### A general state of the Whitehaven Dispensary, : for the year 1804.

#### **Contributors**

Whitehaven Dispensary (Whitehaven, England) Dixon, Joshua, 1745-1825.

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# AGENERALSTATE

OF THE

## WHITEHAVEN DISPENSARY,

For the Year 1804.

(Printed by John Wave, in King freet, Whitehaven.)

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THE Anniversary Meeting of the preceding year afforded a most satisfactory opportunity of attesting the salubrity of this situation. The influence of the general and specific epidemics, which prevailed in the winter and spring, had gradually subsided, and it did not appear probable that any contingent circumstance would excite an apprehension of their immediate powerful recurrence. In populous and confined districts, where unrestricted communication prevails, and where little attention is paid to the cleanliness and ventilation of the houses, and articles of surniture or apparel, seeble and fallacious is the hope of freedom from the danger of infectious disease. In proof of this affertion, with concern do we notice, that the sever, which has so frequently afflicted this country, appeared a few days after that meeting.

A boy, just recovered from the disease, returned to his labour, at a manufactory, in his town, and though perfectly free from complaint, the infection was conveyed from him, or rather his clothing, to a child, in whom the symptoms were peculiarly savourable. This, however, was, by no means, a test of the mild nature of the contagion, is not only the whole samily successively suffered the disease, but every relation or friend, who had any connection with it. In consequence of this imprudence, the sever was communicated to four different situations, and not less than sourteen persons were its

objects, in the space of two months; all of whom very fortunately recovered.

An extensive and populous neighbourhood was preserved from the contagion by the precaution of suppressing the usual intercourse, and that which the chief Agent of Lord Lowther most judiciously employed, viz. the liberal application of fresh prepared

white wash to the houses.

The fingular circumstances of this fever, and which, in a few cases, proved its malignancy, were an extreme degree of languor, and a remarkably putrid tendency. Early in the disease, the patient became unequal to admit the least active exertion; the skin was covered with small florid, and sometimes petechial eruptions, which continued till the completion of the crisis. A thick, black, and offensive film lined the whole surface of the mouth, lips, tongue, and throat. Insensibility to the usual sources of irritation, and incoherent, or francic delirium, prevailed at the same time.

With regard to the treatment, vegetable and mineral tonics were highly beneficial. The expediency of a liberal use of wine was indicated from the first attack of the disease,

and during its progress. Fermenting siquors and yeast, with occasional opiates, we also necessary. From the use of somentations to the seet, and the frequent application of warm vinegar and water to the sace, considerable relief was derived; the advance period of the disease, when medical advice was solicited, not admitting any mode the cold assume the cold assume

To mitigate the virulence, interrupt the progress, and extinguish the seminia this very formidable difeafe, no precaution, antidote, or corrector of contagion, w omitted; and our endeavours were happily successful. The effluvia from heated to and lime, with the various acid fumigations, were diffused in the apartments of the sic With regard to the latter, a further testimony of their esticacy, if that was in the lea necessary, has been afforded by the extensive and accurate practice of the physicians a pointed to eradicate a pestilential fever, which had spread, with irrefistible rapidity, ar raged with extreme virulence, in feveral large towns, in Spain. The usual processe for the complete extrication of the muriatic and nitrous acids were employed, by then with fingular fuccess: and particularly that of Dr. CARMICHAEL SMITH; which affor a constant effusion of the nitrous vapour, and does not fensibly affect respiration. patient never relapsed, the mortality of the disease was lessened; the symptoms, in a var ety of unfavourable fituations, were mitigated, and the contagion was rendered fo mil and innoxious, as to permit the medical and other attendants to visit the fick, and r main long in their chambers, with impunity. To the judicious and repeated emplo ment of these fumigations was attributed the perfect eradication of a distemper, which had required the absolute intervention of Government, to prevent, by coercive measure every possible connection with infected places, and which excited very ferious apprehe fions for the welfare of the people.

The clearest proofs are attested of the use of mineral acids, in correcting contagion of their power in checking its progress, and of their certain essicacy in purifying, not only the persons of those who suffered it, but also every infected article and habitation.

Since early in the month of August, when the last fever patient was admitted, the of jects of the Dispensary have not experienced any recurrence of this disease, though it

malignant influence, in the neighbourhood, has been long deplored.

The disea e most prevalent in the summer, and which may be imputed to the hot an dry state of the weather, was an inflammation of the eyes. Its chief symptoms were frequent gritty sensation, and acute pain extending over the whole surface of the ey and exciting an abundant watery discharge. The head and ears were sometimes affected. It was of so infectious a nature, that a single individual, for the most part, con municated the disease to the rest of the samily. Cold water, brandy a little diluterand saturnine solutions, with gentle purgatives, proved the best remedies.

In former Reports, we have noticed particularly the confiderable number of furgeal and chronic patients; and no clearer proofs of the utility of this Institution can be produced, than those cases, in which relief from the effects of external injury, or long protracted disease, has been afforded. To these, as cases of the greatest importance, or attention has been chiefly directed; and if we have not had it in our power to remove

effectually, we have always been able to m tigate their fufferings.

After these brief observations, respecting a sew of the principal diseases which have o curred in the course of the present year, we shall proceed to consider the Epidemical Contagions of children.—In the adjacent villages, the Scarlet Fever had spread in

nost malignant influence, and proved remarkably satal. Children and delicate people vere the chief objects of its virulence; adult and athletic persons being rarely attacked y it. In Whitehaven, the prevalence of this disease was very general during the winter, to symptoms were mild, and rarely became, in any degree, putrid. In many samilies we had an opportunity to observe, that whilst the younger branches were affected with ne scarlet sever, or ulcerated sore throat, the more advanced in life suffered a pure pleuritic isease; and even, in the former, their incipient symptoms assumed an inflammatory endency. It will not be necessary to trace their usual progress, or to state the curative lan now universally adopted. The only deviation from the present practice was that f prescribing relaxant and aperient medicines, in the early stages of the disease; and detring the use of tonics and cordials till a state of languor and putrescency indicated their xpediency.

The most remarkable instances of malignancy, in this contagion, and of its successful reatment, occurred in January last.—A poor widow and four children inhabited a conned cellar, in Senhouse-street. Two daughters first suffered the characteristic symptoms f this contagion, and from them it was communicated to all the samily. Cleanliness, entilation, and the frequent use of sumigations, with lime, gun powder, and mineral cids, were the means on which we relied for purifying the air in the room, and for preciving the salubrity of a populous district in the vicinity; and our hopes of their efficative were happily realized. Many children have also suffered a great variety of diseases, frecting the stomach and bowels. Diarrhaa, accompanied with painful irritation, was

ne most frequent complaint of the autumn and spring.

To superfede the necessity of suffering a disease which is not less painful and fatal to s objects than offensive to others, the practice of Inoculation for the Cow-pock has been commended, and it is highly fatisfactory to find, that many of the prejudices against s preservative efficacy no longer exist. The inoculations, for this year, amount to 76 .- The poor were prevailed upon to adopt this falutary measure by their apprehenon of the danger which threatened them from the accidental introduction of the Natu-The manner in which this contagion had been communicated, it was exemely difficult to afcertain, as not a fingle instance of it could be discovered, nor had he disease prevailed in Whitehaven and its vicinity, for a considerable length of time. he child of an industrious taylor, in Strand-Breet, was feized with the Small Pox, in eptember last, and there appeared to be the greatest probability that the effluvia from me old articles of apparel, imbued with variolous matter, and which had been repaired y him, might have occasioned the disease. The eruptions were few, and the general ealth of the child was scarcely in the least interrupted by their appearance, or the ght degree of fever which attended them. By strictly confining her to the house, preuding every connection with the public, and washing the linen and other clothes sepaitely from those of the rest of the family, the further dissemination of a contagion the oft destructive to the rifing generation, and to the inhabitants of this populous town and buntry, was prevented.

If the life-preferving plan of inoculating children for the cow-pock soon after their birth, r before they are exposed to the baneful influence of the small-pox, were adopted every here, the immediate sufferings and pernicious or fatal effects, which it too frequently ceasions, could be no longer apprehended; and similar to the pestilential distempers, which estolated the Kingdoms of Europe, in preceding ages, the disease itself would be ac-

A 3 counted

and mild quality of the vaccine matter requires great judgment in its choice and appl tion. Introduced carefully, when quite liquid, before it is arrived at any degree of turity, it will not fail to prevent the patient from being susceptible of the variolous in

tion, at any future period.

With great satisfaction we again express our sense of obligation to those friends, we from the most laudable motives, have so long supplied the objects of this DISPENS with wine, nurse-keeping attendance, and the means of procuring the necessaries of This highly useful assistance, joined to many additional and very muniscent benefaction particularly of several most respectable Ladies, is still continued to them, and has be applied chiefly to the relief of extreme indigence, long protracted illness, the debilitat

effects of labour, and the imbecillities of old age.

As every additional Charitable Undertaking must increase the happiness of lower class of people, it is highly gratifying to announce the Institution of a Chari in this town, for the relief of poor women, in Child-Bed; and the public may reasonal indulge the pleasing hope, that in preventing, or removing, those dangers and distributed are incident to the peculiar circumstances of their situation, it will amply suffice expectations of its noble Founder and Patroness, and of those Ladies who have likely aided its benevolent intentions. In consequence of this establishment, which, impring our original design, administers to the wants of its objects upon a more extensive, sufficiently sufficiently and permanent plan, the Midwirery Department of the Dispensary may be linquished.

How far the indigent were benefited by this branch of our Charity, limited as it n have been, will appear from the following brief statement, that, in the course of two years, the admissions of poor women, for delivery, amount to 1,921; that the moth and their infants have received every requisite surgical, medical, and sometimes peniary assistance; that, of the above number, only four were satal cases; and three

these previously suffered a confumptive tendency.

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In closing this subject, we cannot refrain from expressing our grateful acknowle ments to a benevolent public, for that fanction and support, which this Institut has, from its first recommendation, uniformly received. Many, who in its infant swere its strongest advocates, are removed from this earthly scene, and are now, we trobtaining their well merited reward. Happy, however, are we in observing that the loss, which we must ever deplote, is supplied by other friends and patrons, who actuated by the same noble and ardent zeal, in promoting the interests of the Charit

The beneficence of the Gentlemen of the CUMBERLAND HUNT, in aiding generously the views of this Institution, claims and excites our warmest gratity and our most exalted admiration. With the laudable intention of applying their sit to the best purposes, they have afforded permanent relief to the greatest objects of comiseration; by selecting those of poverty and disease. Hence, the same humane attent has been extended to several other Medical Charities in this County. Whilst shadts of disinterested liberality excite, in their own breasts, the most pleasing and sa safetory feelings and resections, they will obtain the applause of the benevolent, a secure a surure inestimable compensation.

The Benefactions, for the present year, are also augmented by the generosity of the who, though not immediately connected with this country, have had the goodness

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m a noble friend to the Dispensary, who has accepted every opportunity of prooting its interests.—Of the obligation which their kindness has conferred upon this stitution, we wish to express, and shall ever retain, a grateful remembrance.

That Medical Charities form the most essential barrier against the introduction and Terrination of infestious severs is sufficiently proved by long experience, and the conrring testimony of the wisest physicians. As those to whom the management of such ablishments is entrusted, direct their attention particularly to the diseases prevalent aongst the lower orders, and are obliged frequently to visit the abodes of poverty, no tagion can long elude their vigilance. And, as soon as it is discovered, its progress is ecked; its power is mitigated; and its recurrence is prevented, by immediately and igently enforcing every requisite precaution, and exerting every preservative measure.

Whatever, therefore, is contributed to the support of a MEDICAL CHARITY and to the donor an invaluable benefit,—security from the danger of epidemic disease. it is not an affertion unwarranted by facts; it is incontrovertibly proved, by the long of happy exemption of this populous and confined town, from a dreadful sever, which

s rapidly spread its fatal ravages over the adjacent country.

Whilst the man of opulence is thus stimulated by considerations of personal advanre to protect an Institution, which is so conducive to his own fafety, the feelings of mpassion, which nature has implanted in the human breast, will prompt him, with an efistible impulse, to mitigate the pains of sickness, when combined with the distresses of verty .- Those pains he has himself, doubtless, experienced : he must know, that even hen alleviated by every comfort and attention, which riches can procure, they are often creely supportable. Let him recal to his memory those pangs, with which he was onized; and let him confider how truly deplorable must be the situation of one, who, lifled by the same visitation, is deprived both of the necessaries of life, and the succours medicine. Let him picture to his imagination a poor man, languishing on a wretched d, in a dark, confined, and filthy habitation, scarcely sheltered from the inclemency the weather, suffering the greatest bodily pain, and distracted by still more violent anish of mind, on account of his helpless and starving family !- This is not a fictitious ne of mifery, described for the purpose of moving the feelings of the sympathetic art; but, alas! one, of which the DIRECTORS of this CHARITY have been not unfreent spectators .- And who then, that has ever been afflicted with sickness, would withld his support from an Institution, which delivers this unhappy object from the mplicated evils of want and diteafe?

The precariousness of health is daily exemplified; even those to whom an apparent undness and vigour of constitution seemed to promise a long and uninterrupted enjoyent of it, are often visited by disease, in its most dreadful form. In that hour of assume that the constitution and delight must arise from the remembrance of those deeds of nesseence, which soothed the forrows of many in the same distress suit situation?—And, rough the concluding scene of life, we shall be enabled to pass with composure and muets, supported by the animating assurance, that every Act of Charity has been

thfully RECORDED on HIGH, -and will, hereafter, be abundantly REWARDED.

As

As very injurious, and sometimes fatal, consequences have arisen from the improperuse of the FOX GLOVE, the following brief account of a CASE, in which that her was taken, we hope will not be unacceptable. The chief motive for stating it to the public is to deter the lower class of people from employing, in any form, so common, an

yet so poisonous a plant.

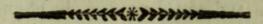
ELIZABETH GAITS, aged 37, Michael street, Feb. 3, 1805. She was advised take a strong Fox-Glove Tea, for the cure of a constitutional nervous head-ach, as severa of her neighbours had employed a snuff made from that herb, with great benefit. Havin procured a considerable quantity of the leaves, she poured about one pint and half a boiling water upon a very large handful of them. She was so desirous of taking the remedy that, after impatiently waiting a quarter of an hour, she drank a cupful, an chewed a little of the dried herb; which relieved her head-ach, and she slept the whole

night, without any inconvenience.

At nine, the next morning, she took the same quantity (at least four ounces) of th high coloured, almost black infusion, warmed; and immediately after breakfasted upo tea. In less than an hour, she complained of a sense of distention in her stomach an bowels; which became exquisitely painful. A constant nausea succeeded, and an ine fectual irritation to flool, accompanied with an acute pain in her head and eyes, shootin through her temples. These symptons were rapidly and violently aggravated in th course of the day. At noon she had a motion to stool, and slight vomiting; the nause still prevailing. In the afternoon, the vomiting was almost incessant; continued a night, and the following day, with delirium, vertigo, deafness, and infatiable thirl though fmall portions of any liquid could be swallowed to gratify it. Her pulse we remarkably flow and languid. A fense of universal coldness and shivering prevaile from the primary attack till the termination of the disease. The ideas of the patien for the most part, were perfectly happy and complacent. Infensible to the lapse of tim or to the concerns of her family, the supposed herself travelling pleasantly, and wa highly amused by a quick succession of brilliant colours, and by the distant prospect lofty and spacious buildings. The skin assumed a brownish yellow colour, and wi covered with small eruptions.

So alarming were the symptoms, that every hope of recovery had been relinquished and she has a very impersect recollection of her state for the first four days. She too a little gin in the morning, but did not apply to the Dispensary till late in the evening From the exhibition of an emetic, she derived little benefit; as more than eight how had elapsed since the strong insusion was taken, and the operation of repeated large doses of castor-oil procured the most immediate and permanent relief. The lax state a bowels, which continued near a week, removed her principal complaints. Opiates an cordials were administered largely, to allay irritation and alleviate the urgent symptom After each dose of the latter, she found the peculiarly bitter taste of the fox-glove ver perceptible. She could take no food, for several days; and a slight degree of head-act

frequent giddiness, and imperfect vision, remained many weeks.



ACCOUNT of the PATIENT	3 admitted, from Ju	me 11, 1804, to	June 10, 1805.
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A Tabular Statement of the Continued Fever Cases, from June 30, 1783, to June 10, 1805.																		

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