

**Observations on fevers, wherein the different species, nature and method of treating those diseases, are represented in new and interesting points of view ... / by John Roberts.**

**Contributors**

Roberts, John.  
Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

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OBSERVATIONS  
ON  
F E V E R S,  
WHEREIN THE  
DIFFERENT SPECIES,  
NATURE AND METHOD  
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TREATING THOSE DISEASES,  
ARE REPRESENTED IN  
NEW AND INTERESTING  
POINTS OF VIEW.

THE Whole written in a simple and concise Manner, divested of the TERMS of ART, and adapted to common Capacities, on the plain Principles of COMMON SENSE. Being designed for the Use of those, who may be afflicted with those DISEASES, as well as the Medical Reader.

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By JOHN ROBERTS, SURGEON.  
Late of His MAJESTY'S ROYAL NAVY;  
now of GRAFTON-STREET, SOHO.

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L O N D O N :

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T H E

R E F A C E.

THE following Observations on the Nature and Treatment of Fevers; which I now most respectfully offer to the Public, were originally written in the Course of a Voyage to Bengal in the East-Indies, in the Years 1767 and 1768, when I had, not only the most extensive Opportunities of seeing the greatest Number of Men labouring under putrid Fevers, a most violent and dangerous Kind; but also the total Insignificancy of the Mode of treating those Diseases which I had been previously taught, and which I found to be the prevailing Mode of Practice in that Country, as well as in England----The Death of a great Number of

Men which daily happened, both on board the Ships as well as in the Hospital on shore; under the evident Appearance of a very high Degree of Putrefaction; determined me to lay aside my former Mode of Practice, and in its stead, substitute that which is described in the following Sheets under the Head of Putrid Fevers. I had not adopted it for many Days before I had the Pleasure to find that I had not done wrong, finding it, when it was timely began, and diligently persisted in, prove almost universally successful.

THE pleasing Satisfaction which I felt on reflecting that I had, in no small Degree, contributed to the Preservation of many useful Men, was too great to suffer me to pass over my New Mode of Practice with slight Attention, I have therefore committed it to Paper, as well as such Observations which, from Time to Time, I have been able to make, tending to establish in my own Mind the Propriety of adopting the same Method of Practice in all Fevers attended with a great Degree of Putrefaction. I have also paid no small Attention to the Nature and  
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Progress of Fevers in general, and to Putrid ones in particular; and daily Experience and attentive Observation convinced me of the Absurdities which medical Writers have been guilty of, in multiplying the Species of Fevers; as well as the Variety of Symptoms, contra-indications, critical Days, and such unintelligible Nonsense, which we find in almost every Page of our medical Books. On the other Hand, the more I attended to Fevers, the more I became convinced of their uniform Regularity and Simplicity: and of the Ease and Certainty, with which their Nature may be ascertained; and also of the absolute Necessity of exploding as useless Trifles, almost all the Medicines which are now most commonly exhibited in Fevers, particularly in those of a putrid malignant Kind; and in lieu thereof, substitute those which are not contrasted or of opposite Effects, and which Reason and Experience declare to be most effectual. I have also found that it was of the first Consequence; that a due Attention be paid, not only to the Patient's Diligence in taking the Medicines directed for him, but also that his Situation, Cloathing and Diet, should not coun-



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teract the Effect of his Medicines, but that all should co-operate in such a Manner as to produce with Certainty the same uniform Effect.

I SHALL endeavour to shew in the following Sheets that by a due Attention to very plain and evident Rules, Fevers may be cured with as much Speed, Ease and Certainty, as most Diseases with which we may be afflicted.

ALTHOUGH it is now Twelve Years since the following Papers were first wrote, I had not an Opportunity of offering them to the Public sooner, as it fell to my Lot to be out of the Nation almost ever since. Neither could I have done it formerly with the same Confidence as I now can; having successfully followed the same Mode of Practice during repeated Voyages to India, as well as for three Years I served as Surgeon in his Majesty's Navy, during which Time I have had most extensive Opportunities of observing and treating Fevers both in North-America and the West Indies.

I THINK

I THINK it not unnecessary here to acknowledge that a Mode of treating Fevers something similar to the following; has been recommended by other Practitioners; particularly Dr. JAMES LIND, of Haslar Hospital, and my Friend Mr. JOHN CLARK, formerly Surgeon of the Talbot Indiaman, (now Dr. JOHN CLARK, of Newcastle) but both those Gentlemen professedly treated on Diseases peculiar to Hot Countries; by which it may seem to imply, that the Method of Practice which they recommended can only be proper in Hot Countries: but so far is that from being a just Conclusion, that a Putrid Fever is one and the same Disease, and should be treated alike in every part of this World.

I FARTHER beg leave to acknowledge that about a Year ago there fell to my Hands by mere Chance, a Miscellaneous Paper containing Dr. LETTSOM'S Method of treating Putrid Fevers. As it is short, and very conformable to my own Ideas on the same Subject, and wrote almost in the same Words as will appear in the following Sheets, I will here transcribe it; and  
am

am very happy to have my Opinion supported by the Sentiment of that ingenious Physician.

“ THE Symptoms that characterize this Fe-  
 “ ver are uniform, the Remission being irregu-  
 “ lar and scarcely evident; the heat of the Body  
 “ intense, the Head-ach almost perpetual; the  
 “ Pulse, small, frequent and irregular, with  
 “ the utmost Prostration of Strength and De-  
 “ spondency of Mind; and from the putrid bi-  
 “ lious Effusions into the Stomach arise nau-  
 “ seous bitter Taste, and frequent vomiting;  
 “ the Respiration is laborious and interrupted  
 “ with deep Sighs, the Breath offensive, and  
 “ likewise the Sweat, which is sometimes tinged  
 “ with Blood; the Delirium almost constant;  
 “ the Tongue dry and covered, as well as the  
 “ Teeth and Lips, with a brown or black tena-  
 “ cious Foulness; Thrush and Ulceration in the  
 “ Mouth and Throat come on; the Urine de-  
 “ posits a dark coloured Sediment; the Stools  
 “ are exceedingly nauseous and fœtid, and  
 “ blackish or bloody; the Eyes almost univer-  
 “ sally seem horney or glossy, and frequently  
 “ the Whites are tinged of a deep Blood Co-  
 “ lour,

“ lour, petechiæ like Flea-bites, appear; and  
 “ sometimes Exudations of Blood or Vibices;  
 “ hemorrhagy from the Gums, Nose, or old  
 “ Ulcers come on, and a fatal Hiccup often  
 “ closes the Tragedy. While the Patient was  
 “ languishing under the Oppression of these  
 “ dreadful Symptoms, a painful Sensation was  
 “ excited in my Breast, while I continued at-  
 “ tentive only to the Mode of Practice of other  
 “ Physicians; but as the loss of a Patient by the  
 “ usual rotine gave me pain, I determined to  
 “ relieve my Anxiety by a more spirited Inter-  
 “ position in Favour of my Patient; and I found  
 “ to my inexpressible Satisfaction, that my en-  
 “ deavours were almost uniformly successful.  
 “ The principal Remedies I made use of, be-  
 “ sides good Liquors, were Peruvian Bark, and  
 “ cold Air. By these I have learned that a De-  
 “ lirium, Dyypsonea, with Pulse One hundred  
 “ and thirty while distinct, occuring in putrid  
 “ Fevers, are rendered as little tremendous, as  
 “ the common Symptoms of an Intermittent,  
 “ by a Method of Cure neither tedious or un-  
 “ pleasant. I have premised already that the  
 “ Fever is ascertained to be of the putrid Kind,  
 “ without Symptoms of Inflammation; in which  
 “ Case

“ Case it may appear necessary to evacuate the  
 “ putrid or accumulated effusions in the Sto-  
 “ mach and Bowels, probably by an antimo-  
 “ nial Vomit, which should always be given in  
 “ such a Manner, or with such Additions, as  
 “ may procure as many Stools, as the Patient  
 “ can easily bear, as well as emptying the Sto-  
 “ mach by vomiting; but where the Patient has  
 “ been previously much weakened, the Eva-  
 “ cuation is not always necessary or safe; and  
 “ indeed the Bark itself generally proves laxa-  
 “ tive, either alone, or when joined with a mi-  
 “ neral Acid. Immediately after the intended  
 “ Evacuation have been produced, I commence  
 “ the Exhibition of the Bark, without waiting  
 “ for Remission or Intermision; a sedulous At-  
 “ tention to which, and to Crisis in Fevers, I  
 “ presume has destroyed more than Famine, or  
 “ Sydenham’s Cold.

“ A DRY dark coloured Tongue, a dry Skin,  
 “ Urine without Sediment, Desipientia, Deli-  
 “ rium, Dyspnoea, and continued Fever, are  
 “ the Circumstances which have deterred Phy-  
 “ sicians from using the Bark. In a word, these  
 “ are the very Reasons for which I would imme-  
 “ diately

“ diately give it ; it promotes a mild Perspira-  
 “ tion, produces a Sediment in the Urine, and  
 “ diminishes the quickness of the Pulse ; it re-  
 “ moves the Delirium, by obviating the Causes,  
 “ which produced the Fever, and effectually  
 “ relieves the Breathing. Such a Treatment  
 “ may probably surprize the Reader, but I am  
 “ earnest in recommending it. In a Fever with  
 “ the urgent Symptoms of Putrefaction, two  
 “ ounces of the Bark a Day, is the least that can  
 “ be depended upon. My common Form,  
 “ however, is to order three ounces of the Pow-  
 “ der to be boiled in a quart of Water to ten  
 “ ounces, which is to be run through a coarse  
 “ Cloth, that admits the fine powder of the  
 “ Bark, and this Decoction is to be taken in 24  
 “ Hours. In weak Stomachs, I have remarked  
 “ that weak Decoctions fit easier with the Pa-  
 “ tient than the Bark in Substance, and thereby  
 “ prove more effectual. In some Cases a dram  
 “ of Elixir of Vitriol is added, it is a laxative,  
 “ prevents Fermentation, and is probably anti-  
 “ septic. It should be a general caution that  
 “ the Patient pay at least a daily Tribute *ad cloa-*  
 “ *cam\**, as the first Evacuation will not insure us

\* That he has at least one Stool a Day.



“ against a fresh though a less Effusion of bilious  
 “ Matter. It is with me a general Injunction to  
 “ keep the Patient out of Bed, as is now gene-  
 “ rally recommended in the Small Pox, and  
 “ where it is not convenient to take them out of  
 “ Doors; the Windows and Doors of the Cham-  
 “ bers are ordered to be opened throughout the  
 “ Day, and the Patient to be exposed to the  
 “ current of the Air; the good Effect of this  
 “ *aura salutifera* (wholesome Air) are astonish-  
 “ ing. This with the free use of the Bark, an  
 “ Attention to the state of the Bowels and some  
 “ precaution to Regimen, will render a Putrid,  
 “ Goal, Hospital or Camp Fever, which are all  
 “ one and the same in the Event, as familiar  
 “ and as easy to cure as a common Intermit-  
 “ tent. It is almost unnecessary to remark, that  
 “ in Cases of this kind all animal Food and Broth  
 “ are to be avoided \*, and farinacea substituted  
 “ for Diet. The common Beverage should be

\* Dr. Lettsom is here governed by the Prejudice of a  
 prevailing Custom; had he ever put this to the Test of  
 Reason and Experience, he would have known that good  
 Broth, consisting of a due Proportion of vegetable and  
 animal Substances, affords much more nourishment than  
 a mere vegetable Diet.

“ Lemo-

Lemonade, imperial Water, acidulated Li-  
 quors, Apple Tea, Wine and Water, and  
 pure Wine, particularly Claret, of which the  
 Patient may be allowed from one Pint to  
 three Quarts a Day. And among those who  
 have been used to Malt Liquors, I advice the  
 free use of good Small Beer, or if agreeable,  
 as much Porter as they can drink, of which  
 I have known Patients drink a Pint at a  
 draught with great Refreshment."

HOWEVER Similar the above Quotation may  
 appear to some part of the following Work,  
 I hope the World will give me full Credit to  
 this Declaration, that the following Papers were  
 not only first wrote at the Time before men-  
 tioned, but received the last Revival, Correction  
 and Addition, above Seven Years ago; conse-  
 quently long before I had the pleasure of know-  
 ing Dr. LETTSOM'S Sentiment. Indeed it is  
 scarcely possible for two Men to write on the  
 same Subject, without frequently hitting on the  
 very same Thing, without having any Know-  
 ledge of each other: this is exactly my Case  
 with respect to Dr. LETTSOM.

WHATSOEVER has been said by other Gentlemen in support of a Mode of Practice similar to that which I most earnestly recommend in the following Sheets; it is notorious that the very reverse is adopted and obstinately persisted in, by a very great Majority of every Rank and Degree in the medical Profession. When therefore, Mankind are so biassed by false Prejudice, as to run directly counter to the plain Dictates of Common Sense, in a Matter of that very high Importance as the Treatment of Fevers; surely too much cannot be said with the View of exploding a Practice, so dangerous to the Safety and Well-being of our Fellow Creatures.

My principal View in the following Papers, is to shew, in a plain intelligible Way (the Work being designed more for the Public in Common, than the medical Profession) that Fevers are so far from being so various in their Nature from each other, as have ever been represented by Physicians, that there actually are but two sorts of Fevers that essentially differ from one another. And when their Nature is well ascertained, (for which no more is required

quired than common Attention) farther to shew, that Nature and Common Sense, presents us with no more than one uniform and rational Method of Treatment applicable to each sort of Fever; and by diligently pursuing which, we not only avoid all Absurdities and Contradictions; but in general have the pleasing Satisfaction, to see our Endeavours crowned with success.

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T H E

# I N T R O D U C T I O N.

**T**O present the Public with even a List of the Names of the multiplicity of Authors both Antient and Modern, who have professedly wrote on the Nature and Treatment of Fevers, would be no very easy Undertaking: and though there are a few, among the Multitude, whose writings have justly rendered them an Ornament to their Profession; it still remains a melancholy Truth, that Fevers, Diseases so eminently destructive to the Human Race; are so little understood by medical Practitioners, that it may truly be asserted, that the Treat-

ment of these, the most common of all Diseases, which afflict Mankind, is generally found to be the most ineffectual and absurd.

I N this very important Branch of medical Science, we find no certain and rational System established for the government of Practitioners; but every one follows the dictates of his own Imagination, which, too often, is found to be delusive and irrational.

IT is very doubtful whether we have T E N M E N in GREAT BRITAIN, who absolutely agree in the most essential Points, relative to the Nature and Treatment of Fevers. This must necessarily happen while Men are blindly led by Prejudice to follow a System of fallacious Rules, rather than open their Eyes and view with Candour the plain naked dictates of Truth and Reason: which can never lead them into Absurdities and Contradictions.

Should untun'd Nature crave the Medic Art,  
 What Health can that contentious Tribe impart?  
 Ev'ry Phyfician writes a different Bill.  
 And gives no other Reason but his Will.

POMFRET.

T H E

THE Confusion and Irregularity observable in the Conduct of medical Practitioners in treating Fevers, I believe chiefly arises from the Mistakes of Authors, in arranging and describing such various Sorts of them, as essentially forming different Species of Diseases, and consequently requiring different Method of Treatment: but in Truth, there are much less Variety among those Diseases than is generally imagined; and a great many of those, which we find described by Writers as different Species of Diseases, differ from each other in degree of Violence only; and that may arise from a thousand different Circumstances; without changing the Nature of the Fever, or affecting or altering the general Indication of curing it.

AMONG many instances of Absurdity which may readily be met with in medical Books, the following singular one is found in the Works of one of the very best Writers, on Fevers, this Country ever produced. DR. HUXHAM, in pointing out the Difference between a slow nervous and putrid pestilential Fever, observed, that "the former seemed to have its Seat in  
b 3 " the



“ the lymphatic and nervous Juices.” I shall only observe here, that the lymphatic and nervous Juices (if such exist) are not only exceedingly foreign to each other in their Nature; but neither of them, or any other part of our Bodies, can be singly, the Seat of any kind of Fever. It is certain, however, that this Doctrine is received and much followed by a number of Practitioners, who seek for no other Assistance to account for the Weakness, Faintness, Anxiety, despondency of Mind, and nervous Tremors, which are so common to putrid Fevers, and other Diseases of that Nature. Agreeable to such Idea, we find their practice, which generally consist in the Choice of such Medicines as by their Subtlety, Warmth, and Volatility, are (as they think) best calculated to enter into, and irritate the nervous System, and assist it to expel the offending Matter.

IT is astonishing that Men of Sense and Learning should advance such Absurdities; when it is indisputably ascertained that the Brain and Nerves are the only Organs of all kind of animal Sensation; and as it is further  
evident

evident that the different degrees of Sensation in different Persons, and even in the same Person at different Times, arises from the Nerves not being at all Times equally cloathed, and defended, by muscular, and other insensible Matter, from the too rough Impression of natural Causes. Thus we find that on removing the cuticle (scarf Skin) the Air, or a very small degree of Heat will give us much Pain, which without such removal, would not in the least affect us; and yet the removed Skin, was always totally void of every degree of Feeling.

Also when our Blood and Juices are thin and acrid, and our Solids are relaxed and weak, our Nerves necessarily are less defended, and we feel the same painful Sensation through our whole Bodies which is partially produced externally by the removal of the scarf Skin.

ON the other Hand, an addition to the Cloathing of the Nerves (which is made by bracing or constringing our Solids, and thickening

ing of our Blood and Juices) will proportionally deaden or lessen Sensation.

IT is therefore evident that a general Relaxation of the muscular System, which, in fact, is a degree of Putrefaction, must inevitably be attended with extraordinary degree of nervous Sensibility. Such being the cause of that Weakness, Faintness, Anxiety, or that distressed Feeling, well known to every Person who ever had a putrid Fever; it is evidently demonstrable on every principle of Common Sense, that those, who in such Cases administer volatile Salts or Spirits, as well as many more Articles of an acrid irritating Nature; must to a great degree of certainty do their Patients infinite Injury.

I HAVE very frequently seen Instances of delicate Women who were subject to hysterical Complaints, which are as properly called Nervous, as any Diseases whatever; do themselves much Harm by the free use of Spirit of Hartshorn, and such dissolving acrid Medicines; and have received more Benefit from  
the

the prudent use of the Bark, Chalybeats, bracing and stomachic Medicines; a warm cordial astringent nutritious Diet, with gentle Exercise in a dry clear Air, than from all the pompous nervous Medicines commonly trusted to in those Cases.

THE same Mode of reasoning, therefore, which condemn the use of those irritating acrid Medicines in Cases of Debility, Weakness, or Relaxation; shew the Utility of pursuing such Method as appear, by Reason, Experience, and Observations, best calculated to brace up and increase the Cohesion of the muscular Fibres; by which the Nerves will be better defended from the rough Impression of natural Causes: many of which, powerfully affect our frail and corruptible Bodies, during the whole Course of our Lives.

IN what Manner Sensation is immediately produced in the Brain and Nerves, has not yet been discovered in a satisfactory Manner: but all that is materially useful to medical Practitioners, is easily known, viz. that all those

AMONG our Country-men who have favoured the World with their thoughts on this important subject, Dr. HUXHAM, and Sir JOHN PRINGLE, are justly entitled to our praise and gratitude: but I can never read their Works without the most painful Sensation, to find Men give the most exact and rational account of these Diseases, and defeating their own good Intention by recommending as principal Remedies, Medicines which are trifling and insignificant: of this Class are the cordial Confection and compound powder of Contrayerva root, Medicines in putrid Fevers of great Vogue in the present Practice; but all those who confide in their Efficacy very frequently find themselves deceived.

THERE are other Writers who studiously attend to make their Works totally incomprehensible to the Bulk of Mankind; and by endeavouring to support their Profession as a profound Mystery in their Writings, make great advances towards the Exclusion of Common Sense.

DOCTOR

DOCTOR CULLEN, a celebrated Theorist at Edinburgh, in his first Lines of his Practice of Physic: begins that Work with observing, that “ the Art of discerning and distinguishing  
 “ Diseases may be best attained by an accurate  
 “ and compleat Observation of their Phœno-  
 “ mena, as they occur in Concourse and Suc-  
 “ cession and by a methodical Nosology, or an  
 arrangement of Diseases according to their Ge-  
 “ nera and Species, established upon such Ob-  
 “ servation abstracted from all reasoning.”

IT is certain that in practice we find a number of Dr. Cullen's Disciples, who cannot, in Justice be charged with the Crime of suffering Reason to influence any part of their medical Conduct: But I think it is somewhat extraordinary that a Physician should, in his Writings, acquaint us, that in our attempts to relieve our Fellow Creatures labouring under Diseases, we are not to suffer our Reason to have any share in the government of our Conduct! At least it must be allowed, that agreeable to that Maxim, Dr. ROCK, or any other Quack of Practice, may

may be as good a Phyfician as any Member of the Colleges of London or Edinburgh!

WHEN we find fuch incoherent Nonfence advanced by Men of the firft Eminence in Practice: in this our pretended enlightened and improved Age; it is not to be wondered at, that Mankind fhould frequently efteem medical Profefors as a fet of Impoftors whofe pretended Art is unfupported by certain and rational Principles.

As Theory alone is infufficient to conftitute a good Phyfician; fo doth practice unaffifted by Reason and a previous Knowledge of the animal Oeconomy, and of the moft common and obvious Laws of Nature, form a dangerous Quack.

ALTHOUGH medical Science is fo complicated in its Nature as to require great expence of Time, Labour, and Money, to acquire a competent Knowledge of it: if we could divest ourfelves of that Prejudice which is the produce of Ignorance and Superftition, we fhould find  
that

that the most important and useful parts of it, may be easily comprehended on the Principles of Common Sense. The art of Physic would then be esteemed (as it really is) a rational Science; and the Professors of it, instead of being esteemed a Society of Self-interested deceitful Jugglers; would be honoured and respected as valuable Members of Community.

WITH an anxious wish to contribute my Mite for the Public Good, and the Honour of the Profession; I proceed to relate my thoughts on the Nature and Treatment of Fevers; unconnected with all Theory but such as may be founded in undoubted Fact; and may be necessary to elucidate or explain my subject; studiously avoiding all Terms of art, so as to render the whole intelligible to moderate Capacities on the principles of Common Sense.



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## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

ON

# F E V E R S.

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**I**T has already been observed, that many Fevers described by Authors as different Species of Diseases, have no Difference but in Degrees of Violence. As one Instance, among a thousand more which may be stated, tending to prove this Position; let any candid impartial Person read attentively, Doctor Huxham's Description of the slow nervous, and putrid malignant Fevers; and, I will appeal to him, whether they differ in any respect, but in degree of Violence: the first, often run a considerable length of Time, without shewing

A

any

any great Degree of Putrefaction; the latter, make a more rapid Progress, and the Contest, between Life and Death, is frequently decided in a few Days.

THE seeming Difference between Fevers absolutely of the same Nature, must necessarily arise from the different State of the Air and Weather, Season of the Year, the Patient's Age, Constitution, usual Employment, way of Living, and nature of his Habitation. Dr. Huxham, who is deservedly esteemed one of the best Writers on this Subject, this Country ever produced; in describing the slow nervous Fever, said, that "it most commonly attacks  
 " Persons of weak Nerves, a lax habit of  
 " Body, and a poor thin Blood, those who  
 " have suffered great Evacuation, a long de-  
 " jection of Spirits, immoderate Watchings,  
 " Studies, Fatigue, and the like. And, also  
 " those who have used much crude unwhole-  
 " some Food, a vapid impure Drink, or who  
 " have been confined long in a damp foul  
 " Air; that have broken the Vigour of their  
 " Constitution by Salivations, too frequent  
 " Purgings, immoderate Venery, and so forth."

IF any judicious Person, tolerably well acquainted with the true Principles of the medical Profession; was seriously to reflect with Candour on the Doctor's Description of the slow nervous Fever; it would be somewhat extraordinary if it did not occur to his Mind, that the only rational and effectual Plan which should be adopted in such Cases, is that which is known to be most efficacious in bracing, strengthening, and invigorating the Solids; and in purifying and thickening the Fluids. For that Purpose, he should chuse the Bark, the aromatic stomachic Bitters, and the vegetable or mineral Acids, a nourishing vegetable Diet, with the free use of Malt Liquor, Claret, or Red Port Wine, and, when the Patient is able, gentle Exercise, in a dry clear Air, with the prudent use of the Cold Bath. When he has revolved in his Mind, this Plan, which is absolutely the plain dictates of Common Sense; how much will he be surprized, when he finds a Physician of such Reputation as Doctor Huxham, in that very Case insist on the excellency of Blisters, the warm irritating Medicines, as the volatile fœtid Spirit, the volatile aromatic Spirit, Musk, Compound Powder of Contra-

yerva Root, and saline neutral Medicines? All these, instead of bracing and strengthening the Solids, and purifying and thickening the Blood and Juices (which is the most obvious Indication, according to the Doctor's own Description of the Causes of slow Nervous Fevers) relax the one, and dissolve the other.

FROM such strange absurd Doctrine supported on the Credit of Men deemed eminent in their Profession; Medical Practitioners are frequently lost and bewildered, and in that doubtful confused Situation, they often change their Plan, until their Patients recover in spite of their Medicines, or are prepared for the Grave, and leave the Doctors to reflect on the Nature of the Fever, and the Virtue of their Medicines, both which, they sometimes even then remain ignorant of.

# OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

DIFFERENT SPECIES

OF

# FEVERS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the multiplicity  
of Fevers described by medical Writers;  
essentially differing in their Nature from  
e another; we should find, if we were di-  
ted of Prejudice, and to leave the old beaten  
h of Ignorance and Superstition; that all  
ers, however different their Symptoms,  
y appear to be; may very consistent with  
nth and Reason, be reduced to two different  
ffes. The first Class, or order of Fevers,  
mprehends all those which are found to at-  
z Persons of plethoric Constitutions, or those  
ch are found to be possessed of a strong and  
d state of Solids, and a fulness of rich and

dense Blood. In this case, too much Health becomes a Disease. The Blood thick and rich in Quality, and over abundant in Quantity is, from violent Exercise, debauched way of Living, a sudden Change in the Air, from hot and moist, to cold and dry, by which Perspiration is lessened, and the Solids acquire an additional Force, liable to be forced in Quantities, into such minute Vessels as were not intended by Nature to receive such. In such Case, Obstruction will happen, which will necessarily produce Inflammation, all this may happen in the Brain, Lungs, Liver, Stomach or any other Part of the Body; from thence arises the various Symptoms and Appearance which attend those Fevers, which are properly called Inflammatory.

THE second Class or Order of Fevers, are all those which are attended by a Disunion and Relaxation of the Solids, and a dissolved or putrid State of the Fluids. Such Fevers are very properly called Putrid or Malignant; and of this Sort, are, Huxham's slow, nervous, and putrid Pestilential; as well as all those describ'd

By Authors under the different Names of Bilious, Yellow, Jail, Camp, Military, and Spotted Fevers, all these are no other than one and the same Disease. Even the Plague itself, is no more than a putrid Fever of a very malignant Kind, as is evident from the various Causes, which are generally allowed to have the principal Share in producing it; these are a hot and moist State of the Atmosphere, the free use of hot Bathing, abstinence from fermented antiseptic Liquors, with Uncleanliness, and living in close populous Cities with stagnated foul Air.

HOWEVER different in their Nature the various Causes of Putrid Fevers may be; their Effects are uniformly the same; and all Fevers attended with Putrefaction should be always considered as one and the same Disease; differing only in Degree of Violence, in Proportion as the Putrefaction may be more or less advanced. And though it may sometimes be proper to make some Difference in the Method of treating them, according to the De-



gree of Malignancy and particular Symptoms, the general Indication of Cure, in them all, will be found to be uniformly the same.

W A S it possible for Physicians to divest themselves of that stupid Prejudice, which so long disgraced the Schools of Physic; and for a Moment listen with Candour to the plain Dictates of Common Sense; they would be obliged to confess that they never saw a Fever that was not attended, either with too much natural Powers, or too much Debility; or, in other Words, that was not strictly of the inflammatory or putrid Kind: even those which are called symptomatic, and the different Sorts of Intermittents, will be found to have some relation to these two different Classes. Indeed it is notorious that low damp Countries with a raw moist Air, are greatly productive of intermitting Complaints. The frequent degeneracy of such Diseases into Dropsies, hectic Complaints, and even the Success we meet with in curing these diseases, by Means of the Bark, timely and plentifully given; is a strong  
Con-

Confirmation that such Sort of Intermittents  
are slow putrid Diseases, and may justly be  
esteemed the most inoffensive sort of those  
Fevers which fall under my second general  
Division.

THERE are also Agues that require Evacu-  
ation before they can be cured by the Bark,  
and those more properly belong to the first  
Class or Order of Fevers.

**O B S E R -**

OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE  
CAUSES  
OF  
FEVERS.

MUCH have been said on the immediate and remote Causes of Fevers, but to very little Purpose; the first, is generally beyond the Limits of Human Comprehension; and, in describing the latter, Writers have too often amused themselves with mere Conjectures, without throwing any useful Light on the Subject. It is certain, that the Causes of Fevers are so various, that we can never reduce them to a true and comprehensive System, unless we could mould the Bodies of Mankind into the same Temperament; and also find them the same Air, Exercise, and Diet, and oblige them to live invariably according

according to one Rule. As we cannot do that, and as we find that Fevers of the same Nature may be produced by a thousand apparent Causes; it is our Business to direct our Attention to the present Situation of our Patients, as they offer to our View; rather than seek for the Causes; which, if we knew them, we should find to be such as we could not obviate; as a great many of them may frequently depend on the past Faults or Inadvertency of the Patients themselves. In a word, the first and most necessary Qualification of a Physician, is to be able to form a true Conception of the Nature of his Patient's Disorder; in which, he will be assisted by duly attending to his Patient's Age, place of Residence, nature of his Life and Employment, previous to his Illness; and above all, to the sensible Qualities of the Air and Weather. These well understood, will always prove certain Guides to a rational Conception of the Nature of accute Diseases.

THERE are two Things which have been supposed by late Writers to be very formidable Causes of Fevers: these are, Marsh Miasma, or something which they suppose arises from  
from

from marshy Ground, and human Contagion. But, these supposed Causes, like all others, are not well understood. For if they were the general Causes of any kind of Fevers, we should seldom find such Diseases any where but but in the Vicinity of marshy Ground, and in crowded Ships, Work-houses or Prisons, where a Number of People may be confined together; but, the Fact is notorious, that we very frequently find Fevers rise to a dangerous Height, when we cannot charge either of those imaginary Causes, with having any Share in producing them.

MARSHY Ground is found to be unwholesome from its low and damp Situation, and the the uncommon Humidity of its Atmosphere. Damp Air naturally disposeth all animal Bodies to a gradual Dissolution or Putrefaction; and human Contagion is no more than animal Putrefaction, from which the Air receives active putrid Particles, which, when received into the Bodies of healthy Subjects, tends, according to the general Law of Gravity, to reduce their Bodies into the same dissolved or putrid State.

State. This, may be compared to that Fermentation in Wort, which we find produced by the addition of Yeast. This human Contagion, as it is called, is easily avoided, and can never be of much Consequence (unless in a confined Place) unless the general Temperature of the Air, is such as to concur with it to dispose animal Bodies to Dissolution or Putrefaction; whenever that happens, we find putrid Diseases become very prevalent; so that it is very evident that human Contagion, esteemed the most formidable Cause of putrid Fevers, is only an accidental secondary Cause, or rather the Effect of something, which, necessarily must have previously existed, without which, that Contagion never could be produced.

IN order to form a right Conception of the true Causes of Fevers, as far as they are ascertainable on rational and certain Principles, which alone can be of any Assistance to us in curing those Diseases; it is necessary we should have a previous Knowledge of the Nature and Functions of the Human Body in a healthy State; and of the Laws or Principles, by which  
 that

that Health is either continued or lost. The Human Body, therefore, is a most admirable Piece of Mechanism, possessing a perpetual Motion, from the first Commencement of Animal Life, until the same is totally extinguished by Death.

THIS exquisite Mechanism is subject to the same natural Laws as inanimate moving Bodies are; that is, its own Motion, the very principle of Life, is hourly tending to its own Destruction. And that would very soon happen, was it not for the wonderful Contrivance made by the Author of Nature, for supplying the constant waste in our Bodies, by introducing continually a due Quantity of wholesome Substance, duly prepared from our Aliment, in our Stomach and Bowels; into our Veins and Arteries; which, by a Process, beyond our Power to explain, become a part of our Flesh and Blood. There is not a Minute in the whole Course of our Lives, in which a Portion of our bodily Substance, is not dissolved and expelled the Habit, by the different Strainers of the Body, as not only useless, but hurtful to Health:

and

and as regular and quickly is that loss repaired by the incessant flowing of rich fluid into our Veins; so that it may, without extravagance, be said, that our Bodies are renewed or formed with new Matter, repeatedly in the Course of our natural Lives.

FOR the better understanding of the Nature of our Bodies, let us consider them as Machines composed of Earth, Oil, Salt, Air, and Water; and that the different Parts of this complicated Machine, contain different proportional Quantities of these chief Ingredients; consequently they must be of different Consistence: so we find that we are all made of more solid and fluid Matter; and that solid and fluid Matter, is not of the same Degree of Solidity and Fluidity in every part, but possesses those different Qualities in a great Variety of Degrees. For instance, our Blood, when in a healthy State, is a very fine Fluid, capable of passing with great Ease through Vessels of great Minuteness: Nevertheless, we have a System of Vessels in our Bodies, which admit a Fluid to pass through them, although they are, with-  
out



Out preter-natural Violence, incapable of receiving a single drop of red Blood. In short, so complicated in its Nature, is the Human Body, and so wonderful are the Laws or Principles by which it is preserved, that we can never sufficiently admire the Power and Wisdom of the divine Architect who made it, and gave Laws for its Support and Preservation. Is it not an Object of Admiration, that the different Particles of Matter which we daily receive into our Bodies for Nourishment, should invariably adhere to those Parts of our Composition, as are of the same Nature as themselves: when a small Error in that Instance would presently promote our Dissolution? Besides, the peculiar Conformation of Solids and Fluids, and a due Regularity which is necessary should take place between the daily Waste of our Bodies, and the fresh Supplies which we receive from our Aliment; it is necessary for the Continuance of Health, that our Solids and Fluids should be of a certain Temperature; that is to say, our Solids must not be above a certain degree of Hardness or Rigidity; or our Fluids above a certain proportional degree of Viscidity

or

or Thickness: on the other Hand, it is not consistent with Health, that the first should be of more than a certain Degree of Softness or Laxity; or the latter, above a peculiar Degree of Fluidity. This peculiar specific Gravity, or Temperament of Body, we call Constitution; and while that peculiar specific Gravity uniformly pervade the respective Parts of an Animal Body, the Functions of that Body must be uniform and regular; consequently, as long as that continue, that Body will enjoy a perfect State of Health: but as soon as the specific Gravity of the several bodily Elements, is altered, whether from a severe Exercise, continual Heat and Motion, a sudden Change in the Air, by which our Bodies may sustain a greater or less degree of pressure; or receiving into our Bodies, such Things as are not calculated to nourish, and maintain the several Particles in their due Order and wholesome Position: that is, when there happens a Change of specific Gravities of the several bodily Elements, proceeding from whatever Cause, a Disease is the Consequence. If such Change should be an increase of specific Gravity above the natural healthy Standard; that is, the Solids become

hard and strong; and the Fluids acquire an additional Thickness by the Particles adhering more forcibly to each other; an inflammatory Disease with Obstruction in some Parts of the Body will happen. When such Change happens sudden and in a high Degree a Coagulation and Stagnation of the circulating Fluid may ensue. Such is the Case of those who are froze to Death. On the other Hand, when the specific Gravity of the animal Composition is diminished, the Solids become relaxed, and the Fluids in a thin dissolved State; as this is a step towards Putrefaction, or more properly a Degree of Putrescence, we must expect Diseases of a putrid or malignant Nature.

AMONG the various Causes of Diseases many of which originates in our own Misconduct, we shall find that the State of the Air, in which we live, is very frequently the most powerful of all Causes of Fevers. In order to understand how that happens, it must be admitted as an established Maxim founded in undeniable Fact; that Heat tends to relax or divide the component Particles of all natural Bodies; we find, therefore, that it relaxes or weakens our Solids  
and

and liquifies our Fluids: and that cold possessing the opposite Effect braces or constricts our Solids and thickens our Fluids. The Effects of both those Qualities of Air, are considerably augmented by the concurring Qualities of Moisture and Dryness. The Weight or Gravity of the Air, also affect our Bodies in a very considerable Degree: so that a light, hot and moist Air most powerfully dispose all animal Bodies to Dissolution and Putrefaction; and a heavy \* dry and cold Air either preserve our Health or disposes us to inflammatory Diseases; merely by overbracing our Solids and thickening our Fluids: in such Case too much Health become a Disease. These are Maxims which are not the Fruit of idle Conjecture; but are established in undoubted Fact; and a due Conception of them can never fail to assist us in ascertaining the Nature of acute Diseases.

\* It is commonly thought that in thick foggy Weather the Air is uncommonly heavy; but the very reverse is the Truth; the Air being then very light, as is evident by observing any common Barometer; the Quick-silver falling in that Instrument in Proportion as the Air lightens. The heaviest of all Air, therefore, is that we find in cold and very clear Weather.

ALTHOUGH it is frequently beyond the Limits of human Power, to alter the Qualities and Properties of Air ; it is no less necessary that we should be acquainted with them ; as it is generally in our Power, in a great Degree to obviate the bad Effects proceeding from an unwholesome Constitution of the Atmosphere : upon the whole, the most general Causes of putrid Fevers, are a light, hot and moist Air, too free use of animal Food, with too sparing use of vegetable ascescent Substances ; with a sedentary inactive Life. These Causes, more particularly affect those who are possessed of a weak, relaxed and delicate Constitution.

THE most frequent Causes of Fevers, which are properly called inflammatory, are a heavy, dry and cold Air, severe Exercise, the free use of Wines, Malt or Spirituous Liquors ; and those who are most subject to these Diseases, are young People with strong robust Constitutions, full of rich and dense Blood : therefore a putrid, and an inflammatory Fever are Diseases differing from one another in the widest Points : consequently the Method of treatment which should be adopted in each Case, should be as  
different

Different as the Nature of the Diseases ; in-  
 much that the most rational and effectual Plan  
 which should be followed for the removal of  
 the latter, would inevitably destroy the Patient  
 was it to be followed in the former Case. That  
 every Person, who may be intrusted with the  
 Lives of his Fellow Creatures, should duly un-  
 derstand this Matter is surely an Object of the  
 greatest Importance. That it is less difficult to  
 ascertain the true Nature of Fevers, and to  
 cure them with a Degree of certainty, than has  
 generally been supposed, I shall endeavour to  
 shew, when I come to describe their Symp-  
 toms, and the Method to be followed in order  
 to obtain a Cure : previous to which I shall say  
 a few Words on the received Opinion that there  
 are certain Days, before the arrival of which  
 no Fevers can be cured ; and the last of those  
 imaginary critical Days, are so remote from  
 the beginning of the Disease, as the Twentieth  
 Day. This very ridiculous imagination, I do  
 not hesitate to pronounce, has been the Means  
 of destroying Millions of the Human Race.

OBSERVATIONS

ON

CRITICAL DAYS

IN

FEVERS.

**T**HAT there is something in the Nature of Fevers which causes them to terminate either in Recovery or Death, on particular Days, hath been believed by Physicians above Two thousand Years past; and so general is this Notion established among us, that every old Nurse pretends to a Sagacity to foresee the Time, in which the Fever will be at the Height. We seldom find much Anxiety about the Fate of the Patient, until the near approach of that important Day, which they imagine, can alone decide the contest between Life and Death.

NOT-

NOTWITHSTANDING the Antiquity of this Doctrine of critical Days, it is proved by daily Experience, to be the Offspring of Ignorance, supported by Superstition: it is also very evident that the Crisis or Terminations of Fevers; as far as they sooner or later happen, absolutely depend on the Manner, in which those Diseases may be treated with Medicines and Diet. I shall presently shew, that a putrid Fever, with which, under some kind of Treatment, the Patient may labour for twenty Days together, and, perhaps may then die; may safely and readily be cured in less than a quarter Part of the Time.

THE first Person who observed that Fevers, have a tendency to terminate on the third, fifth, seventh, ninth, eleventh, fourteenth, seventeenth, and twentieth Day, was Hippocrates, a Grecian Physician, who, for his diligent Attention to the Progress of Diseases, and the faithful Manner in which he communicated his Observations to the World, is justly esteemed the Father of Physic. But, with due Respect to the Memory of that venerable Person; we must allow, notwithstanding the great Exact-



ness, with which he left us the Description of Fevers; that he knew of no certain or rational Method of curing them.

Does not that foolish Deference we pay  
To Men that liv'd long since, our Passage stay?  
What odd, prepost'rous Paths at first we tread,  
And learn to walk by stumbling on the dead?

POMFRET.

INDEED, were we to leave Fevers entirely to Nature, it may be possible that their Terminations may have some Relation to those critical Days described by Hippocrates; but even in that Case, I am much of Opinion, that we should find them happen indiscriminately on all other days. In a word, setting aside all idle, profitless Conjectures; and instead of losing Time in waiting for the critical Day, the Object of our disordered Imagination; it is our Duty, steadily to attend to such Method of Practice, as we know to be most likely to relieve our Patients, in the most effectual and speedy Manner. The Necessity of this is peculiarly great in Fevers; as the Time, in which we can be of service to the Sick, is very short,  
and

and more dangerous Circumstances frequently accumulate every Hour.

I SHALL now proceed to relate a Method of treating Fevers, which, for several Years practice in various Parts of the World, I have found almost universally successful; and which I can safely pronounce will generally prove so, whenever it is diligently and faithfully tried.

O B S E R -





TIGHT QUITTER