

A letter to Dr. Chambers ... on several important points relating to the nature and proper treatment of gout / by Sir Charles Scudamore.

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A LETTER
TO
DR. CHAMBERS,
F.R.S. K.C.H. ETC. ETC.
ON
SEVERAL IMPORTANT POINTS
RELATING TO
THE NATURE AND PROPER TREATMENT
OF
GOUT.

BY
SIR CHARLES SCUDAMORE, MD. F.R.S.
HONORARY DOCTOR OF MEDICINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN;
LATE LECTURER ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PHYSIC,
ETC.

Homines enim ad deos nulla re propius accedunt, quam salutem hominibus dando. Nihil habet nec fortuna tua majus quam ut possis, nec natura tua melius, quam ut velis, conservare quamplurimos.—CICERO
MEDICUS.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMAN,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1839.

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TO
DR. CHAMBERS,
&c. &c.

*Wimpole Street,
December 1838.*

MY DEAR SIR,

In having the honor of addressing myself to you on the present occasion, it is my wish to render the homage which is justly due to one who has risen, no less by the force of his private worth, than by the exercise of his great talents, to the highest pinnacle of his profession.

Notwithstanding all that has been written on the subject of Gout, from Hippocrates down to the present time, it is impossible that its interest should be exhausted, or the important truths belonging to it be yet fully disclosed.

I may be allowed to observe, that I published the first edition of my Treatise on Gout in 1816; and, having since enjoyed extensive

and uninterrupted opportunities of seeing and treating the disease, I venture to claim the privilege of expressing my opinions with a greater share of confidence; since they are founded on the touchstone of all theory—*experience*.

The gout is not now, as formerly, a *neglected* disease. I well remember that a friend of mine, confined to bed by a seizure of gout over the whole of his body, and suffering from its worst tortures, sent for one of the most eminent physicians of this town that ever did honor to English medicine, and did not receive from him a second visit; because, in his candor and love of truth, he declared that he knew not how to treat the gout with success. Nor is it any longer a *cherished* disease, as at the period (the year 1802) when the late Dr. Heberden gave the following lively picture of the popular notions then prevailing respecting gout.

Having described its real severity, he remarks, that “ people are neither ashamed nor afraid of it; but are rather ambitious of supposing that every complaint arises from a gouty cause, and support themselves with the hope

that they shall one day have the gout, and use a variety of means for this purpose, which, happily for them, are generally ineffectual." Again—"For this (the gout) seems to be the favorite disease of the present age in England; wished for by those who have it not, and boasted of by those who fancy they have it; though very sincerely lamented by most who in reality suffer its tyranny. Hence, by a peculiar fate, more pains seem to be taken, at present, to breed or produce the gout, than to find out its remedy. For so much respect hath been shown to this distemper, that all the other ails, except pain, which the supposed gouty patient ever feels, are imputed most commonly, not to his having had too much of this disease, but to his wanting more; and the gout, far from being blamed as the cause, is looked up to as the expected deliverer from these evils."

The dread of being cured of the gout is not now greater than the dread of having it. It is not held as "a sacred disease," nor is it considered profane to handle it freely; but as mankind are always apt to run into extremes, so did it happen that the indifference to treat-

ment which I have described, the boasted contentment with "patience and flannel," was succeeded by an equal spirit of rashness in the means adopted for its relief. The cold water treatment of Kinglake had a short reign, after sending some victims prematurely to the grave. Although the gouty fire was sometimes successfully extinguished by this bold and simple remedy, the infinite danger of it was soon apparent.

The acclamation of joy in the supposed triumph over the gout was reserved for the *eau medicinale*. The long-sought-for cure of a disease which had defied the skill of ages, and was pronounced the opprobrium medicorum, seemed to be at once found; and this medicine, so magical in its powers over the immediate symptoms of gout, appeared as a blessing sent from Heaven! I need not now relate the history of its career and early fate; and those who are curious in the inquiry may be pleased to refer to the particulars which I have detailed in my Treatise*. I may, however, here briefly

* On the Nature and Cure of Gout and Gravel, with

remark of the eau medicinale, that, although for the most part, in the first few trials, it acted as a charm in giving relief to the gouty symptoms, it often produced alarming effects on the stomach and the constitution, and became in a short time dreaded for the evil it created. Its use had sometimes fatal consequences; and rarely indeed did it afford permanent satisfaction.

The hermodactyl of the ancients was next revived as a remedy for the disorder, under the modern name of the colchicum autumnale; and I believe I may speak of myself as having been the first individual who prescribed it in gout; although, at nearly the same period, different preparations of the root, some empirical, some made known, were employed.

It appeared to me important that colchicum should be used in combination with other medicines; that it was to be considered as a palliative, rather than the curative remedy; and that the means of lasting cure, if such a phrase may be adopted, were to be sought for

in such remedies and general treatment, as should be best adapted to correct the errors of the constitution in the individual case. It was my object, therefore, to make the least, rather than the greatest, use of colchicum. Also, with respect to the particular preparation, I made choice of the acetum, which is much weaker than the wine; this last being prepared with about twelve times the quantity of colchicum; besides that the acetic acid modifies the principles of the root, and gives it a milder operation. I found advantage from joining it with magnesia, and sulphate of magnesia; and thus directing its action to the bowels and the kidneys, and using with the vehicle of the ingredients some aromatic water or tincture, it rarely happened that the stomach itself was disordered by the repetition of the dose. Yet, as this would sometimes be the case, and as upon other grounds I thought it desirable, I directed Mr. Garden the chemist to prepare an extract of uniform strength, by the evaporation of a saturated infusion of the dried roots of colchicum in acetic acid, over a water bath; and thus derive a very convenient form of this medicine

for administration in a pill. Experience has fully proved the utility of the preparation; and the *Extractum Colchici aceticum* is now admitted into our *Pharmacopœia*, although the formula laid down is not exactly that which I have stated; nor, in my opinion, one so well adapted for obtaining an efficacious extract.

The late Sir Everard Home committed the great and serious mistake of pronouncing the wine of colchicum “a specific remedy for the cure of gout.”

Hence, in one shape or other, colchicum has, for the last twenty-two years, been the favorite remedy resorted to by gouty persons, and also by the medical profession. No remedy has been more universally used; and I think I may add, with truth, no one more abused. From the misemployment, therefore, of the medicine, much occasional harm would naturally result, and a heavy reproach fall upon it; causing general opinion to be much divided on the merits of colchicum: some continuing to cherish it as a valuable remedy, others execrating its qualities as poisonous and destructive. The late Dr. Woolaston expressed him-

self strongly, in saying that mankind were not worthy of so great a blessing as the colchicum was to gouty persons ; meaning, I know, that its proper use was not understood ; that there was great prejudice against it ; and, consequently, that its remedial powers could not be rightly appreciated.

I have always contended that, in giving the most active preparation of colchicum, as the wine or the tincture, with the intention of producing the strongest and most immediate influence over the gouty symptoms, a most mistaken principle has been exercised. However successful the remedy at the moment, the symptoms only have been put out of sight ; their cause has remained behind, locked up in the system. Rather than thus prescribe colchicum, I would for ever banish its use : but we are not driven to such an alternative. Every powerful medicine that is used, and found necessary in the treatment of severe disease, might be discarded, if we were to decide against it from the consequences of its misemployment, or from the influence of a particular idiosyncrasy of constitution ; for we

know that mercury, antimony, and opium, act upon some individuals very injuriously, in moderate—nay, even the smallest doses.

From a set of experiments which I instituted upon the dog, with the various gout nostrums, and known preparations of colchicum, I found that their essential action on the animal economy was identically the same; and that the morbid appearances on the post-mortem examination, when the doses were destructive, did not exhibit any difference; while completely different results followed from similar administration of a mixture of vinous tinctures of hellebore and opium, which Mr. Moore considered to be the representative of the eau medicinale; and of elaterium and opium, which also was fixed upon as being the French medicine. I found the comparative strength of the different preparations to be in the following order:—Eau Medicinale, Wilson's Tincture, Reynolds' Specific, Spirituous Tincture of Colchicum, Wine of Colchicum. The digestive mucous membrane was highly irritated, and bloody discharges were created, by doses not excessive of all these medicines;

while from so large a quantity as three ounces of acetum colchici, administered in two doses, in combination with magnesia, no injurious irritation of the mucous membrane was produced. I learn, from patients who have taken the different nostrums, and also the wine of colchicum of the Pharmacopœia, that they all have some sensible difference of action; and that one preparation has been the most efficacious and agreed the best with one individual, and another with another.

I shall not in this place enter upon the chemical enquiry into the nature of the different preparations in question. I should object to the principle of giving any one of them with a view to their most specific operation; and I do equally so to colchicum, which I allow myself to employ only as a palliative agent for the controul of an inconvenient degree of the gouty suffering and irritation; in the mildest form of its preparation (almost invariably); and in combination with other medicines; while I consider that the truly *curative* plan of treatment consists in the fulfilment of a more extensive principle—the study to correct all functional

error; and, in chronic cases, to seek to alter the state of the blood itself.

I have, in my different publications on Gout and on Colchicum, related striking examples, shewing the total failure of Wilson's tincture, Reynolds' specific, and the wine of colchicum, as curative means; and that their effect was so much on the contrary, that in the same ratio of their being freely used, and depended upon as a specific remedy, so did the gout return with more and more frequency, while at the same time great mischief was inflicted upon the digestive organs and the nervous system.

With such mal-practice the profession is only to be partially charged. At all times it has been greatly the fashion for gouty patients to take the management of their cases into their own hands. Is this a judicious proceeding? Rarely does it happen that the physician himself, when under disease, is wise in prescribing for his own case; so easily is the judgment of the invalid misled by his sensations. When pain disturbs the nerves, the reasoning faculty is no longer at the same sure command.

It would almost appear as if the gouty patient, in administering colchicum to himself, viewed his disease as simply local, like tooth-ache;—that the external visible symptoms, the redness and swelling, with the attendant pain and lameness, constituted the whole disease; and that, consequently, on the complete subsidence of the local affection, the gout in the constitution had passed away. Now it often happens that, at this the period of seeming recovery, the most useful and important points of treatment are to be enforced; by means of which the system shall be set right in any of its functional errors, and the surest means be thus used to prevent the return of the gout. Can the patient by possibility understand the physiology and pathology of his disease? Can he treat it on scientific and just principles? I have witnessed such lamentable results from the self-treatment of gouty persons with the several nostrums, and with colchicum, that I cannot avoid dwelling with earnestness on this part of my subject.

A gentleman, upwards of sixty years of age, had been so severely harassed with painful fits

of gout, notwithstanding the free use of the wine of colchicum, that he resolved on taking small doses of this medicine every night for a continuance. Still the gout returned with undiminished force. He increased his dose of the wine occasionally to two drachms. In Lucian's amusing poem, Podagra is described as a goddess; and it would seem that she resented this persisting interference with her decrees; for in opposition to such extreme use of colchicum, the gout at length returned so frequently, that it was scarcely ever absent; and, at the same time, the looks of the patient bore evidence that he had a poison in his blood. He was sallow in complexion, the cheeks were hollow, the general flesh wasted, the strength lost, the spirits sunk; in short, he was the wreck of his former self.

By regular and systematic treatment, his health was, after a long interval, quite restored; and during the last four years he has only had one attack of gout, which was wholly caused by a highly disordered state of the liver, and yielded favorably to the mode of treatment which was diligently pursued for the cure of the hepa-

tic error. I never saw a stronger example of the close connection which prevails between disordered functions of the liver, and gout. In several instances, I have witnessed the slow destruction of the constitution by the excessive, and therefore poisonous, use of Wilson's tincture and the wine of colchicum; and, in two examples, gastric fever and death were the melancholy result. First, the appetite and digestive power were lost; then frequent sickness prevailed; the intestinal mucous membrane was highly irritated; the flesh and strength daily wasted; the mind became melancholy; lastly, there was constant sickness, with a rapid pulse, burning skin alternating with profuse perspirations, delirium, exhaustion, insensibility, death! In these two examples, the patients were men of education and rank, but were previously bigoted to their own treatment with Wilson's tincture or wine of colchicum. Does not such extreme error of proceeding constitute a species of *felo-de-se*?

From my written details of many hundred cases of gout, I shall extract some of the most curious and interesting particulars, for the pur-

pose of showing the constitutional nature of the disease; its frequent complications with other malady; and, how unreasonable must be the expectation that its cure can be found in the influence of any one particular medicine.

A fit of gout may occur as the effect of a peculiar state of repletion of the system; and be an effort of nature, as by a safety valve, in an indirect manner to remove the plethora. Whenever it occurs in this way, as a suitable relief to the constitution, the patient may with the greatest propriety be left to the most simple means of treatment. Thus some few, before the fit, suffer from dyspepsia, lassitude, and mental depression, and, without any particular treatment, regain healthy feelings at the conclusion of the gout: these are comparatively very rare examples.

When a fit takes place under circumstances of other constitutional disease of more serious importance than the gout itself, it should not be interfered with by the use of colchicum; although all general principles of practice should be pursued.

The complication of gout with other

malady, and the various sympathies which it occasions, are no less remarkable than important.

The proprietor of an hotel, much subject to gout, had, during two years, frequent recourse to the wine of colchicum, which acted only as a palliative, and much disordered the digestive organs. His nerves also being depressed, he became very intemperate, both with wine and spirits, and at length brought on delirium tremens. At the same time that I studied to calm the nervous system, I was anxious to reproduce gout in the extremities ; and, succeeding in this object, was agreeably surprised to find the immediate relief afforded to the brain. But for the permanent cure, a long course of treatment was required.

In a more aggravated case of this same description, the patient had pursued his intemperance with wine and spirits*, so as not only to

* I have never seen delirium tremens produced except by intemperance with spirits ; never by wine-drinkers only. The delirium much differs from that of fever ; or phrenitis ; or monomania ; or general insanity ; and the whole appearance of the patient, together with the state of tremor, is very characteristic. A more fallen state of human nature than is presented by this disease can hardly be imagined !

bring on delirium tremens, but finally permanent insanity; and although gouty inflammation did take place, and was promoted, it had but slight and temporary favorable influence on the disorder of the brain.

When a gouty patient is threatened by apoplexy, not only should bleeding or cupping be practised as in another person, but the fit of gout should be solicited by stimulating pediluvium, and other means*. I have seen a re-

* I highly approve, in such cases, and in retrocedent gout, of that very excellent remedy, the ammoniated counter-irritant lotion recommended by Dr. Granville; to be applied in the manner which he has directed. Unless the wetted compress be held close to the skin, its action would be much impaired, as the evaporation of this highly volatile application so quickly takes place.

On some occasions, when I have desired to produce, quickly, full vesication together with the effects of a rubefacient, I have directed the application of the acetum cantharidis, by means of a strong camel's hair brush; a preparation which I suggested to Mr. Garden many years ago, consisting of a saturated solution of cantharides in very strong acetic acid. This also is introduced into the new Pharmacopœia; but the proportion of cantharides there ordered is much smaller, and the acetic acid not so concentrated as I thought proper to use.

When the occasion is less immediate, and the situation of the part convenient, I prefer the ordinary blistering plaster; because, probably from its more gradual mode of acting, it

markable abatement of paralytic symptoms produced by the gouty paroxysm ; but it must not be trusted for permanent benefit ; this is to be sought for in strict diet and regimen, and all the means requisite for maintaining an equal circulation, and a regularity of the natural functions.

The brain is sometimes very curiously affected by gouty irritation, not yet developed in its proper form. A gentleman, who had never experienced gout but once, had undergone great fatigue of body, with anxiety of mind. He was seized with inflammation of the calf of the leg, which was considered to be erysipelas ; and at the same time his imagination became affected with this extraordinary delusion, that he thought himself a serpent crawling at the bottom of a cauldron. A blister was applied to the neck, and active medicines were administered ; on the following day, acute gout attacked the ball of the great toe, and immediately the senses were restored.

stimulates the vessels of the cutis more deeply, and produces an effusion of more dense serum than is usually obtained from the action of the fluid preparation.

I have met with examples of severe occasional head-ache, being the disorder of the early part of life, yielding to gout occurring at a later period, and this becoming the established disease of the constitution.

Asthma is sometimes exchanged for gout; and I have known a few instances in which this conversion of disease has been reversed: now and then also the two disorders alternate.

Pain of a gouty nature appears to attack the external parts of the head occasionally; and one patient, whom I saw affected in this way, described his sufferings in the strongest language; expressing that he thought his head was covered with an iron helmet; that sometimes it was opening and shutting; and now and then as if being stabbed with knives.

One gentleman, on the occurrence of a fit, has confusion of the head with giddiness, a difficulty of articulating his words, great nervousness, and exceeding agitation of spirits; and this state continues more or less during the stay of the gout. It does not always happen therefore that the paroxysm confers the benefit of removing the distress of the nervous system.

On the contrary, it more commonly brings misery in its train.

Various are the proofs that gout induces in the constitution a remarkable degree of morbid nervous sensibility. In no disorder, is the disposition to severe cramps of the muscles of the legs and feet more shewn, than in gout.

Jactitations of the limbs during the fit are sometimes so violent, that the patient has the dread of being thrown out of bed by their force.

A gentleman suffered from what he called gout in the stomach, complaining of a sense of coldness in the epigastric region, followed by pain in the clavicles and down both arms, particularly the left; and occasionally over the chest and stomach a sense of heat like fire; cramps in the hands in driving or trying to hold any small substance; jactitations at night, restlessness, and frightful dreams. An attack of gout gave only partial relief to these and other symptoms, which were found to depend on a confirmed wrong action of the liver, and which was cured by active treatment.

The sensations which in a severe degree

sometimes affect the chest in a gouty person, may proceed from the stomach. A gentleman, long subject to gout, was more than usually distressed with heartburn, and was suddenly seized with pain of the chest, so that he thought his breast bones were being forced open. He drank a small wine-glass of brandy, which caused an immediate dispersion of flatus from the stomach, and gave immediate relief.

He submitted to a proper course of treatment, and was restored to health.

Pains of the stomach and of the limbs sometimes alternate in a remarkable manner; and I have witnessed attendant dyspnœa, and palpitation of the heart.

The action of the heart is sympathetically affected by gout; and, in persons of the nervous temperament, is very commonly disturbed with palpitation. I have found the pulse intermitting or quite irregular before the establishment of the fit; in a few cases, for some days after; and, what is more surprising, the mysterious influence of the gouty diathesis is sometimes shewn for a long time previously. I know a gentleman who had an intermitting pulse con-

stantly during four years, and which caused him much alarm. All at once acute gout attacked the foot for the first time ; the pulse immediately became regular, and has continued so ever since.

It deserves to be remarked, that although an attack of gout will often in a remarkable manner relieve or take away the symptoms arising out of the functional error of an important viscus, as the brain, heart, or lungs ; yet the relief so afforded would be only transient, and probably slight, if organic disease should exist as the cause of the symptoms.

Great inequality of the circulation sometimes attends the commencement of a fit. A gentleman, subject to gout, was suddenly seized with a pain of the instep of one foot, with such coldness and lividness of all the toes, that it appeared, he said, like a dead foot ; while, at the same time, his head was affected with heat, pain, and much giddiness. He was cupped with advantage ; but the head was not effectually relieved until gout was fully developed in the foot.

Another, anxious not to be detained from

his engagements, when threatened with gout in the foot, rubbed into the part cajeput oil, under circumstances of a disordered state of the digestive organs, and of the liver especially. He was suddenly seized with an intense cramp-like pain at the stomach, signs of gout disappearing. He could not swallow æther, which he wished to take, from the violence of spasm, which affected him as soon as he applied the draught to his lips; but he drank some brandy with success. Medicines were given; and assa-fœtida injections were used, in conjunction with mustard and salt-water pediluvium, and mustard poultice. Gout quickly took place, first in the elbow, and then in the feet; and the stomach, in a short time, was permanently relieved.

I met with a very interesting case in a gentleman, sixty years of age, who, having been affected with gout about once in two years, became gradually troubled with a strong sense of stricture across the chest, attended with fluttering sensations, palpitation of the heart, and very irregular pulse, on ascending a hill; and would occasionally have the same symptoms after breakfast, when sitting in his chair. A

disease of the heart was suspected ; but, on investigation, I found all the signs of a confirmed wrong action of the liver ; and by a suitable treatment, followed up with due perseverance, the alarming symptoms just described disappeared.

The external senses are often disturbed in their function, when gouty irritation is hovering over the system. A keen sportsman relates that he has been distressingly admonished of the approach of gout, when he has seen the birds double, without the power of taking his accustomed aim. Another, when walking in the streets, experiences a sudden mist come over the eyes, so that he cannot distinguish a single object.

Sometimes the ears are beset with unnatural sounds, both by night and day, almost too various to be described ; and in the tumult of the streets, there is such deafness and confusion of the head, as to create alarm, lest an apoplexy should be at hand.

The mind, not less than the body, is brought under the powerful influence of suppressed gout. A gentleman, threatened with gout when begin-

ning a tour in Italy, took colchicum in repeated small doses, and averted the fit ; but was rendered so listless and lethargic, "so truly miserable," to use his own words, that at the Florentine gallery he could scarcely resist throwing himself down on the floor, instead of admiring the works of art by which he was surrounded. His first wish then was to have the fit which he had been so studious to prevent.

A military man, of the firmest mind when in health, had in the same manner made use of colchicum, and suppressed a coming fit. His nervousness became extreme. He would only see a chosen friend, and on the slightest occasion burst into involuntary tears, without any moral cause.

Nerves are sometimes, in a fit, the only texture apparently affected: the most intensely painful attack which I ever saw, was in the nervous branches distributed over the foot. With the exception of a little fulness of the veins, there was no external appearance of disease. The case was very peculiar ; the gentleman was of full habit ; no relief was afforded by colchicum, or by opiates, until he had been very freely bled from the arm.

A gentleman, subject to gout, lost his leg by amputation ten years ago. When he has a fit, and the gout attacks the stump, he has the sensation of still having his foot; but at no other time experiences this deception.

Any kind of accident happening to a gouty person, by producing constitutional irritation, very commonly gives rise to a fit. Some disorders have the same effect, and, by certain authors, have been called misplaced gout; followed by gout, they have by others been termed *conversions* of disease. For example: no complaint more induces a fit in a gouty individual than gonorrhœa; yet no one would term that the gout. When this happens, ophthalmia would be a certain attendant.

Strong emotions of the mind are sometimes the exciting cause of an attack: those who are engaged in anxious and fatiguing business, especially if sedentary, are more liable than others to frequent attacks. A gentleman, advancing in years, who had long filled a high official situation, suffered from severe and frequent attacks; and at length his constitution was so evidently injured, that I advised him to retire from his duties. He has since enjoyed a new life of

comparative ease and comfort. Thus it is that gout is an exceedingly varied disease, and requires a corresponding variation of treatment. Some will be much benefited by a change of climate. Even the change of air from the town to the country will often be of the greatest importance; and I have seen the convalescence wholly delayed till this change has been made.

I have now to notice some of the most remarkable circumstances relating to gout itself; and as affecting different persons. It sometimes passes over one generation entirely, and then returns with all its former force.

I have known the individuals of a family who inherited the gout, to bear a greater personal resemblance to their father or mother; or to their more distant relations, when the hereditary predisposition was thus remotely derived; than the other children who escaped the disease.

It rarely happens that all the children born of gouty parents have the complaint.

Occasionally the gout begins at a very early age; I have been assured at the eleventh or twelfth year, and even at the ninth in two instances: but I believe that cases of rheuma-

tism in young children are sometimes mistaken for gout. As a contrary example, I knew one instance of a first fit at the age of eighty. Sometimes the first fit is the most severe. One gentleman, in his first attack, had no sleep for twelve days and nights.

The accession of a paroxysm, and the aggravation of the symptoms, usually occur about one or two in the morning; and this seems in part referrible to the time when the processes of digestion may be supposed to be most actively going on.

The periodical returns of gout are sometimes so remarkably exact, that it will take place on the same day of the month in each year. Some persons of full habit suffer from attacks most in the summer months. I know a patient so peculiarly sensitive to the influence of heat, that a pediluvium, although only of moderate warmth, would be certainly productive of a gouty attack: and with most persons, when the disposition to a fit is much present, the influence of a warm bath will in all probability call it into full action.

The greater exemption of females from gout is chiefly to be explained by their mode-

rate habits of living, and less exposure to wet and cold, and bodily accidents, than men. In them, the gout is seldom so well defined; it is less inflammatory, and more of a nervous character; and altogether it is a much more irregular disease.

Some females, however, suffer the disease in all its intensity. I remember one lady, who, when I first saw her, had been suffering from a protracted fit for twenty weeks. At that time, together with pains in various parts, she felt remarkable coldness of the feet, although they were of ordinary temperature to the touch of another; she had violent jactitations of the limbs at night; and, during the day, palpitation of the heart, with severe depression of the spirits.

Of the many whom I have known to leave a fit of gout almost wholly to its own course, the majority have been quite disappointed of their expected reward of health. One gentleman informs me that he had two attacks in a year, each of three months' duration, with such severity of symptoms, that he thinks he did not procure any sleep for fourteen successive nights. His nerves were entirely broken down

by suffering. He lived at a distance from medical help, and had scarcely used any treatment.

Gout is, for the most part, easily to be distinguished from rheumatism; and when the diagnosis in a case is really difficult, it is not probably of much practical importance.

Gout is essentially a different disease, being necessarily the offspring of internal error; while rheumatism, although usually, and of necessity, much connected with the state of the constitution, may occur as entirely an external complaint. All, of every age and station, are subject to rheumatism; but gout visits not the poor man's cottage; and here I may quote the beautiful language of the poet:

“ O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona nôrint,
“ Agricolas,” &c.

Erysipelas sometimes precedes, and sometimes follows, gout; but this additional disease does not affect the majority of gouty persons.

Very few gouty persons are exempt from hæmorrhoidal complaint, and which is so sure a sign of obstructed circulation of the vena portarum, and an additional proof of the inti-

mate connection between gout and the disordered functions of the liver. In the first production of gout, it seldom happens that the stomach indicates much disorder; and often the appetite is not at all impaired, nor the digestion sensibly affected; but inveterate dyspepsia often affects those who have long suffered from its tyranny. A first, and an old gout, if I may so express it, are widely different diseases; and require to be as differently treated, both as to the kind of medicines used, and the particular diet and regimen.

Such gouty persons as have gravel, are usually those who are too indulgent in acescent food, and are, especially, imprudent in their choice of liquors. The small calculi which are formed are usually consisting of uric acid. I have frequently seen them passed of the size of a lemon kernel. The small crystals, denominated gravel, are more common, and sometimes alternate with the impalpable powder, when dried, called the lateritious sediment. I may here remark, that when both cease suddenly, and the bladder becomes affected with increased, yet a new kind of, irritation, the

formation of a large calculus in the bladder is to be suspected.

Chalk-stones, as they are called, from their resemblance to chalk,—a material composed of soda, with uric acid in excess*,—are spoken of by some authors as resulting from the more active inflammation of gout, or from the protraction of a fit; but, in truth, it is a peculiarity of certain constitutions. I know many who have suffered from the worst torments of inflammatory and continued gout, without having a particle of chalk-stone in any part of the body.

I have invariably found a deficiency of uric

* The composition of this secretion varies occasionally. In one specimen, I found minute portions of phosphate and carbonate of lime; and, in four other instances, I detected a little lime; but I believe that, for the most part, the gouty calculi consist entirely of super-urate of soda and animal matter. Such was the nature of one which I have just examined, taken from the hand of a gentleman who has these deposits almost universally over his body, and who has only been enabled to leave his bed, and then with the utmost difficulty, for one single day, during the last two years; so distorted are his joints, and so crippled all his limbs.

What a contrast does this acmé of gouty suffering present to a first slight occurrence of the disease, and which the patient may mistake for a strain? and what a lesson is it for taking early care to counteract the progress of the evil!

acid in the urine of those gouty persons who have chalk-stones; and it would appear as if the capillary vessels in different external parts of the body, but usually the hands and feet, performed this secretion of uric acid, naturally belonging to the kidneys, *vicariously*.

Chalk-stones, for the most part, infest the hands and feet, in preference to other situations; but I have met with cases in which they have been formed in almost every part of the surface of the body; and abundantly on the interior of the eye-lids, and even on the cornea itself. On the other hand, I have occasionally seen them in no other part than in the lobes of the ears, and there in small points. The chief constituent of this matter, uric acid, is not to be found in the circulating blood.

It seems evident that the humoral pathology of the ancients received great support from the formation of chalk-stones in gout; and this was pronounced by Sydenham to be the gouty humor. As it is an occasional consequence of gout in certain constitutions, and not a certain one of the disease, however intensely it may prevail, we cannot, in reference

to such formation, find an explanation of the *proximate cause*; although chalk-stones are only met with in gouty persons.

All the practical ideas entertained by Sydenham were derived from this theory of the gouty matter in the blood; and therefore no useful treatment of the least importance was suggested by him for the relief of the fit; although his account of the disease is highly interesting and well drawn; and he furnishes many excellent remarks for the general conduct of the patient.

The perspiration of gouty persons, in the fit, is often marked by a peculiar odor; and this is especially noticed by the patient as the disorder comes to its crisis. What then is gout? it will be asked; and how is it to be treated?

The one essential cause, as an invariable antecedent to gout, cannot be shewn. The nicest skill of the chemist does not enable him to ascertain the various morbid conditions of the blood. But the difficulty in question is not confined to gout; it is the same with most other diseases. Who is able to detect, in the blood

or any of the secretions, the poison of the plague, small pox, measles, scarlatina, and so on? But, for practical purposes, is it not sufficient that we make ourselves acquainted with the characters of a disease, all its symptoms, its varieties, its complications, and the modifications it receives from individual constitution, and from every kind of internal and external influence?

A careful investigation of every distinct case; the knowledge of all the remedies which our art supplies; and of their various operations on different constitutions; with strict attention to all the points of the particular case we are called upon to treat; will give us no mean qualification to succeed, when success can be obtained.

I believe the gout to be a disease both of the solids and the fluids, and that there is a mutual reaction between them. Primarily, there is too much nutrition in the system for healthy uses; and congestion, with wrong function, is always more or less found in the hepatic system. In the progress of the disorder, the nervous system becomes much involved. It may, in the convenience of language, then

be called very much a nervous disease. It is never so truly inflammatory as the acute rheumatism.

In no disease are the sensations of suffering so strongly described by the patient as in gout. The language used is highly figurative, because ordinary comparisons are insufficient to convey any adequate idea of the pain which is felt. It was expressed by the distinguished Sydenham, from what he himself suffered, as "resembling that of a dislocated bone; sometimes as if from laceration of the ligaments; sometimes as if from the gnawing of a dog; and so exquisitely painful a state of the membranes of the parts affected, as for the patient not to endure the weight of the clothes, nor the shaking of the room from a person walking briskly therein." By some, the heat of the part is spoken of as if produced by the pouring of boiling lead upon it; the sense of laceration as if a vice were employed to draw the bone out of its socket; some, as if the parts were undergoing amputation; and often so hot as if they were in the fire itself.

I have known cases of fracture of the leg

followed in a day or two by gout in one or both feet, the pain of which far exceeded that belonging to the accident.

Opposed to this statement, I have met with instances of protracted fits, in which no pain, nor scarcely any uneasiness beyond a sense of heat, has been felt, from the first hour to the last; save upon motion, for the lameness has been great, and often entire. So varied therefore is gout in different constitutions!

It remains for me now to offer a cursory view of the principles of treatment. As it almost invariably happens that the functions of the liver are disordered in connection with a fit of gout, and often indeed standing in the relation of cause and effect, so is it of primary importance to give some mercurial purgatives and alteratives, for the purpose of evacuating vitiated secretions, and inducing more healthy action. But due care should always be exercised not to carry the use of mercury to the extent of producing salivation; the irritation and suffering of which state are particularly injurious to gouty persons.

As I have before remarked, I am led, both by theory and experience, to prescribe the

mildest preparations* of colchicum, and those in combination with saline aperients, using this medicine as a valuable palliative for a short period during the actual existence of the gouty irritation; but not viewing it as the really curative agent. The draught to which I have alluded at page 6, I sometimes prescribe to be taken in the state of effervescence; the due proportion of bi-carbonate of potash being added. For the relief of pain and the procuring of sleep, I place my dependance rather on the sedative liquor of opium and acetate of morphia, joined with a sudorific, than on colchicum. There are cases of gout complicated with other malady, in which I would refrain from making any use of colchicum whatever.

One of the bad consequences of the em-

* I repeat that the treatment of the fit must be indefinitely varied, according to the individual constitution, and various circumstances. Sometimes the continuation of aperients is improper; and, also, if the actual gouty irritation be so predominant as to resist the influence of the acetous preparation of colchicum, the use of the wine, as recommended by Sir Henry Hallford, would be highly proper; but I take the liberty of thinking that gout in its severe forms is not a disease so simplified, or of such easy treatment, as we might be led to suppose, from the elegant account which has appeared from the pen of the distinguished President.

pirical use of the nostrums and colchicum, has been the extreme impatience of the *should-be patient*, under the slower but surer methods of regular and well-considered treatment. A virtuous submission to some delay of recovery is the more required, when the gout is complicated with some other constitutional disease of more importance to the safety of life ; as a threatening apoplexy ; or paralysis ; or diseased condition of the heart ; or other forms of disease which might be mentioned ; and, under which circumstances, it would in all probability be proper rather to promote the stay of gout, by judicious means, than attempt its removal by the use of colchicum.

The functions of the skin, and of the kidneys, should receive particular attention ; and if the action of the skin should have received a check from exposure to cold, the use of sudorifics will be the more indicated. The daily appearances of the urine will serve to indicate, in great measure, the state of the blood, and the force of the gouty diathesis.

In a very disordered state of stomach, especially when there is a prevalence of morbid acid, and mucus, an emetic is often useful.

Formerly a strong prejudice existed against bleeding; and it is not a remedy for the gouty inflammation. I have known many examples in which the gouty patient has been bled very largely for pneumonia, or pleurisy; and, when such inflammation has been conquered, a severe fit of gout has immediately ensued. But if there be good reasons for taking away blood, either by the lancet or cupping, on general grounds, this remedy should not be withheld on account of gout being in the constitution; nor even if the fit be actually present.

The local treatment of gout has, in general, been too much neglected; and, from theory, it might not seem important—it being a constitutional disease. I object entirely to those narrow views of practice in which local remedies are held to be sufficient. This is indeed strongly reversing the doctrines of the late Mr. Abernethy, who, even in surgical cases, considered local treatment to be of very secondary importance, and the constitutional, of the first.

I have, however, been taught, by ample experience and observation, that local applications, varied in their nature according to the

particular textures which are affected, and their condition, not only conduces greatly to present relief, but, what is of still more importance, towards the prevention of future lameness. The morbidly excited action of the vessels necessarily causes increased secretion and effusion of synovial, or serous, or fibrinous fluid, or of the matter of chalkstone; and unless timely treatment be used to prevent inspissation, permanent deposits and thickening of parts are certain consequences in most instances. I do not recommend local means till the first violence of the attack has a little subsided; but then, the lotion of alcohol or spirit of rosemary, diluted with camphor mixture, will be found very useful, rendered tepid; and, either used in the way of affusion by means of a sponge, or by linen compresses covered with a fold of oil-skin; or made into a poultice with equal parts of linseed meal and grated bread; and applied agreeably tepid.

It scarcely ever happens that I am induced to recommend the use of leeches in acute gout; and my objections I have fully stated in my Treatise. In chronic gout, I have now and

then prescribed them with advantage; but I must add, that local bleeding by leeches is not, with me, a favorite remedy.

In the advanced stages of the disease, other topical means may be used with great advantage; as the veratria liniment; linim. sapon. c. with liquor. ammon. acet. and tincture of opium; linim. sapon. c. with linim. camphor. c. and tinctura lyttæ, &c. Finally, benefit will be derived from the daily or occasional sponging with a mixture of tepid salt water and vinegar; friction and shampooing; with bandage also, if the vessels should be so weak as to cause œdema.

I have thus stated, briefly, the general plan of treating the paroxysm which I advise; but it must always be modified by circumstances. So much does the character of gout vary, according to individual temperament and constitution, that I have occasionally seen an increase of the inflammation and pain under the use of colchicum and aperients; and a speedy improvement effected by the administration of quinine, opium, and improved diet. In the same circumstances of irritation and

debility, I have also witnessed very excellent effects produced by the carbonate of iron in a saline draught, administered at stated intervals.

We will now suppose the patient to be recovered from the paroxysm; and if proper treatment shall have been employed, no relapse, in a great majority of cases, is likely to take place: but if colchicum alone have been the remedy depended on for the cure, it is almost certain to happen. Also, in most cases, if properly treated, when the fit is ended, no further use of medicine need be thought of, than a due attention to the state of the bowels, which is always the great pivot of preventive treatment for the gouty patient. The resinous purgatives in the form of pill will be occasionally proper; but, as a more habitual expedient, I can mention, with great approbation, a powder composed of equal parts of rhubarb, carbonates of soda and magnesia, camomile, and compound cinnamon powder, or ginger, to be taken at bed time, with more or less frequency in every week.

The daily and free use of carbonate of soda, as a preventive means of gout, was much re-

commended by the late Mr. Vance ; and many have highly praised its effects. I cannot, on principle, approve of the habitual use of alkalis. Constantly taken, they must be unfriendly to the tone of the stomach, and to the healthy secretion of gastric juice.

In the natural state of the stomach, there is always a free acid* ; and I think that an alkalinescent condition may be introduced, in this manner, unfavorably. The chief utility of alkali must consist in neutralising the morbid acid of indigestion, the produce of fermentation, and which would not happen if the vitalising

* In an experiment on a healthy dog, in which examination was made at a given time after it had been fed with very strong beef tea, I found that litmus paper, applied to the contents of the stomach and of the duodenum, was vividly reddened. Dr. Prout, our highest authority in animal chemistry, speaks of chlorine as being, in some state or other of combination, an ingredient in the secretion of the stomach ; and that, in the healthy condition of this organ, a little free muriatic acid is present during the process of digestion. He observes, "it often happens that, instead of chlorine, or a little free muriatic acid, a large quantity of free muriatic acid is elicited ; which not only gives rise to much secondary uneasiness, but more or less retards the process of reduction itself." There is also that most important secretion, the gastric juice, which is in so great a degree dependant on the nervous influence.

action of the digestive process were properly performed. To this, then, our care should be directed ; and so to improve and regulate the functions of the digestive organs, that morbid acid may not be created. I am fully aware of the virtues of alkaline medicine as an occasional remedy ; and only object to its habitual employment. As a further argument against this, I may observe, that if the carbonate of soda, taken after a meal, in which more indulgence is practised from the confidence in this agent, have the effect of causing a better digestion of the too indulgent repast, its continued use would tend greatly to conduce towards a plethoric state of the system ; and hence, an ulterior evil, and one of great magnitude.

There are cases, and unfortunately they are too numerous, in which the constitution is so completely gouty, that the disease is called into action by almost every slight cause of disturbance ; and here it is, I apprehend, that we should study, by medical treatment, and diet and regimen, to effect a radical alteration in the state of the system ; so, even that the condition of the blood itself may undergo a de-

cided change. Such established dominion of the gout over the body as I am now contemplating, is not easy to be opposed.

An attentive investigation of the functions of the liver is of the first importance. Chronic gout is kept up, and relapses are produced, more by the errors of this organ, than by any other cause. I need not here enter into details of treatment with relation to this point of practice.

With a further view to alter the state of the system, I am in the habit of prescribing a mixture of the infusion of the cortical part of sarsaparilla in lime water, with syrup of the same, Brandish's alkaline liquor in small doses, tincture of orange peel, and the iodide of potassium in minute doses (one or two grains), to be taken in admixture with hot milk, twice daily for a certain period, and then once; and the course to be resumed occasionally. Sometimes I give, in conjunction, a pill with the muriate of ammonia, and a dose so small as the fifteenth or twentieth of a grain of the bichloride of mercury.

I do not always consider it necessary to give alkaline medicines; on the contrary, I have

on many occasions prescribed, with great advantage, nitric acid with sarsaparilla.

But the patient must not expect the important benefit he desires from medical treatment, unless he will conform to an almost exact, and certainly to a steady, plan of diet.

Some time ago, I heard of the revival of an ancient practice in Germany, called *hunger-cure*; the food of the patient being confined to three ounces of meat and five of bread per diem! this is too extreme a limitation.

The late Mr. Abernethy confined his dieted patients to twelve ounces of solid food altogether, animal, vegetable, and farinaceous, per diem. This method of weighing the food is intended as a guard against the fallacy of appetite, and the pleasure of the palate. It is certainly true that more nourishment is rendered to the system by a small quantity of food well digested and assimilated, than by large meals forced upon the stomach, or even if taken with appetite. I remember an example of this. One of Mr. Abernethy's patients, who consulted me, related that, after an accident, he got into ill health, and lost his flesh very much. He took a great quantity of food, yet continued to waste, and be-

came weaker. According to the plan laid down, he confined himself to twelve ounces of food per diem ; and after a month's adherence to this limit, he found that he had considerably increased in weight, and had improved in strength.

The adoption of this very strict rule is seldom necessary ; and it is sufficient that the patient should exercise his discretion and experience in regard to the quantity and kind of his food ; strictly, however, obeying particular medical directions ; that he should avoid whatever he has found not to agree ; confine himself to a very few articles at the same meal ; and leave off with the appetite not fully satisfied.

Although no truism is more known, it cannot be too often repeated, that almost all persons who have the means, take daily an excess of food beyond what is required and useful.

Every one has too much occasion to say with the poet,

————— *Video meliora proboque,
Deteriora sequor.*

In some instances of dyspepsia, the digestive powers are so weakened, that the conversion of vegetable matter into good chyme

is difficult or impracticable, and acetous fermentation is the consequence ; but otherwise, for the gouty individual, I must approve of a mixed diet, of animal and vegetable food. Various facts serve to show that, in gout, the blood is overcharged with animal principles. All the secretions are loaded. It should be the patient's study not to exceed that quantity of food with which he can, by the exercise of self-control, just feel himself comfortable. Due regard is, at the same time, to be paid to the nervous energy ; and this is a point always to be studied in the diet. It will often be expedient to make gradual rather than sudden changes.

In regard to the beverage also, forbearance must be practised ; or it is in vain to expect exemption from gout. Whoever desires to adopt the most determined plan of prevention, and is, at the same time, in possession of a good constitution and firm nerve, would be wise to abjure every kind of fermented liquor, and choose water for his constant beverage ; that alone, or with the addition of a small quantity, one or two table-spoonfuls, of the best

brandy, at the dinner meal ; or a glass of sherry so diluted.

Sydenham recommended “small beer, hopped, or unhopped,” in preference to any other drink. The late Dr. Gregory, who, having an attack of gout in early life, and avoided wine, also himself used and prescribed good small beer as the dinner beverage : when quite sound, I should, in many instances, approve its use, no wine being taken.

Strong malt liquors are decidedly improper, as being too stimulating, and conducing to plethora, from containing much nutritive matter. We require fluid with our solid food for one of two purposes—namely, dilution and stimulation. Water is the best diluent ; pure wine, such especially as sherry of the best quality, the most wholesome stimulant.

The very acescent wines*, as is well known, are most unfriendly to the gouty patient ; and

* The influence of wine in inducing and aggravating a disposition to gout, serving also as a predisposing and exciting cause to a paroxysm, must be greatly connected with the native acids in the wine ; for the drinking of spirits only, although a dreadful bane to the constitution in other ways, is

the influence of champagne, although not containing so much acid as some other wines, in exciting a paroxysm, is now and then very remarkably shewn. One gentleman, subject to gout, was prevailed upon, in opposition to his judgment, to drink a glass of champagne at a cheerful feast in honor of some particular occasion; and on the following morning he was severely attacked by *podagra*. Another, who thought himself quite well when he sat down to dinner, drank champagne, and in five minutes felt pain in the fingers and feet, which went on increasing to a fit that confined him for three weeks.

Claret of the best quality agrees with some persons better than the stronger wines; and if it were necessary to drink freely, I should say that it was less injurious, from the smaller proportion of its alcohol; but, as no one can reasonably contend for such necessity, the pre-

not creative of gout. Different wines are hurtful in different degrees; partly, as I conceive, by reason of some peculiar influence of the particular grape used; and partly by the proportion of alcohol forming a constituent in the respective wine.

ference, on this ground, need not be seriously argued.

Burgundy is, of all wines, the most certain fuel to the gout.

All gouty persons are not to be equally restrained. The rule of forbearance must be laid down differently for different constitutions and temperaments; and with especial relation to the strength of the diathesis, which is always the strongest where the hereditary influence exists; but, as I have shewn in the tabular view in my Treatise, the examples of wholly acquired gout are almost as numerous as in the hereditary list.

Although, therefore, it must be right for every one to practise moderation, we find that much the largest proportion of gouty invalids are so enervated by their disease, that neither could they submit in their physical feelings to a low diet and total abstinence from wine, nor would they be benefited by such a plan, but on the contrary; and I repeat that it is those only of unimpaired, or slightly impaired constitution, who should be required to submit to the very

strict restraint which I have mentioned ; the return of gout being an object of their dread.

In all cases, the middle course of self-denial in reality carries with it the truest enjoyment of life ; the greatest freedom from indigestion ; the clearest head ; the sweetest sleep by night* ; and the most elastic state of the nerves by day. It requires, doubtless, fortitude and determination to break through the habits of false indulgence ; but the reward to be obtained is large and certain.

It would be an ill compliment to the intellectual accomplishments of any one, to suppose that his cheerfulness at the social board would be necessarily dependant on the stimulus of wine.

The necessity for the use of wine or other stimulating liquor, imaginary or real, is created by habit ; custom ; delicacy of constitution ; or ill health. It cannot be said to be a natural want.

Horace, although he speaks with great delight of the pleasures of wine in such passages as

* Fuseli is said to have summoned the night-mare to his aid, by supping on pork chops.

“ Deprome quadrimum Subinâ,

“ O Thaliarche, merum diotâ,”

the “ nunc est bibendum ;” and the “ ducere nectaris succos,” &c. ; yet, with equal felicity, has the following :

“ Me pascunt olivæ,

“ Me cichorea, levesque malvæ :”

to which he adds the prayer for clear sense ; strong health ; and an honorable old age ;—the results of leading a life according to nature.

I could quote very many examples of success in averting the returns of gout by the disuse of wine and all fermented liquors. They have been persons of firm constitution, and who have taken the alarm from the early assaults, perhaps from the first invasion, of gout.

I have known some instances of gout having taken place once only in the early part of life, and never afterwards ; and this notwithstanding that no exact method of diet was pursued : so much does constitution vary, and the individual diathesis itself undergo a change. Examples of this kind are very rare.

The general principle of care and temperance must undoubtedly aptly apply to all gouty

persons ; but the exact rule of diet is to be varied for every individual ; and that will be the best, by means of which the digestive functions are the most healthily performed ; the circulation kept regular, and tempered in its force ; and the nervous system maintained in the most equal state of tone and tranquillity.

Those who are afflicted by gout or rheumatism, or by both disorders, occurring sometimes separately, at others in conjunction, act wisely in resorting to some watering place in the summer season, or at the beginning of autumn. Of late years, it has been greatly the fashion to prefer the baths on the Continent ; and doubtless there are many, especially in Germany and the Pyrenees, possessing distinguished efficacy ; but in our own country we can boast of mineral springs, and of baths, which, if rightly understood and used, may leave nothing to be desired. The warm springs at Bath are admirably suited to many chronic cases, in which there is debility of circulation, and depression of nervous power.

In those instances, however, in which a favorable reaction follows the immersion, the Buxton

bath claims particular regard. During the last twenty years, I have had the opportunity, every season, of witnessing its surprising efficacy. Intermediate in temperature (82°) between the warm and the cold bath, it acts as a most agreeable and refreshing tonic, neither exciting the circulation so as to produce subsequent relaxation—an effect often produced by the hot bath; nor depressing it by that immediate sedative influence which belongs to the cold bath;—it delights the invalid by the pleasing invigoration which it produces. The internal use of St. Anne's Well water is also to be recommended as a light tonic to the stomach, and a pure and useful diluent.

Disappointment must often be experienced, because so many use these springs without any, or sufficient, preparation; and now and then the case itself is not appropriate.

There are many cases in which the previous employment of the waters of Cheltenham, Leamington, or Harrogate, and probably in conjunction with an alterative medicine, would tend in a high degree to the curative power of the Buxton bath.

In what circumstances the remedial powers of the warm bath, or vapor bath, are to be resorted to, it is not my present purpose to consider.

The regimen of gouty persons, embracing the consideration of exercise* in its various modes; of clothing; of the hours of rest and rising; and also of residence and climate; is a matter always of great importance to be considered.

It now remains that I should bring these pages to a conclusion; as I fear that I may have already exceeded my proper limits on the present occasion.

I will indulge the hope that I may have successfully advocated the pretensions of re-

* The infinite importance of exercise for the preservation of health is such, that no one who neglects it has a right to expect exemption from some kind of disease. Those unfortunate gouty persons, who by their infirmities are precluded from quitting their apartments, should have daily frictions used over the body generally; make use of a good chamber horse, if in their power; and adopt any ingenious expedients as a substitute for ordinary exercise; so that digestion may be assisted: and the functions of the skin, which are so important, may at least receive some useful excitement.

gular practice, in opposition to empirical methods of treatment.

I have brought forward many new arguments, and new facts and observations; with the design of elucidating the real nature of gout; of setting forth the principles of constitutional treatment which I conceive to be well founded; and of shewing, in this further report, what I consider to be the real merits of Colchicum, as one of the remedies in this disorder.

He renders a tribute to the commonwealth of physic, who studies to improve the use of those means which we already possess; for I believe that it is the fate of many excellent remedies to fall into disrepute and neglect, from an insufficient acquaintance with their properties, and best modes of administration.

I wish to set a just value on every discovery of a new and useful medicine; but I suspect that the seeking after new remedies for diseases has of late been carried so far, as to have grown into a fault.

It will afford me the highest gratification,

if you should find reason to approve the view which I have taken of my subject.

That you, my dear Sir, may, for many years to come, enjoy health and strength; enabling you to continue your valuable services to mankind; to promote the advancement of medical science; and sustain the dignity of our profession; is the ardent wish of

Your faithful and obliged

Friend and Servant,

CHARLES SCUDAMORE.

To

WILLIAM FREDERIC CHAMBERS, M.D. F.R.S.
K. C. H. Physician to the QUEEN, and the QUEEN
DOWAGER, &c. &c. &c.

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