

**A treatise on bilious diseases and indigestion : with the effects of quassy and natron.**

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 B I L I O U S D I S E A S E S  
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 I N D I G E S T I O N ;  
 W I T H T H E E F F E C T S O F  
*Q U A S S Y A N D N A T R O N*  
 I N T H E S E D I S O R D E R S.

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By JOHN GIBSON, M. D.  
 A SURGEON IN THE ROYAL NAVY, AND IN THE  
 PRACTICE OF SURGERY, &c. LONDON.

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L O N D O N :  
 PRINTED FOR MURRAY AND HIGHLEY, FLEET STREET;  
 J. HARDING, ST. JAMES'S STREET; AND J. CUTHELL,  
 MIDDLE ROW, HOLBORN.

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1799.

TREATISE  
ON  
BILIOUS DISEASES  
AND  
INDIGESTION

WITH THE EFFECTS OF

QUASSY AND WATER  
IN THESE DISORDERS

BY JOHN GIBSON, M.D.  
A SURGEON IN THE ROYAL NAVY, AND IN THE  
PRACTICE OF SURGERY, IN LONDON.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR MURRAY AND NEWMAN, THREE ST. PAULS  
CHURCH-YARD, AT JAMES'S ST. AND A. COOPER,  
MIDDLE ROW, BOSTON.

1799

A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

AS Bilious Diseases are among the most common of the chronic Disorders, and by many so little understood, the Author has endeavoured to be as explicit in treating of their Symptoms and Cure, as the nature of this Publication would admit.

York-street, St. James's Square,  
London, July 1799.

ADVERTISEMENT

As Bilious Disorders are among the most

common of all, and by

ERRATA:

P. 4. l. 9. *for* preventative *read* preventive.

P. 10. l. 20. *for* have *read* has.

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1800

INTRODUCTION.

**H**AVING been appointed surgeon of a man of war, by Lord RODNEY, when the fleet went down to Jamaica, after the memorable action of the 12th April 1782, I was then left to the freedom of my own will in the treatment of the diseases of those intrusted to my care; and as Bilious Complaints were the most general in the West Indies, my attention was more immediately directed to the cure of them.

I was at first naturally led to follow the mode of practice laid down by authors, who had wrote upon the diseases of warm climates; and being at that time unexperienced in the treatment of the diseases of these climes, *now* seventeen years ago, I thought I was doing justice to those intrusted to my care in following the practice of gentlemen of greater experience than myself; but in so doing I found a deficiency in their treatment of bilious complaints, particularly after I had got the bile sufficiently diluted, in not finding any medicine in these authors to answer the intention of strengthening

the stomach and bowels, and at the same time to prevent the acidity of the primæ viæ, and frequent acrimony of the bile; I therefore thought of such medicines as would have that effect; the result of which was, my using an infusion of Quassia with the fossil alkali, from this consideration, that the former would strengthen the tone of the system, while the alkali prevented acescency in the stomach, and supplied the deficiency of alkali in the bile itself. And as I am convinced of the good effect of these medicines in bilious complaints, not only in the West Indies, but in a great many cases during the number of years I have been in practice in London; and being solicited to publish my method of treating these complaints, by men of the first respectability, who have been under my care for the cure of bilious disorders, and who have acknowledged the good effects of these medicines; at their request I have ventured to lay my practice before the Public, in expectation of giving relief to the afflicted, and that medical gentlemen of greater abilities than myself may improve the mode of practice here laid down.

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A  
TREATISE  
ON  
BILIOUS DISEASES  
AND  
INDIGESTION;  
Etc. Etc.

---

**I**N some bilious complaints I have trusted the cure solely to the use of the infusion of quassiy and natron (sal sodæ); in others I have made use of calomel, antimony, camphor, and other aperient medicines, as will be seen in the following Cases, where I thought it necessary to remove certain symptoms before the quassiy and natron were given, for which I shall give my reasons hereafter; and I have in some cases imagined that I have kept off paroxysms of the gout in patients subject to that disease, when they have applied to me for the relief of the following symptoms, the *prognosis* of that disorder; viz. loss of appetite and flatulency, a bitter taste in the mouth, nausea and acid



eructations, drowfiness and dejection of spirits; by giving a few grains of calomel and camphor in a bolus, at bed-time, and next day an infusion of quaffy and natron (fal fodæ) with some drops of aromatic spirits in each draught; which had the effect of removing these complaints: but as gouty patients seldom apply till the fit comes on, there is little chance of afcertaining the good effects of any medicine as a preventative, and therefore I only fuggest the probability, to thofe liable to the gout, that if they would attend to thefe fymptoms, and take fuch medicines, they may at leaft mitigate if not entirely prevent a paroxfym of the gout, as few people have violent attacks of it without fymptoms of bile, flatulency, and dyspepfia. In fome cafes where I have found the patient of a coftive habit of body, with bile on the ftomach, I have added to the quaffy and natron either fal polychref-tum, magnesia vitriolata, or tinctura fennæ, according to the nature of the fymptoms; and others have experienced the greateft relief in calculus (gravel) from the ufe of the fal fodæ\*, which I commonly mix with the

\* See Dr. Beddoes's ingenious Observations on the good effects of alkali in calculous complaints, in his Pathology.

quaffy;

quaffy; and as I find my patients can take more alkali in this way than by itself, I am convinced the use of these medicines would in such cases give relief. I do not however infer that the same medicines which are proper in bilious cases would be found always so in calculus, but when describing the different qualities of these medicines, I was induced to make these remarks for the information of those who have not leisure to consult different authors.

I have remarked, that grief or anxiety of mind, a sedentary life, or the chlorosis in women, occasion a defect in the secretion of bile; which is accompanied with the following symptoms, loss of appetite, flatulency, and indigestion, difficulty of breathing in going up stairs, or walking fast; attended with acidity in the primæ viæ, and costiveness. Where there is an excess of bile, the symptoms are similar to the autumnal remittent or marsh fever of this country; viz. loss of appetite, nausea, dejection of spirits, and a sense of great debility, foul tongue, pains in the head and loins, trembling of the hands, countenance pale or yellow, with vomiting of bile, and diarrhœa. I have ob-

served the latter symptoms most common in warm climates, particularly in the West Indies and in South America; and notwithstanding these symptoms seem to be the most formidable, yet in the course of practice I have found them less difficult to cure than those arising from a defect in the bile. Where the complaint arises from an excess of bile, I generally trust the cure to an infusion of quassy and natron, prepared thus: Take a dram and a half of the wood of quassy and two drams and a half of sal sodæ, pour upon them a quart of boiling water, let them infuse one hour, and then filter the liquor; of which I give two ounces or four table spoonfuls three or four times a day. Where I have cause to suspect a predominant acidity in the stomach, I increase the proportion of the sal sodæ, and I have given it to the extent of six drams in three days: and a patient of mine the other day told me he had taken an ounce of the sal sodæ in a quart of the quassy infusion in three days, without experiencing any inconvenience from it; and added, that the only sensible effect it produced was to lessen the acescency in the stomach, and increase the secretion of urine. Where there is much flatulency,

tulency, I add fifteen or twenty drops of the compound spirit of ammoniac to each draught; when much bile or phlegm on the stomach, I gave six grains of calomel and four of antimonial powder at bed-time, and next morning a purgative draught. The following is what I have found the best in these cases; viz. one dram of the tincture of jalap, two drams of tincture of fenna, half a dram of the salt of many virtues, with fifteen drops of the spirit of ammoniac in an ounce and a half of water, increasing or diminishing the dose according to the constitution of the patient: if there is a sense of hardness or pain at the pit of the stomach, I give six grains of camphor and four grains of antimonial powder, made into a bolus, at bed-time; and next day the infusion of quassiy and natron, to which I occasionally add fifteen grains of the salt of many virtues to a draught, if the patient is costive. In case of much thirst, or feverish symptoms, I give an aperient draught of an infusion of fenna and manna, with Epsom salts or soluble tartar, with a few drops of some aromatic spirit; but as I seldom discover much fever in bilious complaints, although there

may be a frequency of pulse and foul tongue, and in general find the symptoms yield to an infusion of quassy and natron, with some saline medicine taken in the day-time, and the antimonial powder and camphor at bed time, I do not often give emetics in these cases, as they are apt to divert the bile from the intestines into the stomach; but where there is much phlegm in the stomach; in such cases it may be necessary. This practice has been admitted by some of the best authors; and Celsus says \*, “If the stomach is loaded with phlegm, a vomit is necessary, sometimes fasting, sometimes after meat.” And in the following sentence he says †, “It is the more troublesome disorder where the stomach is vitiated with bile. Those that are thus affected, usually at the interval of some days throw it up, and indeed, which is worst of all, of a black colour.” In such cases, Celsus recommends the use of warm

\* Si vero pituita stomachus impletur, necessarius modo in jejuno, modo post cibum vomitus est.—Celsus de Medicina, lib. iv. cap. v.

† Molestius est, si stomachus bile vitiosus est. Solent autem hi, qui sic tentantur, interpositis quibusdam diebus, hanc, & quidem, quod pessimum est, atram vomere. Celsus, lib. iv. cap. v.

water, as does Dr. Saunders, in his ingenious Treatise on the Diseases of the Liver; wherein he recommends to his patient, "every morning before breakfast to dilute the contents of the stomach, by drinking from half a pint to a pint of water, of a temperature from 90 to 114 degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer; likewise to take a moderate degree of exercise before breakfast."

With submission to these authors, and as I cannot always prevail upon my patients to drink warm water, though sensible of the good effects of dilution, in such cases I give six or seven grains of calomel and four grains of camphor at bed-time, and next morning an opening draught of jalap and sal polychrestum, or manna with Epsom salts or soluble tartar; and the following day I give the infusion of quassiy and natron, with sal polychrestum, if the bowels are not sufficiently open; to which I occasionally add some aromatic spirits. When the stomach is foul with much phlegm, and the bile thick and ropy which is thrown up, I give an infusion of ipecacuanha with a view to cleanse it, which I generally find  
this

this medicine effect, without increasing the irritability of the stomach, and therefore never think of giving any stronger emetic; and but rarely this, in bilious complaints, as they are apt to occasion the regurgitation of bile, and increase the irritation of the hepatic system.

In obstinate chlorosis and bad digestion, which indicate a want of the due secretion of bile, I often succeed in the cure by giving one-eighth of a grain of calomel with three grains of aloes and one of castile soap, made into a pill, twice a day, washing each pill down with two ounces of the infusion of quassiy and sal sodæ, in the proportion formerly mentioned; and by continuing this course of medicine a few weeks, I have generally succeeded in removing the obstruction and indigestion. In cases where the catamenia have not been long obstructed, I seldom give any other medicine than the quassiy and sal sodæ, with some aperient if the body is costive, as I find by experience that active deobstruents will not prevail till the digestions are mended, which is one cause of my forming the opinion that this obstruction is not so often the cause as the  
consequence

consequence of other disorders, as in general the cure depends upon remedying the indisposed habit of body. A learned and ingenious physician says \*, “ In this complaint (chlorosis) the bile is deficient perhaps in quantity, but certainly in acrimony, the thinner parts not being absorbed from it. Now, as the bile is probably of great consequence in the process of making the blood, it is on this account that the blood is so destitute of red globules, which is evinced by the great paleness of these patients. As this serous blood must exert less stimulus on the heart and arteries, the pulse in consequence becomes quick as well as weak.

“ The quickness of the pulse is frequently so great and permanent, that when attended by an accidental cough, the disease may be mistaken for hectic fever; but is cured by chalybeates and bitters exhibited twice a day, with half a grain of opium and a grain of aloe every night: the expected catamenia appears in consequence of a restoration of the due quantity of red blood.”

\* Dr. Darwin's Zoonomia, Sorbentia, art. iv. 2. 6.



The great Sydenham recommends chalybeate medicines, but that he has found “ Venice treacle alone a good remedy, not “ only in this but in many other diseases, “ that proceed from a want of heat and “ concoction or digestion ;” and that, “ it is “ perhaps the most effectual that has been “ hitherto known, how contemptible fo- “ ever it may seem to most people, be- “ cause it is common, and has been a long “ while known.”

“ But if any of the remedies above men- “ tioned do not well agree, which often “ happens in cholerick and thin constitu- “ tions, then a milk diet may be used \* ;” which

\* “ But this is chiefly to be wondered at in this method “ of cure, viz. That milk which yields only a cold and “ crude nourishment, should, notwithstanding by use, “ strengthen and invigorate the spirits; and yet this will “ not seem disagreeable to reason, if you consider that milk, “ yielding only a simple nourishment, does not busy nature “ much in concocting it; for what meats and liquors more “ compounded do, and that an equal temper of the blood “ and spirits necessarily follows that perfect concoction, “ for this must be also considered, that a bare weakness of “ the spirits, considered by itself, is not the cause of those “ confusions they are under, but the weakness of them com- “ pared with the state of the blood. For it may be an “ infant

which I imagine he recommended as being in many cases easy of digestion; and I consider the great success I experienced from giving the infusion of quassy and natron in this disease, to arise from its stomachic and strengthening quality, and its power of correcting acidity in the primæ viæ; as I have never known it fail in increasing the appetite, neither has it in any case to my knowledge disagreed with the patient's stomach, nor am I aware of any danger that can arise from taking it.

### *Faundice.*

It is not to be wondered at when we consider the nature of the Bile \*, that it should

“ infant has spirits strong and firm enough with respect to  
 “ its blood, but yet not proportionable to the blood of  
 “ a grown person. Now when by the continual use of  
 “ a milk diet (though it is crude and weak) the blood is  
 “ rendered more soft and tender, if the spirits that are  
 “ made by it are only equal to it, all is well. Yet all  
 “ are not able to undergo those inconveniences which most  
 “ commonly accompany it the first days, namely because it  
 “ curdles in the stomach; but if they could, they might  
 “ receive benefit by it.” Sydenham, page 325.

\* It has been found chemically to consist of water, a resinous substance, a white substance named albumen, and a mineral alkali.

be of great use in the animal œconomy, and the diseases consequent on its viscidty, which are apparent in the lives of the sedentary by costiveness, &c. as the contrary happens to free livers where the strong stimuli taken into the body occasion diarrhœas and fevers.

Where the passage of the bile into the intestine is obstructed, a circumstance which often happens from the oblique manner in which the biliary duct enters the duodenum, especially if the bile has undergone a change from dilution to viscidty, *Jaundice* is produced, which is accompanied with the following symptoms; viz. inactivity, anxiety, lassitude, sickness, and sometimes vomiting, pain in the epigastrium, difficult respiration, costiveness, hard, white, or clay coloured fœces, alvinæ, yellow and high coloured urine, and bitter taste in the mouth, with an universal yellow tinge of the skin, particularly of the adnata of the eyes, in consequence of the bile after it has been secreted, being present in the mass of blood, owing to the interruption of its passage into the duodenum, in which case it accumulates in the biliary ducts,

ducts, and from thence is either absorbed and carried by the lymphatics into the blood-vessels, or by regurgitation passed directly into the ascending cava; where, by being circulated through every part of the body, gives yellowness to the skin. For the removal of these symptoms, I generally follow the same mode of treatment I made use of, for the want of a due secretion of bile, by giving a calomel bolus at bed-time, and next morning a purgative draught of tincture of jalap and fenna, with sal polychrestum, and some drops of the compound spirit of ammoniac; after its operation, I give an aperient pill of aloes, soap, and calomel, or myrrh, with ginger, which I vary according to the constitution of the patient. One of these pills I recommend to be washed down with two ounces of the infusion of quassy and natron three or four times a day. For the most part in cases of Jaundice I put forty or fifty drops of vitriolic æther to every two ounces of the infusion; with this idea, as it has been found a solvent for bile-stones out of the body, it may have some effect when given as a medicine. After continuing the pills and infusion with the vitriolic æther some days, without their  
having

having produced any alleviation of the symptoms, I again repeat the calomel-bolus and aperient draught; and after its operation, the pills and infusion as before, which I have in general found to have the desired effect of removing the complaint, if taken soon after the appearance of the yellow tinge of the skin. I do not mean to affirm that this mode of treatment will always succeed in Jaundice; but thus far I can declare, that in most cases I have found it effectual. It is obvious, that the interrupted excretion of bile is the cause of Jaundice; yet as that interruption depends upon various causes so are the remedies, as that elegant classical writer, Celsus, says, "Ut  
 "diversa autem vitia ejus, sic etiam remedia  
 "sunt \*."

The most common cause of Jaundice is bilious concretions formed in the gall bladder, which concretion falling down into the *ductus communis*, cannot pass through it into the intestine. But any other cause occasioning obstruction of the bile-duct would produce this disease, such as spasmodic con-

\* Celsus de Medicina, lib. iv. cap. v.

striction

striction of the duct itself; or in the duodenum, pressing the sides of the duct close together as it passes through its coats, or it may be obstructed by a tumour compressing it, therefore it becomes necessary to consider, when called to an icteric patient, whether any other cause manifestly shows itself without any indications of a bile-stone, and according to the particular nature of that morbid cause we must prescribe.

When the Jaundice is occasioned by tumefaction of the neighbouring parts compressing the biliary duct, the disease is not often cured; in such cases, if there were no inflammatory symptoms with fever, I would give calomel in small doses, either with or without cicuta, for several weeks, with gentle frictions of mercurial ointment over the region of the liver and lower part of the stomach; if it proceeds from biliary concretions, gentle vomits often have good effects; and exercise on horseback, where the patient can bear it; sometimes it will not yield to the most probable means of cure: hence, Riverius positively affirms, that when it proceeds from a stone obstructing the passage of the bile, it is incur-  
C able,

able, urging this reason for his opinion,  
 “ Calculus cum dissolvi non possit, morbum  
 facit incurabilem.” Cap. de Ictero.

The late learned and able professor Dr. Cullen, in this stage of the disease, makes the following remarks: “ We know of no  
 “ certain and immediate means of expediting  
 “ the passage of the biliary concretions.  
 “ This is generally a work of time, depend-  
 “ ing upon the gradual dilatation of the  
 “ biliary duct; and it is surprising to ob-  
 “ serve from the size of the stones, which  
 “ sometimes pass through, what dilatation  
 “ the duct will admit of. It proceeds how-  
 “ ever faster or slower upon different occa-  
 “ sions, and therefore the Jaundice, after  
 “ a various duration, often ceases suddenly  
 “ and spontaneously. It is this which has  
 “ given rise to the belief, that the Jaundice  
 “ has been cured by such a number, and  
 “ such a variety of different remedies.  
 “ Many of these, however, are perfectly  
 “ inert, and many others of them such as  
 “ cannot be supposed to have any effect in  
 “ expediting the passage of a biliary concre-  
 “ tion.”

When

When the Jaundice is attended with pain, I frequently find the patient relieved by fomentations applied to the epigastrium; and when these do not relieve, opium is often of great benefit, not only in allaying the pain but in removing any spasmodic contraction of the parts affected. Electricity has been recommended in this complaint, but I have not had any experience of its good effects.

*Dry Belly Ach.*

It sometimes happens from a defect of the bile, that it has not sufficient stimulus upon the intestines, hence costiveness, and frequently in the West Indies *dry belly ach*, ensue. In these cases I commonly succeed in the cure by giving eight or ten grains of calomel in a bolus at bed-time; and next morning, if it has not acted purgatively, two drams of the tincture of jalap, half an ounce of the tincture of senna, with half a dram of sal polychrestum, and thirty drops of the spirit of ammoniac in two ounces of peppermint-water, made into a draught. If these medicines have not had the desired



effect, and the stomach will retain oily medicines, I give from two to four table spoonfuls of castor oil every two hours, until a stool is procured. When the dry belly ach is attended with much pain and spasms, the principal relief is to be expected from the use of opium, both by clysters and embrocations, and after the pain and spasms are mitigated, by giving cathartics \* by the mouth so as to procure stools.

When the discharge of the contents of the intestines commences, it is usual to find the patient much relaxed and debilitated, especially if the *constipatio* has been of long duration, I have therefore found it necessary to give a gentle anodyne with the *confectio aromatica*; and in case of great tenesmus, an emollient clyster, with tincture of opium; and in order to recover the natural secretion of bile, and the tone of the intestines, I give some pills of soap, rhubarb, and ginger, washing them down with two ounces of the infusion of quassy and natron thrice a day.

\* Calomel is often effectual, and mercurial frictions, I am convinced, have had the best effects in warm climates in cases of violent spasms.

It may seem strange perhaps to some, that in the different stages of debility in bilious complaints I have not recommended the peruvian bark; but as I have not found it so effectual in these cases as I had reason to expect from the recommendation of others; and as I wish to give such medicines as I have found by experience most effectual in the cure of diseases, I have declined giving it in these cases where there was an accumulation of phlegm in the stomach, which often happens in bilious disorders, and which I have found by experience to prevent the good effects of the bark. I have therefore trusted to the infusion of quassia to strengthen digestion, having first removed the phlegm from the stomach by a weak infusion of ipecacuanha; and as a proof of the powerful effects of this medicine when given in small quantities, frequently repeated, a gentleman of the greatest respectability assured me, that he had given it in cases of ague, among his tenantry, in the quantity of two or three grains, at bed-time, for some nights, mixed with a little prepared chalk, and that in no instance had he found the ipecacuanha fail, when given in this way, in the cure of the ague; and that he had recommended it

in cases where the bark had failed in the cure of agues, and that, as far as his information went, had always cured the patient. And I have given in many cases after fever, where the tongue remained white with want of appetite, two grains of the powder of ipecacuanha, and six grains of the powder of gum myrrh, mixed with two ounces of the infusion of quassiy and natron thrice a day, with the best effects, not only in cleaning the tongue but in restoring the strength and appetite. From the quantity of bile sometimes thrown up in the paroxysms of the *ague*, it has been classed among bilious disorders, and therefore comes under consideration here; in many cases of this disease the same mode of treatment I have recommended for bilious complaints in general, will remove ague, by giving six grains of calomel at bed-time, and next morning the purgative draught, composed of tinctures of jalap, and senna with sal polychrest; and after its operation, by giving two grains of ipecacuanha, with six grains of myrrh, and saffron powdered, and mixed with two ounces of the infusion of quassiy and natron every four hours. But if the cure is to be attempted by means of the bark,

bark, which is the common mode of cure, I would advice emetics and purges to be given frequently before administering it, that there may be no viscid phlegm on the stomach; and in case of any inflammatory diathesis to use the lancet, and give saline draughts, with nitre, before giving the bark; and as it often happens that the stomach becomes so squeamish as to reject the bark in every shape it can be given, it may be administered with great advantage in clysters, of which see a very remarkable instance \* in Dr. Donald Monro's diseases of the army, when treating of the intermit- tent fever, pages 186 and 187.

The same author makes the following remark, "In England, vernal, quotidian, " and tertian agues, frequently go off after " bleeding, and taking some emetics and " purges, and the saline draughts and cool- " ing medicines for some time, without

\* This patient's stomach rejected the bark in whatever form it was given. Other means were tried to stop his ague, but with no effect, till two drams of the powder of the bark was given him twice a day in an emollient clyster, with half a dram of the tinctura thebaica, which stopt his ague in three days.

“ the use of the bark ; in Germany very  
 “ few yielded to this treatment, and we  
 “ were obliged to give the bark before we  
 “ could put a stop to them.” In another  
 part, page 197, he adds, “ With many the  
 “ bark had no effect; and its use persisted  
 “ in, seeming rather to exasperate the pa-  
 “ roxysms, and to do hurt ; nor had almost  
 “ any remedy we tried a better effect.”  
 And in page 202, he says, “ The cortex  
 “ cascarillæ or eleutheriæ was given freely,  
 “ both in decoction and substance, in four  
 “ cases which had not yielded to the bark,  
 “ but without producing any good effect.”  
 and Dr. Lind \*, when treating of agues,  
 says, “ Among many other remedies, I  
 “ have given the cortex cascarillæ to the  
 “ quantity of half a dram every four hours,  
 “ but found its effects inconsiderable.”

I have succeeded in the cure of agues  
 by giving half a grain of emetic tartar,  
 mixed with some crabs eyes, every twenty  
 minutes, until it occasioned vomiting; and  
 afterwards one grain of blue vitriol, with

\* See Appendix concerning intermittent fevers, to an  
 Essay on Diseases incidental to Europeans in hot climates,  
 pages 328 and 329.

two grains of ipecacuanha and half a grain of opium, with some extract of gentian made into a pill, and given thrice a day \* ;  
where

\* In the month of September 1782, the man of war, in which I was then surgeon, was ordered from Jamaica to Charlestown, in South Carolina, in America, to convoy some transports, which were sent to assist in the evacuation of Charlestown. As our ship drew little water we went over the bar at the mouth of the river, which we navigated till within a mile and a half of the town. As the country behind the town on the side of the river was low and marshy, and the wind happening to blow from that quarter, about thirty of the ships company were seized with the ague during the short time we remained there ; and as the bark I had in the medicine chest was all used, I was under the necessity of substituting some other medicines for the cure of the ague, and was happy to find the vitriol, ipecacuanha, and opium, had the desired effect. At that time the bark in Jamaica cost thirty shillings a pound, so that at a moderate calculation the allowance of money for medicines to the ship's company for a whole year, would not have purchased bark at that price to have cured these thirty patients, therefore it became a matter of necessity and choice to find another remedy, and that less expensive.

Before quitting this subject I beg leave to remark, in justice to the present Commissioners of Sick and Hurt, that they have always been attentive to the interest of the navy, and have instituted many proper and wise regulations for the good of the service, and among others have so ordered it, that surgeons shall be supplied with medicines abroad at the same price as at home ; whereas at the time here alluded to, we were under the necessity of drawing upon our agents in England for money to purchase these medicines, often at thrice the sum they would have cost at apothecaries hall ; and, if lately-made surgeons, run a risk of having these bills protested,

where this pill occasioned sickness or vomiting, I gave a strong infusion of chamomile, and two or three hours afterwards a scruple of alum, with ten grains of nutmeg powdered, which were made into a bolus, with some syrup of poppies, and repeated thrice a day. In several cases I found this bolus had the desired effect, but upon the whole did not find it so powerful a medicine in the cure of ague as the pill of vitriol, ipecacuanha, and opium. Dr. Lind makes mention of an obstinate intermittent fever, which, though two ounces of the bark in draughts, taken in each interval of a fit, had failed to remove, was effectually cured by two ounces of the extract given in clysters. That the extract has been administered in clysters, to the quantity of six ounces, to patients who could not have re-

protested, as perhaps there was little or no pay due to us, and the agents did not choose to advance the money, or it might so happen that the bill might be presented to the agents before the power of attorney enabling them to act for us, a circumstance which occurred to myself, as I happened to grant a bill for medicines to supply the ship to which I was appointed surgeon; and having sent a power of attorney appointing an agent, by the surgeon of the Ville de Paris, then in Jamaica, that ship was unfortunately lost coming to England, the bill returned protested, with eight per cent. interest, besides other expences.

ceived

ceived half an ounce of the bark in any other form; and many have been cured by clysters \*, after large quantities of the bark had been unsuccessfully taken by the mouth; it being in this manner that the largest quantities of bark can be administered. For children having this disease one dram of the extract of peruvian bark, with four or five drops of the tincture of opium, may be given in clyster, and repeated every three or four hours, for a child of about a year old, after purging with magnesia alba.

I have already mentioned the propriety of bleeding in cases of plethora in intermitting fevers, but more particularly the propriety of emetics or purges. And it is a general remark among authors, that nothing is more effectual in curing agues than well timed emetics; but I find they differ much in their time of administering them; the ancients recommended them to be given in the beginning of the paroxysm; for Celsus advises, cum primum aliquis inhorruit, et

\* Rec. Extracti corticis peruviani semunciam; solvatur coquendo in aquæ fontanæ unc. iv. et adde olei olivarum semunciam, tincturæ thebaicæ gutt. v. ad x. fiat enema, quarta quaque hora injiciendum.



ex horrore incaluit, dare ei oportet potui tepidam aquam subsalsam & vomere eum cogere; nam fere talis horror ab his oritur, quæ biliosa in stomacho resederunt. Lib. 3. cap. 12.

But later authors have recommended emetics on the days of intermission. As I have given emetics during the paroxysms, and the intermissions, I am convinced the best time of exhibiting emetics is during the cold stage \*, or at the beginning of the  
hot,

\* Dr. Alexander Thomson, physician in Montrose, makes the following remarks on the cure of agues, in the 4th Vol. of the Medical Essays, published at Edinburgh 1737. "Agues having been endemic in this place and neighbourhood these many years, I had good occasion of experience in this disease I went on some years in the ordinary way of vomiting, on the days of intermission, as preparative for curing by the *cortex*, till reading the old physicians books, I found they recommended vomiting in the beginning of the paroxysm.

"This method appeared to me so reasonable and natural, that I began to give emetics upon the first appearance of the aguish fits, and have found so good success by this way, that I have now continued in it these twenty years."

It seems strange that the ague should have been at that time so common in Montrose, and that during the seven years I was settled as physician there from 1783 to 1790, only one case of ague came under my care, although I had, during that period, what was considered by many, extensive practice; nor can I account for the ague having appeared

hot, and opiates with the best effect during the time of the hot stage; which not only shortens and abates the paroxysm, but generally gives a relief to the head, and by occasioning a profuse sweat, carries off the heat of the fever; and as it lessens the duration of the fever, when given soon after the commencement of the hot fit, has the salutary effect of preventing the constitution being injured by this disorder; nor have I ever found it, when given in the hot fit, augment the violence of the fever.

There is perhaps no other disease for which so many remedies have been recommended as for intermitting fevers; but as I have here confined myself chiefly to practical observations, it does not come within the limits of my plan in this publication to enumerate them. I should, however, in this instance, be doing injustice to my own judgment as well as my feelings, if I did not here mention a remedy recommended by the learned and ingenious physician, Dr. Blane, as published in his observations on the dif-

so seldom there of late years, unless it is owing to the neighbourhood being more cultivated, and the grounds better drained; and this patient was seized with the ague when at work at the house of Kinnaird, which lies low, and some miles from Montrose.

eases of seamen, which is the flowers of zinc in obstinate intermitting fevers. The doctor began with giving it in the quantity of two grains thrice a day, which in some produced the desired effect, and without the least sensible operation on the stomach or bowels. If this dose did not stop the fits after a few days trial, it was increased to three grains, which in some would produce a little sickness. He found that four grains ruffled the stomach a good deal; but if the patient is gradually habituated to it, even more than this may be given without inconvenience. The doctor further adds, the white vitriol, being a salt of zinc, might be supposed to possess the same virtues; and it would appear to do so from some facts reported to him in the West Indies, as well as from some trials made by himself at St. Thomas's hospital. As to external applications, there is no doubt of their efficacy in agues, of which the doctor gives a singular instance \*.

\* A man on board of the Sandwich had an obstinate intermitting, which had resisted the bark, and was stopped by applying to the stomach a plaster, composed of gum plaster, epispastic plaster and opium; the proportions of which he does not now recollect. Children have been cured of the ague by the powder of bark sewed between the folds of a linen jacket, and worn next the skin.

Arfenic

Arsenic has of late years been much recommended in the cure of intermittents; but I cannot decide concerning this practice from my own experience.

The Cholera Morbus, which comes next under consideration, is a disease *sui generis*, entirely bilious, although it is not a dangerous disease when attended to in time, yet as instances have occurred of its proving fatal, if not duly attended to, I shall here make some observations on its symptoms and cure. It begins with a violent vomiting and looseness, chiefly bilious, from the bile regurgitating into the stomach, and descending into the bowels, attended with pain and anxiety about the præcordia, together with gripings and inflations in the smaller intestines, with great thirst; from the violence of the vomiting and purging the sick become quite exhausted, the pulse quick and unequal, which in the last stages sink, the extremities cold, then follow hiccup, syncope, and death. This disease is most frequent among young persons and children; but when it attacks the aged is most fatal, especially when the discharge by vomiting has an excrementitious smell.

smell. In the cure of this disease the stomach must be evacuated of its contents, by some very gentle stimulus or diluents, as by large draughts of a weak infusion of chamomile flowers, chicken broth, or with warm water, with a few drops of the compound spirit of ammoniac, to allay the cramps or spasms, so common in this complaint. The intestines ought likewise to be cleansed with a clyster of the decoction of chamomile flowers, after which an opiate must immediately be given. If it does not remain upon the stomach, I would then recommend clysters of broth, with fifty or sixty drops of the tincture of opium; and in obstinate and dangerous cases, I have sometimes increased the quantity of tincture of opium to two drams in a clyster, before the pains were removed. And Dr. Lind was obliged to give half an ounce of the tincture of opium in a clyster, before the spasms were removed; but previous to giving opium in so large a quantity, he generally ordered the feet to be bathed, and blisters applied to the legs; or if a violent and fixed pain in the stomach, or in any part of the abdomen, had continued from the beginning of the disease, which was not removed by  
bleeding

bleeding and warm fomentations, a blister was applied to the seat of that pain. In the advanced stage of this disease I have seen good effects from large doses of opium, musk, and æther, and from the use of opium with aromatics; and when other methods have failed to stop the vomiting, warm applications, with opium and camphor, applied to the region of the stomach; and I have seen immediate ease procured by fomenting the abdomen with a decoction of chamomile and elder flowers, with some heads of poppies, first sprinkling the flannel, to be used in the fomentation, with liniment of camphor.

This disease prevails most in this country in the months of August and September, but I have observed it common in the West Indies at any time of the year, but most frequent during the hottest months in all countries\*. It may be brought on by

\* Hippocrates ascribed distempers of this nature to a redundance of bile, and most other authors to a corruption of that humour, and from the frequency of these distempers appearing in the summer and autumn, the ancient maxim held "the summer and autumn to be the most sickly seasons," so that the summer and autumnal diseases have been both early and generally called *bilious*. See *Pringle's Diseases*.

cating large quantities of unripe fruits, vegetables, or food of difficult digestion. It will therefore be prudent for the sick to avoid eating vegetables or fruits for some time after; and in order to restore the tone of the stomach and bowels, I would recommend the infusion of quassiy and natron, to be continued as a medicine for some weeks after. As the diseases I have mentioned, may be considered to arise from the diminished or increased secretion, or vitiated state of the bile, it is probable that some of the symptoms may arise from some disease or torpor of the liver, which secretes the bile\*; but from observation I am convinced, the original mischief is in the stomach and duodenum, and that symptoms of indigestion precede affections of the liver, which are often brought on by intemperance, either in our eating or drinking, but more particularly by the latter. I shall therefore conclude this treatise with some observations on these affections, such as loss of appetite and indigestion.

\* When the liver is diseased, our chief dependance is on a mercurial course of medicines, having first removed any inflammatory diathesis.

In all cases where digestion is impaired, the diet of the patient ought to be attended to as well as the medicines required, as it is often found in chronical complaints, that a proper regimen and exercise will make fewer medicines necessary, and those more effectual that are taken. In all cases of

### DYSPEPSIA, OR INDIGESTION,

there is a want of appetite, frequent squeamishness, and some times a vomiting, now and then distensions of the stomach, and pain, eructations of various kinds, heart-burn, with costiveness; and it is not improbable these several symptoms may arise from an imbecility or weaker action in the muscular fibres of the stomach, or upon some change in the gastric fluid, upon which the solution of the food taken into the stomach chiefly depends. When the symptoms of this disease are loss of appetite, and a sense of weight or uneasiness in the stomach, with frequent eructations, I generally begin the cure by giving emetics, or what I have often found very effectual, a few grains of calomel given in a bolus at bed-time, and next morning a gentle purge of tincture of aloes and senna. When there



is an excess of acidity in the contents of the stomach, producing flatulency, eructations, heart-burn, and gnawing pains of the stomach, I have recourse to alkaline, or absorbent medicines, and in general alleviate, if not entirely remove these symptoms, by giving some grains of the powder of rhubarb and magnesia, with some aromatic, such as the pulvis aromaticus of the London dispensary; at the same time desiring the patient to avoid acedent aliment, such as vegetables, and to use solid animal food in preference to soups and broths, which are apt to run into fermentation.

*Costiveness* is a common complaint in dyspepsia, or indigestion; and as it happens that a slower action of the intestines lessens that of the stomach; and vice versa, it becomes necessary to remove costiveness by such laxatives as will excite the action of the large intestines, so as the stomach may not be weakened thereby, without stimulating the small intestines so as to produce large evacuations, which only weaken their action afterwards, and are therefore unfit for correcting the habit of costiveness. With this view I commonly give some pills, so as

to

to produce one motion of the bowels in the day \* composed of aloes, soap, ginger, and myrrh ; to which I occasionally add a small proportion of calomel, but not in that proportion to make any visible effect upon the gums.

After having palliated these several symptoms, the next and chief consideration is to restore the tone of the stomach. The medicines commonly given with this intention, are bitters, astringents, and chalybeates. The late learned professor and able physician, Dr. Cullen, says, that bitters and astringents combined, are probably more effectual tonics than either of them taken singly ; and he supposes such a combination to take place in the peruvian bark, which therefore proves a powerful tonic, both with respect to the stomach and the whole system. As the virtues of this medicine are so generally known, it may be considered as unnecessary for me to enter further on its praise ; and as the same disease will not always yield to the same medicine, I shall content myself with pointing out those medicines I have found

\* " Oportet sanorum sedes esse figuratas." Cheyne of Health, chap. v.

most effectual in the cure of dyspeptic complaints, where the bark has been rejected by the stomach, or where there has been too much fever in the habit to administer it with safety, or where there is much phlegm on the stomach, as in bilious complaints, when I have often thought the peruvian bark did more harm than good.

I am inclined to believe, that in many cases of dyspepsia, or indigestion, some fever may remain in the habit, which perhaps the pulse does not sufficiently indicate, nor can we always trust to the state of the pulse in these cases, as a torpor of the stomach is known to weaken the action of the heart and arteries; and, on the contrary, when the fibres of the stomach have regained their action, so have the heart and arteries. Therefore, when I observe the patient's tongue white after an emetic, or the use of the medicines already premised, I am cautious of giving these medicines called *tonics*; and in order to remove the whiteness of the tongue, and carry off any fever that may remain, I give ten or twelve grains of magnesia alba, with thirty drops of antimonial wine in some water (in peppermint-water, if there

is flatulency in the stomach), three or four times a day, and add or diminish the quantity of magnesia according to the symptoms of acidity in the stomach: or what I have tried of late with good effect, by the advice of a gentleman of great judgment and discernment, a medicine, prepared of one ounce of the spirit of hartshorn, in which two grains of tartarised antimony (tartar emetic) are dissolved, of this solution I give from twenty to thirty drops, with six grains of magnesia alba in some water at bed-time, or even three or four times a day. When these medicines have had the effect of removing the whiteness of the tongue, and probably any fever that might have been lurking in the habit, I then give one of the following doses three or four times a day; viz. take of ipecacuanha powdered, two grains, powder of gum myrrh, six grains, of ginger four grains, mixed together, for a dose, which I mix with one ounce of the infusion of quassia \* and natron, with as much water as that the infusion shall only be of half the strength formerly given; after continuing these medicines a few days, if the appetite and digestion do not increase, I then

\* I have used the terms quassia, quassy, and lignum quassiae, promiscuously.

double the proportion of the myrrh and ginger in each dose, to which I add two ounces of the infusion of quassia and natron of the strength formerly mentioned, which practice seldom fails of creating an appetite, recovering the tone of the stomach, and curing dyspepsia.

In many cases, after having removed the whiteness of the tongue by the antimonial medicines\*, or by small proportions of ipecacuanha, to which I sometimes add a few grains of rhubarb to each dose; at other times a few grains of rhubarb with calomel, according to the peculiar idiosyncrasy, or constitution of each individual person; I give the infusion of quassia and natron only, which I generally find has the desired effect of bracing the fibres of the stomach, and restoring the appetite; and if the patient is costive, I give the pills of soap and aloes, &c. already mentioned.

\* Although the alkali may in some degree decompose the antimonial preparation, yet I find it an excellent medicine, as here given; and in many cases I have given the pulvis antimonialis, and James's powder, with the best effects, by adding to them some absorbent or alkali, which always lessen their irritation on the stomach, and render the cure more certain.

A great variety of medicines have been used for dyspeptic complaints, such as the vitriolic acid in different forms; that of giving it in infusion of chamomile flowers, I consider the best, or given as Dr. Huxham advices, with his tincture of the bark \*, of which a similar preparation is to be found in the last edition of the Pharmacopœa Londinensis, under the title *tinctura cinchonæ, sive corticis peruviani composita*.

Gentian, columbo root, and orange peel, have also been recommended, and I have frequently known the chewing of rhubarb help to strengthen the stomach; as also chalybeates in various forms, of which I think that of Dr. Griffiths the best, composed of salt of steel, myrrh, and alkali.

When the patient complains of flatulent distention of the stomach, I commonly relieve it by carminatives, or antispasmodics, of which the most effectual is the vitriolic æther; the other pains of the stomach are often relieved by opiates; and vomiting is most effectually cured by anodyne clysters; and, in several cases, I have thought blisters applied to the

\* See Huxham's Treatise on Fevers, page 122.

region of the stomach had good effects, not only in stopping the vomiting, but in assisting digestion. The tone of the stomach is considerably strengthened by exercise in the cold air, and riding on horseback\*, has been often found one of the most powerful means of strengthening the general system, and the application of cold water, or cold bathing, by exciting the action of the extreme vessels, becomes a powerful means of strengthening the tone of the stomach.

Dyspeptics, or those subject to indigestion, should guard against sudden or violent emotions, which are dangerous, and night watching, which is debilitating; should eat moderately, and water should be always drunk at their meals, as it promotes digestion more effectually than fermented liquors. The diet should be light and easy of digestion, and its nature and quantity should be proportioned to the strength of the digestion; and it is generally found that vegetables and ani-

\* Sydenham had such an opinion of riding on horseback, that he believed not only the lesser diseases could be cured by it, but even consumption in its last stages; in which he says it is a specific as certain as mercury in the lues, or bark in an ague; but he cautions phthifics never to fatigue themselves by it.

mals that come to maturity the soonest, are the lightest of digestion, and animal food to be the easiest of digestion, which is of the lightest colour. Milk \* partakes of the properties of both the animal and vegetable source of our aliment, or in other words may be said to be an extract of animal and vegetable food, and was in much esteem among the ancients for its nutritious juices, and in costive habits butter-milk and brown bread are considered by many as truly specifics. Boerhaave is said to have lived on that diet for many years.

Lest the general accounts of the diseases here given should not be reckoned satisfactory, I have, in order to explain the application of the method of cure in particular instances, subjoined a few Cases, selected from a great number, as I considered it unnecessary to relate many where the symptoms are alike, and the manner of treatment similar.

\* See Sydenham's opinion on milk in another part of this treatise.



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PREVIOUS to my entering upon this Case, I beg leave to remark, in justice to the humanity and charity of the right honourable the Baroness of Bath, that it was at her expence this patient was cured; and that in several instances, to my knowledge, she has been at great expence, on similar occasions, to relieve the afflictions of the distressed; and it were earnestly to be wished, that people of fortune would take example from so praise-worthy a benefactress.

### C A S E I.

Mary Lecock, N<sup>o</sup> 5, Mount Row, Berkley Square, aged 27 years, in September 1798 was seized with a scarlet fever, which lasted six weeks, after which she was subject to frequent pains of her stomach, loss of appetite, and often thirst; had no eructations from the stomach; the body open, with frequent gripes; the fæces dark coloured, and deeply tinged with bile, a pain often extending from the region of the liver to the left side, the urine high coloured, and  
turbid,

turbid, the catamenia was obstructed some time after the fever, but afterwards regular, was never entirely free of the pain of her stomach from the time she had the fever till I attended her, three months afterwards. During that period, she was at times in the greatest agony, infomuch that her cries disturbed her neighbours. Seldom any food remained on her stomach ten minutes; her principal nourishment consisted of beef tea, with a little wine and water for her drink. The first time I was called to her, was in the evening of the 27th January 1799; she was then in the greatest pain, and had taken, during the space of twenty-four hours preceding, half an ounce of laudanum \*, which had not removed the pain, nor produced sleep; her pulse then about one hundred and twelve in a minute, and nervous; complained of the most excruciating pain of her stomach, which felt hard on being pressed. I sent her a bolus of calomel, and creta prepared, each six grains, with ten grains of the confectio opiata, which was washed down with about twenty drops

\* The medical gentleman who attended her before I was called, ordered her to take fifty drops of laudanum when the pain was most severe, in a draught, and twenty every half hour afterwards, whilst *the pain continued.*

of the compound spirit of æther, and as much of the compound spirit of ammoniac made into a draught, and repeated every four hours during the night; having desired her not to take the laudanum as before.

When I saw her the next day, she still complained of much pain, but as she said not quite so severe, I gave her in the course of this day (the 28th) a dram of the confectio opiata, with one dram of the compound spirit of ammoniac, made into two mixtures, desiring half of one of the phials to be taken every four hours. I have here to remark, that during the time she was taking half an ounce of laudanum, in twenty-four hours, she had in that period three or four loose motions of a dark yellow colour, deeply tinged with bile; when I called on her, on the 29th, she was in a state of great uneasiness with the pain of the stomach; her pulse 118 in a minute; her tongue white, and complained of being thirsty; I gave her during the day half an ounce of the magnesia vitriolata (Epsom salts) two drams of the tincture of fenna, one scruple of natron prepared, (sal sodæ) with half a dram of the compound spirit of ammoniac, and four ounces

ounces of water, of which two table spoonfuls were given every three hours, and ordered the liniment of ammonia, with camphor, to be rubbed over the part of the stomach affected.

When I called next morning, the 30th, she still complained of the pain of her stomach; had several stools during the night of a dark yellow colour; her pulse about a hundred strokes in a minute, the tongue white, but not dry, which was the state I had for the most part found it since I first saw her. I then gave her the following formula, which I have hitherto found so effectual in removing bilious complaints, which is the infusion of quassy with natron prepared (sal sodæ) prepared thus; one dram and a half of the lignum quassia, and two drams and a half of the natron prepared, infused in a quart of boiling water; after standing one hour it was filtered; of which she took from one to two ounces every four hours. On seeing her next day, she told me the pain of her stomach was less severe, and her bowels less relaxed, and what she had passed was not so dark coloured. I desired her to continue the medicine; and on visiting

ing her the day following found she had still received further relief from this medicine, which she continued to take eight days longer; at the end of which the complaint of her stomach was entirely removed, her appetite much better than it had been at any one time since she was first taken ill; her tongue recovered its natural state, and the thirst left her. As this *formula* had the effect to strengthen her appetite, and as I understood the peruvian bark did not agree with her, I therefore advised her to continue the same medicines, which I was happy to find had such good effects. I called some days afterwards, (as she did not then require my daily attendance,) when she informed me she had had no return of the pain of her stomach; but that her belly and legs swelled very much since she got out of bed, for which I gave her, in addition to her former medicines, two drams of the cream of tartar in twenty-four hours, which she continued to take about two weeks, when she was relieved of the swelling, and her other complaints removed.

I am convinced this patient had every attention paid her by the surgeon and apothecary

the cary who attended her before I was called, and had also the advice of a very able physician; nor have I the vanity to suppose I should have succeeded in this case, if I had not experienced the good effects of the quassy and natron in similar cases.

I have given this patient's name and address with her consent; but as I have found many of my patients object to my taking that liberty, I must decline giving them in the subsequent cases.

## CASE II.

Captain H—— of the engineers, who had been in the early part of life on the coast of Africa, where he was afflicted with bilious complaints, which had in a great measure left him on his going to Canada, in North America, where, with a strict attention to diet, and taking a few grains of rhubarb occasionally, he had kept free of these symptoms till his coming to London in December 1798, when he was seized with a pain of his stomach, nausea, and inclination

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to vomit, attended with thirst, and quickness of pulse; as he imagined these complaints arose from a foulness of stomach, he of his own accord took an emetic, which he told me brought a great quantity of bile off his stomach, which still was painful and swelled; and as he thought the emetic had not operated sufficiently, he soon after took another, which brought up an additional quantity of bile from the stomach; but not finding his complaints relieved, he sent for me, about an hour after taking the last emetic, when he complained of great pain of his stomach, which felt hard to the touch, attended with nausea and thirst, pains in the head and loins, the eyes dull, and of a yellow cast, the pulse quick and small, about 120 in a minute. As I had reason to suppose a considerable regurgitation of bile had taken place in the stomach, which I wished to carry off by the bowels, I sent him a bolus, composed of six grains of calomel, and some conserve of roses, which was washed down with an aperient draught; he had several evacuations during the night much tinged with bile, attended with tenesmus; when I saw him in the morning, he complained of an oppression about the præcordia,

cordia, with pain and acidity in his stomach, pulse quick and nervous, the tongue white, and had no appetite, for which I gave him two ounces of the following infusion, with a dram of the compound tinctures of gentian and cardamom to each two ounce draught every four or five hours. The *infusion*; Take the wood of quassy a dram and a half, prepared natron three drams, infuse in a quart of boiling water one hour, and filter. He continued these medicines till the day following. When I again saw him he told me he had had some sleep during the night, that the pain of the stomach was not so great, but that he had not recovered his appetite. I found his pulse less frequent, about 100 in a minute; the hardness of his stomach and irritation of the bowels, and tenesmus, much less. I desired him to take two ounces of the above infusion, without the tinctures of gentian and cardamom, every four hours; and next day I was happy to find, on calling for him, an alleviation of the general symptoms, the pain of his stomach much less, pulse more regular, about 90 in a minute, had little or no thirst, and the hardness of stomach removed. As this infusion had done him so much good, as



he told me, I continued to give it a few days longer, at his request, when I found him perfectly recovered. He has been several weeks in town since his recovery, and assures me he has had no return of his bilious complaints.

### C A S E III.

A young lady, who complained of pain of her stomach, frequent head-achs, with a great sense of weight across her eyes, loathing of food, attended with a listlessness to motion, a heaviness, paleness of complexion, a quick and weak pulse, with other symptoms of chlorosis, for which she had consulted several physicians, and had taken, during the last twelve months, a great variety of nervous and deobstruent medicines, and was at the time I first saw her taking large doses of the compound spirit of æther, and volatile aromatic spirits, for the pain of her stomach; as it was the particular desire of her friends, that some medicines should be tried to remove the obstruction of the catamenia, to which they attributed the whole of her complaints, I gave her, in compliance

pliance with their wishes, several deobstruent medicines, without having the effect they expected; as these medicines only occasioned a laxity of the bowels, and had no effect upon the uterine vessels, I was determined to try to recover the tone of the system, for which purpose four ounces of the infusion of quassiy and natron \* were given every day for the space of three weeks, when she became regular, her appetite returned, and the other symptoms above enumerated removed. The proportion of the ingredients in this infusion was a dram and a half of quassiy, and two drams and a half of natron prepared, to a quart of boiling water, infused one hour, and filtered for use.

I have inserted this case not only to shew the stomachic quality of these medicines, as well as their other powerful effects, but to corroborate an opinion which I have long entertained, that obstructions in the uterine vessels, were not so much the *cause* of these symptoms above described, as the *effect*; and that by removing them, the natural

\* When the stomach is squeamish, I occasionally add half a dram of the confectio aromatica to a draught of the infusion of quassiy and natron.

course of the other secretions follow, and therefore, that it were well for young ladies in general, when they find a want of appetite, universal lassitude, attended with sickness at stomach, costive habit and nervous pulse, that they would take an early opportunity of consulting their medical attendant; and by getting these complaints removed, would often prevent obstruction of the catamenia, and its concomitant symptoms.

#### CASE IV.

Mrs. M——, middle aged, had been long afflicted with a pain of her stomach, head-ach, was restless during the night, and much disturbed in her sleep, of a costive habit, her spirits much depressed, had little appetite and bad digestion, had frequent pain and coldness of her loins, her urine pale coloured, pulse weak and frequent, with other nervous symptoms. She had consulted a physician of great eminence in his profession, who had ordered various nervous medicines, such as valerian, castor, assafætida, with myrrh and aloes, all of which I must acknowledge had not given her much relief. As I found her much distressed with  
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the pains of her head and stomach, attended with a weak nervous pulse and bad digestion, when I saw her, I gave her the following formula of medicines, which she continued to take three weeks, when she found her stomach able to receive any food without difficulty of digestion, the head-ach and pain of the stomach left her, and, to use her own words, much better than she had been for many months. It was in the month of July 1798 when I attended her, and when I saw her in January 1799, she told me she was in perfect health, and had been very well ever since she took my medicines, although those I gave her chiefly consisted of quassy and natron; but as some other ingredients were added, I shall here insert them: Take quassy half a dram, natron prepared one dram, compound spirit of ammoniac half a dram, compound spirit of lavender one dram, water six ounces. In preparing this prescription, the quassy was infused in six ounces of boiling water one hour, and after filtering, the other ingredients were added, of which she took two ounces in a glass of water thrice a day. As this was the only formula this patient had of me, there can be no ambiguity as to its effects.

I have tried the same prescription in other nervous cases with the like good success; but as the symptoms were similar to those of this patient, I do not think it necessary to describe them.

### CASE V.

A captain of dragoons, who had been on duty at St. Domingo, and was obliged to return to England on account of ill health, applied to me the 19th July 1797, when he complained of bilious vomitings, an acrid bitter taste in his mouth, loss of appetite, frequent nausea with thirst, the tongue white, pulse quick and nervous, was costive, had a yellow tinge of his skin, and slept little. I gave him six grains of calomel in a bolus going to bed, and next day the following mixture, of which he took two ounces every four hours: Take cream of tartar, matron prepared, of each half a dram, sal polychrestum, (salt of many virtues) one dram, antimonial wine half a dram, compound tincture of cardamom one dram, water eight ounces, mixed. He continued to take this mixture two days, when he found his stomach easier,

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and told me he thought the thirst and nausea not so great, and that if the bile could be carried downwards he had no doubt of getting well. I then added to the other ingredients in the former mixture, a sufficient quantity of soluble tartar, to act aperiently, in lieu of the cream of tartar and natron, which he continued to take a few days with apparent good effect, when he went into the country. On his return to town, some months afterwards, as he had not got the better of his former complaints, he begged to have the same medicines as I first gave him, from which he received considerable relief; he again went out of town, and I saw nothing of him till the month of December 1798, when he again came under my care for the same complaints; I then gave him the quassy and natron, with the tincture of gentian prepared thus: a dram and a half of quassy was infused in a quart of boiling water one hour, after straining the liquor he took two ounces of it with fifteen grains of prepared natron, and one dram of the compound tincture of gentian, thrice a day; he continued these medicines two weeks, when he found himself perfectly recovered; and when I saw him in my house, two days ago,

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he assured me he was free of any bilious complaints, and had been so ever since he took the quassy mixture, a space upwards of two months, and till then had not been one week free of the bile from the time he first went to the West Indies.

I infer from this case, the great advantage of a medicine such as the quassy and natron, as here given. It corrects the bile, strengthens the stomach, and thereby tends to prevent a relapse; a circumstance which does not occur on taking saline and antimonial medicines, nor calomel, although in many cases I consider them as proper to precede the use of the quassy and natron.

#### C A S E VI.

Mr. S——, of Suffolk Street, having been frequently under my care with bilious fever, which used to come on with a sense of great debility and lowness of spirits, attended with chilliness, nausea, pain of the loins, the countenance pale, and sometimes of a yellow cast, eyes dull, and tinged yellow, had difficulty of breathing, with quick and

small pulse, attended often with a vomiting of bile, and bilious stools, for which I generally gave him an infusion of manna and tamarinds in barley water, with a small proportion of antimonial powder. After several evacuations, which the above medicines produced, I gave saline draughts till some intermission of the fever, when I threw in the bark.

As I was in the habit of giving neutral saline draughts, I added a few drops of the tincture of opium, or rhubarb, according to the state of the body. Although I succeeded repeatedly in the cure of this patient by this mode of practice, during the frequent attacks he had of these complaints, yet as he had such frequent relapses I was anxious to try some other cure, which I thought would be more permanent; and when he was last taken ill with these symptoms, and I found him in great pain, I gave small quantities of ipecacuanha wine, with a few drops of tincture of opium, to be repeated occasionally during the night, and next morning gave him a saline purgative, which carried off a great quantity of bile by stool. In the evening when I saw him his tongue remained foul, and no symptoms



toms of intermission of the fever sufficiently strong to give the bark, I therefore resolved to try the effect of quassiy with some antimonial wine, which he took in the proportion as after mentioned, every three or four hours during the night. On visiting him next morning found his tongue clean, and was told he had passed a considerable quantity of bile by stool during the night; and as his fever was abated, I gave him an infusion of quassiy and natron of the strength I have commonly given it in other cases, thrice a day, which he continued to take two weeks, at the end of which he assured me he had gained more strength, and found his appetite better than he did formerly when taking the peruvian bark, nor did he experience any gripes, or flatulency, which the bark used to occasion; and I am convinced this medicine agrees much better with bilious habits than bark, colombo, or any other medicine I have hitherto seen used in such cases, and that there is less danger of giving it before any intermission of the fever, especially if combined with some neutral salt, such as the vitriolated magnesia, (Epsom salt) or a small proportion of antimonial wine; and moreover that it would  
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be a safer medicine in the hands of those not bred to the practice of physic, to make use of, when there was no medical assistance to be had. The common proportion I give (and what I gave this patient) when any symptom of fever remains in bilious cases, is a dram of the quassiy infused one hour in a quart of boiling water, then strain the liquor, and give two ounces of it, with thirty drops of antimonial wine, every four hours, when the tongue is foul; and when there is no free evacuation by stool, one dram of the vitriolated magnesia to two ounces of this infusion, every four hours; and I have the satisfaction to add, that this medicine not only agreed well with this patient, but that he has not been so long free of bilious complaints at any one period these six years, as since he took the quassiy and natron.

## C A S E VII.

A gentleman, who had been captain of a ship in the East Indies, applied to me for cure of the following bilious complaints; viz. want of appetite, with flatulency, nau-  
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sea and indigestion, his tongue foul, &c.; for which I prepared a dram and a half of quassiy, with two drams and a half of sal sodæ, infused in a quart of boiling water one hour, then straining the liquor, two ounces of which was taken thrice a day; he continued these draughts ten or twelve days, when he found himself perfectly recovered, and I considered him no longer under my care; but as his health and spirits got better he began to mix more with society, and drank more wine than he had been able to take for a long time, owing to his bilious complaints, when he again sent for the quassiy and natron draughts. Some time afterwards I called to enquire if he had had any return of his former disorder. When he told me the reason of his sending for the draughts was, that when he drank too much over-night, he had the same sensation in his stomach the next morning as when he applied to me, and therefore as these medicines had the desired effect in removing the complaints, he expected they would be a preventative; and that he always took one of the draughts when going to bed, after having drunk too much wine, which

which had the salutary effect of preventing the nausea and sickness he had always felt afterwards.

Might we not conclude from this circumstance, that by mixing the tartar of the wine, or crust adhering to the bottle, with the wine when drinking it, or by shaking them together before taking the wine out of the bottle, the stomach would suffer less, for the tartar, being an alkali, would counteract the acidity in a manner similar to the sal sodæ, contained in the draughts, and would thereby render the effects of drinking much wine (a practice I would in no instance recommend) less pernicious; and although the small quantity of tartar adhering to the side of a bottle of wine, would not be equal to the alkali contained in one of these draughts, yet in a certain degree it would lessen the acid of the wine, if it had not power to destroy the spirit contained in it.

## C A S E VIII.

A gentleman, who was subject to frequent looseness, attended with flatulency and copious discharge of bile in the faces, had been in the habit of receiving temporary relief from sedative and astringent medicines; but if he eat an orange, or any food tending to acescency, the diarrhœa always returned, with much pain of the belly, and frequent tenesmus. As his constitution had been much broke in the West Indies, and having reason to suppose his complaint bilious, I gave him seven grains of calomel in a bolus at bed-time, and next day two ounces of the infusion of quassiy and natron thrice a day, in the proportion of a dram and a half of quassiy to two drams and a half of natron, in a quart of water, which in two or three days entirely removed his complaints; but as he was afraid of a relapse, to which he had been subject, he continued the infusion of quassiy and natron a week longer. It is now three weeks since, and I have had frequent opportunities of seeing  
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him, he assures me he has had no return of this disorder.

I have made use of the same treatment in similar cases, and am convinced such a mode of practice would have the best effects in warm climates, where the excess of bile is a general complaint. I have often experienced its effects on myself, as well as on others, when in the West Indies and South America.

## C A S E IX.

Mr. S——, aged 38 years, applied to me for the cure of Jaundice, of which the symptoms were, inactivity, lassitude, sickness, and sometimes vomiting, pain in the epigastrium, with difficult respiration, and costiveness. The *fæces alvinæ* hard and white, the urine high coloured, which tinged white linen yellow, bitter taste in his mouth, and a yellow tinge of his skin, for which I gave him seven grains of calomel in a bolus at bedtime, and next morning the following draught: Take of the tincture of jalap a dram and an half, tincture of fenna two drams, salt of many

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virtues one scruple, compound spirit of ammoniac twenty drops, water two ounces, made into a draught; as these medicines had the effect of removing the costiveness, I then gave him an aperient pill of soap, aloes, and calomel, thrice a day, washing it down with two ounces of the infusion of quassia and natron of the strength formerly mentioned, which treatment was continued for six days without any other medicine, when I found him perfectly recovered of the complaints above mentioned, and his skin and eyes had their natural appearance. I have followed this mode of practice in a great many cases of Jaundice with the like good success. I find the calomel bolus and aperient draught so completely empty the bowels and stomach, as to prevent the necessity of giving emetics; and as the pills keep the body sufficiently open, and the infusion of quassia and natron assists digestion, and strengthens the tone of the stomach, I seldom give any other medicine, except occasionally adding forty or fifty drops of vitriolic æther to two ounces of the infusion of quassia and natron.

## THE CONCLUSION.

What is here advanced is submitted with the greatest respect to the consideration of medical gentlemen; and lest many of them may not deign to follow the practice of one much younger, and perhaps less experienced than themselves, it is humbly requested, when they find patients labouring under indigestion, loss of appetite, and costiveness, if they do not find these complaints yield to their own mode of treatment, they would make trial of pills of soap, aloes, myrrh, and ginger, of sufficient strength of the aloes to keep the bowels open, and to give two ounces of the infusion of quassy and natron thrice a day, in the proportion herein mentioned. They must be sensible of the propriety of the remark of Celsus \* that it is fit when any thing does not answer, not to pay so much regard to the author as to the patient, and to make trial of one thing after another: *remembering*, however, that in acute distempers what does not relieve must

\* Vide Celsus, lib. iii. cap. 1.



be quickly changed: in the chronic, which time both causes and removes, whatever has not immediately done service, is not to be hastily condemned, much less must that be discontinued which does but give a small relief, because its good effects are completed by time. I have been the more particular in recommending my treatment of dyspepsia or indigestion, because I have not given any case directly upon that disorder. I have the same wish that trial may be made of the other parts of my practice in this publication, having no favourite theory to support, nor any medical sect to defend.

THE END.