life, and*



*and those much shorter than the life of the part on which they are formed. This is most remarkable in the extremities; but where they are capable of going through all their operations, as cicatrization, their life then seems to be not so limited: they are probably then acquiring new life or longevity every day. But while in a state of granulation, we find these often dying without any visible cause: thus, a person shall have a sore upon the leg, which shall granulate readily; the granulations shall appear healthy, the skin shall be forming round the edges, and all shall be promising well, when all at once the granulations shall become livid, lose their life, and immediately slough off; or, in some cases, ulceration shall in part take place, and both together shall destroy the granulations:*

*and*

and probably where ulceration wholly takes place, it may be owing to the same cause. New granulations shall immediately rise as before, and go through the same process; this shall happen three or four times in the SAME person, and probably for ever, if some alteration in the nature of the parts be not produced. This circumstance of the difference in longevity of granulations in different people, is somewhat similar to the difference in longevity of different animals.

*In cases of short-lived granulations, I have tried various modes of treatment, both local and constitutional, to render the life of the granulations longer, but without success."*

“ Imme-

“ Immediately upon the formation of the granulations, cicatrization would appear to be in view. The parts which had receded, in consequence of a breach being made into them, by their natural elasticity, and probably by muscular contraction, now begin to be brought together by this new substance ; and it being endowed with such properties, they soon begin to contract, which is a sign that cicatrization is to follow. The contraction takes place in every point, but principally from edge to edge, which brings the circumference of the sore towards the centre ; so that the sore becomes smaller and smaller, although there is little or no new skin formed.

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The contracting tendency is in some degree proportioned to the general healing disposition of the sore, and the looseness of the parts on which they are formed; for when it has not a tendency to skin, the granulations do not so readily contract, and therefore *contracting and skinning are probably effects of one cause.* The granulations too being formed upon a pretty fixed surface, which is a consequence of inflammation, are in some degree retarded in their contraction from this cause; but probably this does not act so much upon a mechanical principle as we at first might imagine; for such a state of parts in some degree lessens the disposition for this process, but this state is every day altering, and in proportion as the tumefaction

G subsides.

subfides. Granulations are also retarded in their contraction from a mechanical cause, when they are formed on parts naturally fixed, such as bone; for instance, on the skull, on the bone etc. of the shin, for there the granulations cannot greatly contract.

In cases where there has been a loss of substance making a hollow sore, and the contraction has begun and advanced pretty far, before the granulations have had time to rise as high as the skin, in such cases the edges of the skin are generally drawn down and tucked in by it, in the hollow direction of the surface of the sore.

If

If it is a cavity, or abscess which is granulating, with only a small opening, as in many that have not been freely opened, the whole circumference contracts like the bladder of urine, till little or no cavity is left; and if any cavity is remaining, when they cannot contract any further, they unite with the opposite granulations, in the manner described.

*This contraction in the granulations, continues till the whole is healed, or skinned over; but their greatest power is at the beginning, at least their greatest effect is at the beginning: one cause of which is, that the resistance to their contraction in the surrounding parts is then least.*

*The contractile power can be assisted by art, which is a further proof that there is a resistance to be overcome.*

The art generally made use of, is that of bandages, which tend to push, draw, or keep the skin near to the sore which is healing; but this assistance need not be given, or is at least not so necessary, till the granulations are formed and the contractile power has taken place: however, it may not be amiss to practise it from the beginning, as by bringing the parts near to their natural position, the adhesive inflammation will fix them there. They will not therefore recede so much afterwards, and there will be less necessity for the contractile powers of the granulations.

Besides the contractile powers of the granulations, there is also a similar power in the surrounding edge of the cicatrizing skin, which assists the contraction of granulations, and is generally more considerable than that of the granulations themselves, drawing the mouth of the wound together like a purse; this is frequently so great, as to occasion the skin to grasp the granulations which rise above the surface, and is very visible in sugar loaf stumps, where the projection of the sore is to be considered as above the level of the skin.

*The use arising from the contraction of the granulations are various. It facilitates the healing of a sore, as there are two operations*



*going on at the same time, viz. contraction and skinning.*

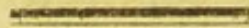
It avoids the formation of much new skin, an effect very evident in all sores which are healed, especially in found parts.

In amputation of a thick thigh (which is naturally seven, eight, or more inches diameter before the operation,) the surface of the fore is of the same diameter; for the receding of the skin here does not increase its surface, as it does in a cut on a plane; yet in this case, the cicatrix shall be no broader than a crown piece. This can be effected by the contractile power of the granulations, for it is bringing the skin within its natural bounds.

bounds. The advantage arising from this is very evident; for it is with the skin, as it is with all other parts of the body, viz. that those parts which were originally formed are much fitter for the purposes of life, than those that are newly formed, and not nearly so liable to ulceration.

After the whole is skinned, we find that the substance, which is the remains of the granulations on which the new skin is formed, still continues to contract, till hardly any thing more is left than what the new skin stands upon. This is a very small part, in comparison with the first formed granulations, and it in time loses most of its apparent vessels, becomes white and ligamentous. For

we may observe that all new healed fores are redder than the common skin, but in time they become much whiter. As the granulations contract, the surrounding old skin is stretched to cover the part which had been deprived of skin, and this is at first little more than bringing the skin to the old position, which had receded when the breach was first made; but afterwards it becomes considerably more, so as to stretch or oblige the old skin to elongate."



If any thing more than the preceding quotations were necessary to prove that nature accomplishes the cure of ulcerated wounds by a contraction of the granulations, and an obliteration of the extreme vessels—the *success*

of the means that have been recommended in this Treatise, I believe, would furnish the evidence, as they only differ from the common methods of cure, in as much as they tend to occasion a contraction of the granulations, an obliteration of the vessels, and to enable us to overcome the resistance which is opposed to the process of skinning. The same effects are produced in this method by mechanical means, that nature is constantly endeavouring to produce in her operations, and speedy cures have been the general consequence of treating diseases in this manner, whilst failures have as generally occurred where the same kind of applications have been used in a different manner. Does it not then appear that the advantages of this practice consist in our  
being

being able to bring about in a shorter space of time the same effects, that the efforts of nature, when unassisted by these means, would have imperfectly accomplished in a much longer period, or have failed to perform in any time? And does not the speedy contraction of the granulations, and the skinning, that was occasioned by endeavouring to bring the sides of the ulcers nearer each other, in the cases that have been described, sufficiently account for the circumstance of my having never lost any of the ground that had been gained by this method of treating these diseases? The granulations having possessed in every instance, that has fallen under my observation, sufficient "longevity" to enable them to  
complete

complete the operations of contracting, skinning, and consequently curing the disease, before the natural period of their decay, when they have been so assisted; and thus *it appears*, that skinning is a consequence of the contraction of the granulations, and that both are “ effects of one cause.”

Every candid practitioner, that has seen many of these diseases, must subscribe to the truth of those beautiful and impressive observations in the foregoing quotations, that respect the longevity of granulations in old ulcers of the extremities. They will also, I believe, be pleased with the ingenuous confession that occurs immediately after, of a want of success in the endeavours that were  
made

made to prolong their life.—Will it be deemed arrogant, if, with the experience of near forty successful cases, I venture to say, that cures may be generally obtained by this method of assisting them in the completion of their operations, (in those cases where the retracted skin cannot be brought forward,) without its being necessary to increase the period of their duration? As the skinning process, in cases that have been so treated, has been always accomplished before the time of their decay.

My partiality for a mode of practice that I believe myself the inventor of, in these diseases, and that, I may without vanity say, has enabled me to do much good, induced me to avail myself of the support that I think it will

receive from the discoveries of the philosopher, whose last work furnished me with the preceding extracts; and when his description of nature's process in curing ulcers, and the *mode of treatment* that I have recommended, is compared with each other, and with the uniform effects that have succeeded to *that mode of treatment*; will it be supposed that my solicitude to connect this improvement with his name has misled my judgment? or rather, will it be easy to account in a more rational, or satisfactory manner for the effects that have been so constantly observed to follow a similar cause to that, which he says, nature employs to accomplish her cures? If it were necessary to add more to render it probable that my

successes



successes depended upon the assigned causes,  
 it would be effectually done by a review of  
 almost every line that has been written by  
 him upon the subject in the work alluded to ;  
 but as I consider the coincidence between  
 his opinions and this practice to be self-  
 evident, I shall only add, that, they mu-  
 tually tend to support and illustrate each  
 other.

It will scarcely be expected, that I should  
 think it necessary to notice the exploded  
 doctrine of humours in the present day ;  
 but as it has been remarked “ that those  
 notions which have been long rejected by  
 medical men, continue current with others  
 a considerable time afterwards, to the great  
 detriment

detriment of themselves, and the vexation of those who are called in to cure them when they are ill ;” and as it is probable that these sheets may be read by persons, not of the profession, who may labour under such diseases, and who may suppose that the discharges of ulcers are kept up by constitutional affections, or bad humours, it may render this Essay more useful, if I say a few words on the fallacy of such opinions ; though the subject has been already so ably discussed, and the error so compleatly exposed, by Mr. Bell, in his treatise on the theory and management of ulcers, that little remains to be added to what has been established by him in the work alluded to.

It

It is now known that the discharges of ulcers are nothing more than certain parts of the blood somewhat altered in their properties, by the action of the vessels that secrete them. It is also known, that no analysis of the blood ever detected the smallest particle of those acrid fluids that are sometimes afforded by ulcers. And when it is considered that a wound furnishing the healthiest matter, may be made to produce the most acrid by a stimulating application ; and that the acrid discharge may be again rendered healthy, by mild applications, in a very few hours, it will be perceived that the nature of the discharge must solely depend on the action of the secreting vessels.

The powers of those vessels are so astonishingly diversified, as to enable them to produce not only the different fluids that are necessary in the animal economy, the discharges of wounds, &c. but they are also capable of altering their natural actions, and producing even horn, hair, wool, and many other substances, where no human sagacity could have previously suspected their existence.<sup>(a)</sup>

Dr. Cullen says, “ that the action of the vessels has a considerable share in determining both the quantity, and quality of the secreted fluid, and that both are very little affected by

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(a.) See a communication in the 81st. vol. of the Philosophical Transactions, by Everard Home Esq. F. R. S.

the general state of the circulation, or by the different conditions of the mass of blood.”<sup>(a)</sup> Mr. Bell says, “ that very little consideration indeed, will make it appear that no such kind of matter as that which is frequently observed to flow from ulcers, ever subsisted in the blood; and that it is not easy to suppose life to continue in a frame so delicate as the human, with its vessels, which are so tender and irritable, filled with any sort of fluid, in its nature much more acrid, than what in general, the blood in a state of health is observed to be.”<sup>(b)</sup>

And

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(a). See Dr. Cullen's Institutions of Medicine p. 221.

(b). See Mr. Bell's Treatise on the Theory and Management of Ulcers. p. 139.

And it is now the opinion of the most enlightened practitioners, that the evils which have been sometimes observed to follow the suppression of an accustomed evacuation, depend solely upon “the returning of a portion of fluids into the circulation, that the animal economy had been in the habit of making a provision for.” Does it not then appear, that drains from setons or issues, in convenient situations, may at all times be rendered agreeable, as well as adequate substitutes, for the discharges that are afforded by *ulcers*, situated either upon tendinous parts, in the vicinity of joints, or upon places not so susceptible of pain, and inflammation, but, that may be liable in *their* progress to injure the constitution, or endanger the lives of the persons who are

unfortunately subject to them? And does it not seem to be a duty almost equal to that of self-preservation, to endeavour to obtain cures for diseases, that in their mildest forms are distressing, and that in their advanced stages, are frequently attended with danger?

Perhaps enough has been said to convince readers, who are not of the medical profession, that the doctrine of humours has been rejected in consequence of the advancement of natural knowledge, and that the opinions which have been adopted in its stead, explain more rationally, as well as more satisfactorily, those phenomena which were supposed to depend upon that cause. For such persons, and such only, these observations are inserted, with  
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the hope of preventing, or lessening, the opposition which is frequently made by them, to the removal of one of the greatest inconveniences that can be experienced, upon the groundless supposition that an ulcer is an outlet for the morbid materials of the body ; I hope they will also remove from the minds of the most timid, the objections that may be made against curing such diseases ; as they prove that all the ill consequences that can follow the suppression of accustomed discharges, may be prevented by the establishment of adequate drains, in better situations.

Much experience enables me to say more ; and indeed to assert that many of the oldest ulcers have been cured without a relapse, or  
any



any succeeding constitutional disease, though unafflicted by substituted drains.

It has happened, that many of the patients have been unable, from the nature of their occupations, to attend to the proper management of issues, and have allowed them to close, soon after their insertion; nevertheless, I have observed that their cures have been as lasting as those have been whose issues were continued, and that they have remained in every instance, as free from any constitutional indisposition. Indeed, if the cures that were obtained by these means, had no better security against relapses, than the prevention of repletion, I should entertain little hope of their permanence.

It

It has been observed, that most of those persons upon whom this plan has been tried, have been of the class of labouring poor. It may from thence be inferred, that their scanty diet, or their daily labour, may have prevented the bad consequences, that in other circumstances might have followed the suppression of their discharges. But I must observe, that though the greater number were of this description, many that received perfect cures of *old ulcers*, without experiencing any disagreeable effects, and that now remain sound, were very differently circumstanced.

I may instance some of the cases that have been described, as all that are now in this part of the world, I believe, continue sound and  
perfectly

perfectly healthy ; though no artificial discharges were established for either of them. Does it not then appear probable, that nature possesses the power to prevent that increase, or improper determination of the fluids, which has been so much dreaded, and which, if it occurred, might endanger ?

I merely offer the suggestions that arise out of the facts which have been forced upon my observation, by the peculiar circumstances of those people, who have been cured, without substituted drains, of long continued ulcers, without experiencing the inconveniences that might have been expected. I do not assert that it will at all times be safe to suppress old discharges, without the establishment of new ones,

ones, but as I think useful inferences may be drawn from what has occurred in this way, it would be improper to conceal that which has really happened, though by publishing it, I may appear to favour an opinion that contradicts the most respectable authorities. I venture only to say, that I believe the *indiscriminate* use of drains to be improper, and that there may be cases, where the patients, from the nature of their occupations, their necessitous situation, or their time of life, cannot be likely to suffer from repletion, and consequently will not stand in need of drains that may prove troublesome, and perhaps distressing.

In *different cases*, may not an attention to regimen, with the assistance of opening medicines,

cines, or the occasional evacuation of a small quantity of blood, be safely substituted for an artificial drain? which, though generally innocent, and frequently useful, is considered by some people to be equally objectionable with the disease whose relapse it is designed to prevent.

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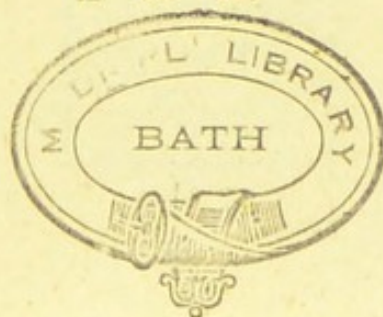
Thus, after some years experience of a practice that has very seldom disappointed me, though I have fought for the most desperate diseases among the poor, in Workhouses, and other situations, where such cases were likely to be found, I have ventured to publish an account of the means whereby my successes have been obtained;

and

and although some warmth of expression may be discovered in my description of *that*, which has rewarded me, for all my labour, with a rich harvest of success; and although it may perhaps be discovered, that the reasoning is sometimes defective, and the style every where improveable, I have so full an assurance of the utility of the practice I have described, that I should not despair of its procuring a welcome reception for a publication that had been produced with less leisure, and consequently greater disadvantage, than even this has been.

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E N D.



## ERRORS.

Page Line

7, 9, for *those that*, read *those who*.

12, 4, omit "*size of the*"

28, First line in the Note, read, "its principal ingredient *lead*."

28, In the Note, read, "Dr. Ingenhousz."

35, 13, for *them*, read *it*.

38, 6, instead of *about four inches*, read *about four or six inches*.

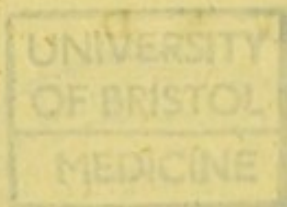
50, 11, place commas after the words *power*, and *applied*.

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## N O T E.

I am sorry to observe, that the prejudices of some of my patients, have made it necessary either to *deceive* them, or *relinquish the opportunity of completing their cures*. I have chosen the former; and have disguised the *Water*, with a few drops of the *compound Tincture of Lavender*: it has then always happened, that the "RED LOTION" has been a "FINE MEDICINE," though the "*cold water would have certainly BACKENED the humour, or occasioned their death!*"

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### ERRATA.

PAGE	vii,	LINE	21	<i>for</i>	and	<i>read</i>	where he.
	x,	—	7	—	June 30	—	July 30.
	15,	—	8	—	—8°	—	8°.
	22,	—	21	<i>before</i>	as	<i>omit</i>	that.
	24,	—	6	<i>for</i>	averdupois	<i>read</i>	avoirdupois.
	32,	—	9	—	46°	—	—46°.
	39,	—	21	—	narrow	—	narrower.
	42,	—	17	—	has	—	as.
	49,	—	last	<i>read</i>	by similar figures of reference.		
	71,	—	23	<i>after</i>	less	<i>add</i>	cold.

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