

A familiar treatise on rheumatism, and rheumatic affections : in which a popular view of these distressing maladies, their causes, symptoms, and methods of cure are so clearly arranged, that any person of common understanding may safely prescribe therefrom, principally by the use of domestic means.

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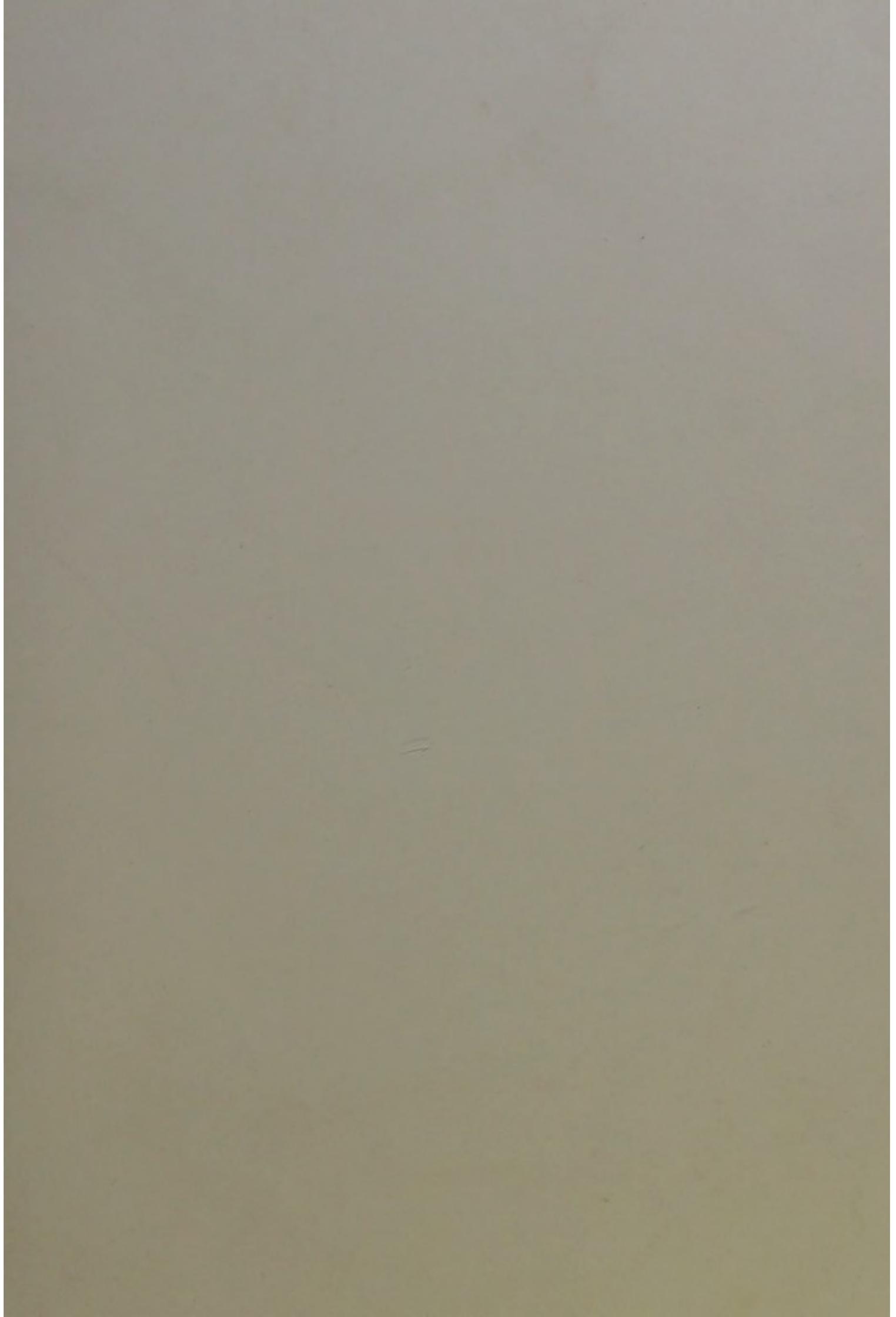
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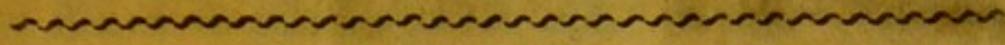
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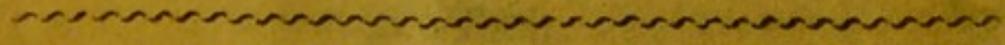
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A
FAMILIAR TREATISE
ON
RHEUMATISM,
AND
RHEUMATIC AFFECTIONS,
WITH
Domestic Methods of Cure.

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FOURTH EDITION.
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Price One Shilling and Sixpence.



THE TREATISE

ON THE

DOMESTIC AFFECTIONS

OR

THE TREATISE

ON

DOMESTIC AFFECTIONS

WITH

DOMESTIC METHODS OF CURE

BY

JOHN HUNTER, ESQ.

OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, AND OF THE SOCIETY OF PHYSICIANS, IN GREAT BRITAIN.

LONDON, 1773.

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“ Millions have died of medicable wounds.”

ARMSTRONG.

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FAMILIAR TREATISE

RHEUMATISM

Rheumatic Affections;

A popular Treatise of these distressing Affections

IN THEIR

METHODS OF CURE

AND THE MOST EFFECTIVE DOMESTIC MEANS.

BY

W. M. HICKMAN,

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OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA,

AND

OF THE VIRGINIA COLLEGE OF PHYSICIAN AND SURGEONS,

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA.

1850

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PREFACE.

THE universal prevalence of those afflicting maladies called Rheumatic Affections, has repeatedly excited attention by the miserable appearance of those thus afflicted. This, with the improper treatment with which they are so frequently treated, for the want of knowing the real causes, mode of treatment, &c. the author hopes will prove the necessity of a short and concise Treatise on the subject; to render, as intelligible as possible, to ordinary readers, such domestic methods as may tend, in some measure, to alleviate those distressing pains.

The Author is aware the sentiments in the following Treatise, will present nothing new to medical readers; his sole object, when penning it, was the adaption of the language to the understanding of those persons little skilled in medical science.

Publications wherein these effects are fully treated are not wanted, yet, as most of the observations constitute part of voluminous systems, and treatises adapted more to medical readers, they of course do not fall into the hands of those persons most interested in them.

The Author has availed himself of many of these remarks, and trusts their utility and importance will not render the insertion of them unacceptable to the public; to whose candour the work is with due deference submitted; and he hopes, whatever be the merits or demerits of these pages, the reader will be of opinion, the few hours employed in reading them will not be misapplied, or unattended with advantage.

The Author recently edited a *Treatise on Coughs and Colds*, on a similar plan to this; the sanction of a very extensive sale, and call for five large editions, is an acknowledgement of its utility and adaption to the wants of the public.

Henley on Thames,

Dec. 18th. 1815.

A
FAMILIAR TREATISE,

&c. &c.

CHAP. I.

On the different kinds of Rheumatism.

THE Rheumatism generally arises from a neglected Cold, or from exposure to cold damp air, or from wet clothes, or want of sufficient clothing, it also frequently arises from sudden exposure from heat to cold; or from a scrofulous taint in the blood and secretions; or else from a deficiency of vital heat. The latter is chiefly confined to aged persons.

Of this disease there are two species; one called the Acute, the other the Chronic Rheu-

matism. The common Rheumatism is called the Chronic, and is not attended with fever, or heat, or dryness of the skin. The symptoms are wandering pains, or a fixed pain either about the shoulders, hips, loins, arms, legs, knees, or any bony or sinewy parts of the body, felt most when in action, or when lying warm in bed; persons in years feel it mostly about the head and sides: it usually yields to a little care and attention, if not suffered to be too long without it.

The Acute Rheumatism is attended with fever and thirst, great restlessness, swellings of the joints, knees, wrists and shoulders, and an unusual redness appears on the surface of the skin. If this fixes long about the nerves it becomes very difficult to cure, for the internal parts would be soon affected; if the brain be attacked by it, a delirium ensues; if it falls upon the lungs, the patient is in imminent danger of suffocation, the severe pain of this kind causes a general in-

flammation, inducing great fever and sometimes a gangrene.

It will be necessary for every person who prescribes for himself, to remember these distinctions, for the treatment each requires is opposed to the other, and that which would mitigate the one, would accelerate the progress of the other; the acute, or inflammatory Species being attended with an increased action of the system, and the chronic with a diminished one.

CHAP. II.

Of the Treatment necessary in the Acute Rheumatism.

THE sufferer, if living in a low marshy situation, or whose business obliges him to frequent exposure to wet and cold, should immediately leave off such habits, at least for a time, as no remedy will avail while such

primary causes exist to counteract them, and this should be done before the disease has time to set fast hold on the constitution.

This fever which arises mostly from obstructed perspiration, and its consequences, bad colds, and inattention or neglect of them, must be treated like other fevers of the inflammatory kind; viz. by bleeding and opening drinks; which any apothecary, who is called in to bleed, will be able to make up in proper doses. A cooling diluting drink, either of sweet or vinegar whey, should be drank in large quantities, and the patient may be indulged with stewed prunes, coddled apples, and well-ripened summer fruits. Nitre is an excellent Medicine in this disorder, and if the stomach can bear it, may be given liberally, and more especially when joined with camphor. The sick, therefore, with bleeding should take half a dram of nitre with a quarter of a dram of camphor twice a day, in a pint of smooth boiled water

gruel, either with or without sugar as the patient pleases, and this should be persevered in for two or three days. As so much nitre cannot in general be taken without injuring the stomach, unless it be in copious draughts of gruel, barley water, or other such soft drinks, the quantity of nitre may be lessened if it disagrees with the patient.

These methods will generally bring down the fever, and often cure entirely by the profuse sweats they occasion. Another advantage arising is by thus lightly stimulating the intestines, one or two copious stools are produced, and the necessity of purging or glysters is obviated. If, however, the fever be very obstinate, a table spoonful of milderus spirit may be taken twice a day, in whey, taking care to keep open the body with senna, or other mild purgatives.

When the fever goes off, and the patient seems recovering, the pain often removes from one place to another, in which case

half a dram of Venice soap should be taken, in a pill, morning, noon and night, with a draught of sassafras tea, and the parts affected rubbed with a piece of dry warm flannel. If the pain and swelling of the joints remain, apply two or three leeches to those parts affected with the greatest swelling. It happens sometimes that the patient, though otherwise recovered, has a fixed pain left about the articulation of the hip, in such case apply a blister about the size of a crown piece to the part for twelve hours, then pierce the bladder it has raised, and cure with common cerate; eight days after apply another, and proceed as before. This operation may be repeated three or four times. It is necessary to observe, to pierce only the bladder, when you take off the blister, and not the skin, otherwise the place made bare would be extremely painful, and without any advance towards the cure. When the pains are extremely violent, apply a rye poultice to the

joints. Fomentations are of great service. Vapour baths are often used, and at times prove very efficacious.

A warm bath, wherein the patient may remain half an hour, after sufficient bleedings, affords the greatest relief, by its use a profuse sweat is often produced, which relieves the patient of much pain.

CHAP. III.

Of the Treatment necessary in the Chronic Rheumatism.

THE Common or Chronic Rheumatism arises from the serum of the blood becoming sharp and acrimonious, from the effects of cold or wet; and lodging on different membranes and nervous parts, occasioning excruciating pain. This sort does not require bleeding, the system being too cold already, and has no nourishment to spare; bleeding therefore would do hurt instead of good.

The proper treatment in the Chronic

Rheumatism, depends on diluting the acrimony and sharpness of the humours, which may be done by drinking largely of whey, or compound lime water. Some recommend a plaister to be applied to the affected parts, of course brown paper spread over with black soap, and sometimes rubbing the parts with Hollands gin, or solve the soap, about the size of a walnut, in a wine glass three parts full of the gin, and rub the affected parts, (the latter I have found of more use,) keeping the part warm with flannel afterwards, but such as are necessarily exposed to the inclemency of the weather, should prepare the body by frequent doses of the following: take of burdock root or buck bean three or four ounces, sassaparella the the same quantity, half an ounce of liquorice root, boil them in three quarts of water down to two quarts, then add thirty or forty drops of tincture of guiacum, and twenty drops of antimonial wine. Dose, a wine glass full

twice or thrice a day, and the following for a purging powder going to bed: calomel ten grains; powdered jalap half a dram; cream of tartar ten grains; ginger five grains; or, if not of a pretty good constitution, let the person only take a scruple of gum guaiacum in a jelly, or in a small glass of Holland's gin.

The supporting a free perspiration by using three or four grains of antimonial powder, taken twice a day, will generally remove these pains.

If the foregoing remedies do not affect a cure, and the patient otherwise in good health, we would recommend a trial of the cold bath, (only in and out in a minute,) more particularly in the sea if practicable, observing at the same time, proper precaution; as when not under the effect of any internal medicine, or full of heat. For such as are not robust, we would recommend the warm bath, or warm water pumped on the affected parts, and persevered in three or four days.

Cupping and blisters may be necessary, but to go warmly clothed with woollen is of the first consequence.

When by a long continuance of pain, the affected parts become rigid and stiff, let the parts be held over the steam of hot water, and continue the same once or twice a day, observing always to wipe the parts dry with warm linen, and then anoint them with a little ointment of marsh mallows. If this does not alleviate the pain, rub on the part sparingly, a little spirits of turpentine; or you may foment the parts with warm decoctions of mallows, and after wiping dry, rub on the parts a little opodeldoc, or black soap and gin as mentioned before, or water in which horse-raddish has been steeped.

There are some cold Rheumatisms which will submit to a spoonful of bruised mustard seed taken daily; or by a pint of whey, turned by boiling a large spoonful of fresh mustard seed in milk, and taking a pint every night and morning.

In cases where the distemper has been long rivetted, we recommend half a grain of tartar emetic, taken twice every other day, in a cup of gruel, but if it should occasion much sickness or vomiting, it may be taken in less quantities at first, but this symptom frequently disappears after a few days taking.

In very strong constitutions, two or three drams of ethereal oil of turpentine may be taken in the morning fasting, for a week, in four times the quantity of honey; large drafts of whey should be taken after it, in order to dilute and make it sit easier on the stomach.

The following is a very useful preparation taken in a dose of a wine glass full, three times a day, and proves sometimes serviceable. Boil half an ounce of each of the leaves of oleander and rose bay in a quart of water, till reduced to a pint.

A modern author speaking of this affection, recommends when the weather begins to get raw and cold in autumnal mornings and evenings, not to refrain from a good fire, for the sake of keeping your stoves bright and polished, adding there is not a more useful document for health to the inhabitants of this climate than to "Follow your feelings,"

When symptoms of a scorbutic habit attend this Rheumatism, it is called the Scorbutic, and may be treated the same as the foregoing, with the addition only of the frequent use of water-cresses, brook-lime, garden scurvy grass, ground-ivy, and camomile tea; and if available, the sulphureous waters of Harrowgate, or the sea water, both inwardly and while bathing.

In old Chronic Rheumatisms the sufferer should not be without the following articles and drugs for general use as occasion may require. Peruvian bark, for taking small doses

between the fits of pain. Volatile tincture of gum guaiacum and salt of hartshorn, for taking when the pains are most violent. Some good Holland's gin as a vehicle for taking them in, which passes off freely by urine, when properly diluted with warm drinks; the patient may also indulge in a pipe of tobacco, and especially if of English Herb.

The following is a cheap recipe for a poor person afflicted with this disease. Take eight handfuls of garden scurvy grass, four of each water cresses, sage and mint, the peels of six oranges, and a quarter of an ounce of nutmegs, infuse these in six quarts of mead, or if that is not attainable, strong sweet wort; distill them and draw off three quarts for use; take a wine glass occasionally.

CHAP. IV.

*Of the Rheumatism which generally attacks
Aged Persons.*

THESE generally arise from deficiency of animal heat, from a coldness of constitution, or, decay of the natural powers; it is in part an affection of the nerves, and often occurs in persons whose health has been good; hence friction not only produces an equal distribution of animal or vital heat, but also favors its production, either by means of exercise, or if that is impracticable the use of flannel and the flesh brush. To such we cannot recommend the use of any violent means, or those which might answer for young persons, but must candidly confess, that relief from the fits of pain can merely be done, and for which purpose we cannot do better than recommend our

own Rheumatic Tincture, which may be used at any time, though more especially in bed, an hour before rising; this medicine is faithfully prepared under our own peculiar care from the different recipes contained in the pamphlet, of its beneficial effects we have had repeated experience, and which with or without the use of Privett's Pills, according to occasion, strengthens the tone of the stomach, purifies the blood, and vivifies the whole system of animal secretions, promoting the spirits and chearfulness in a high degree, but totally innoxious and unconnected with inebriating drafts. If the bowels should be too much bound, the pills are of use, taken occasionally, to open them. Perseverance in this medicine has affected great cures.

It may seem needless to caution elderly people against going too thinly clad, and to avoid going out in wet or moist weather.

CHAP. V.

Cautions against improper Treatment.

FOR those violent pains, most common when warm in bed, many of the faculty have recommended opiates to lull to sleep, but that practice certainly deserves censure, which would, for the sake of a few hours respite, augment the disease and destroy the efficacy of proper medicines. For the drowsiness they occasion, is continually interrupted by sudden jerks and fits of pain, equally as painful to bear as the disease itself.

Another improper mode of treating the Rheumatism is, shutting up the patient in a close confined air, and denying the free use of his limbs, as far as he might use them by walking about, or by the use of too much wrapping up. As to the first, except in

severe cold weather, fresh air ought always to be admitted (but no drafts,) by day, and as to exercise, it is so essentially necessary, that we would recommend its use as much as possible, and if walking be not practicable, to ride out on horseback, taking care to avoid severe cold, or long continued exertions. Too much rubbing the affected parts with turpentine, or greasy preparations, cannot but be pernicious.

We cannot close this chapter better than mentioning a singular case of good arising out of evil, by accident, not as an example, but merely to shew the reasonableness of the practice and usage herein recommended.

A woman was chaffing the arm of her husband by candle light, who had violent Rheumatic pains there, with some spirits of wine, (a most pernicious custom!) when a very lucky accident prevented the mischief it might have occasioned. by the spirits taking fire from the flame of the candle

which she made use of, and burnt the diseased part; the wound was of course dressed as a burn, and the suppuration that attended it entirely cured the Rheumatism.

A rottenness of the bones has ensued upon the use of a medicine called the Balsam of Sulphur, with turpentine, and purging by the too frequent use of antimony.

CHAP. VI.

General Observations,—the Diet, Regimen, &c. proper for those afflicted with Rheumatic Pains.

WE must not omit to inform our readers there are some Rheumatisms that are long before they yield to medical treatment, and indeed seem to be aggravated by their use; in such cases, after duly considering the circumstances of the case, and treating cautiously as herein recommended, it may, perhaps, be preferable to leave the pain

to itself for a short time, taking care to keep the affected parts from the impression of cold or moist air, by the use of flannel next the skin; or the furry skin of rabbits, or other animals, keeping the fur inside; more especially if the summer is near at hand, as that season is more favourable to its suppression than either of the others, and particularly if the person is weak or sickly; because violent medicines may affect more than the pains did.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish Rheumatic pains, from the pains produced by a deep rooted inflammation; if, however; the patient is at a loss to determine, it would be better to consult a physician or apothecary, and not too hastily apply the means herein recommended.

The indiscriminate use of turpentine, sold under different fictitious names, it is to be feared, has been productive of much serious mischief in many cases, which milder

and more appropriate medicines might have mitigated.

In autumn Rheumatisms are more common than at any other season; nature has therefore given us warning, by the distribution of the varieties of weather, when to prepare or expect our foe; and who is there, knowing the hour approaching when the thief would come to rob us of our comfort, but would watch and guard against him; it is therefore necessary to observe, when the weather begins to be changeable, wet and stormy, this inveterate disease begins its attack, and when it gets settled again, either in summer or winter, it slackens; by noticing this we may, in some means, guard against these attacks, and for this purpose attention should be first paid to warm clothing, using flannel next the skin, before the wet weather commences, and the constant use of a simple beverage, as boiled water, with cream of tartar dissolved in it and flowers of sulphur,

kept constantly at hand for drink, to which may be added, as the season advances, a small quantity of salt of hartshorn; or to save the trouble of preparing, we can safely recommend our own Tincture, (as before mentioned.) If, however, the pain gains strength, notwithstanding these precautions, let the sufferer take an ounce of Rochelle salts, in three or four ounces of water; or one ounce and a half of phosphate of soda, commonly called tasteless purging salts; if the pains do not yield in a day or two, repeat the dose with the addition of half a dram of common sulphur.

In Chronic Rheumatism electricity may have a good effect, but it would be uniform-hurtful in Rheumatic Fevers.]

The period of the Acute seldom exceeds forty days, after which, when the pains continue without fever, it may be safely called the Chronic; change of weather generally affects this species, which often continues a length of time.

The joints most surrounded by muscles are the parts that suffer most by bodily exertion, the hips and loins are commonly the seat of this complaint, when it affects the hip only it is called the Sciatica, and when situated in the loins the Lumbago.

The use of distilled water is preferable in every article of diet, and the principal beverage in all stages of Rheumatism.

Healthy robust people that are subject to its attacks, may fortify their bodies much by the use of the cold bath, and also by the use of flannel next the skin; horse radish steeped in gin and taken occasionally, is of great service; we have heard of an application of brown paper, rubbed over with black soap, as being an excellent remedy, it certainly deserves a trial if other means fail.

The following is a cheap, and has been found an efficacious remedy, five ounces of stone brimstone reduced to a very fine powder, divide it in fourteen equal parts, take

one part every morning in spring water, and continue it as you think proper.

It will not be hard to distinguish between Gout and Rheumatism, nor from the Gravel and Stone in the Kidneys, nor from Inflammation in the Bladder, though some pretend there is a possibility of making such a mistake, but by an attention to the symptoms herein-mentioned, the patient's case will be found pretty accurately determined if he has any Rheumatism at all.

When weakly people are attacked with the Acute Rheumatism, much care will be required before venturing on bleeding, for if that be freely indulged in, it may induce disorders that are not remedied without the greatest difficulty; in such cases, a cooling but moderately nourishing diet should be used, and whey may accompany it profusely; bleeding is principally useful when the symptoms are violent, and threatening life, when the pains shift suddenly

from the extremities to the inward parts and affect the breath, in this case the diet must be low, no solid meat of any kind should be taken, nor even broth, but simply the diluting drinks.

In all cases of Rheumatism salted provisions should be avoided, but a generous diet is allowed at the seasons when the patients are more exposed to its attacks and at its commencement.

The hopes of doing good has been our principal object in sending forth these observations, if we have hazarded any thing contrary to received opinions, it has been from a conviction of its truth by experience, and if they, in any way, contribute to alleviate the sufferings of persons afflicted with the distressing pains mentioned in the work, we shall esteem ourselves amply rewarded.

FINIS.

