Contributors

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

Publication/Creation

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A GENERAL STATE

OF THE

WHITEHAVEN DISPENSARY,

For the Year 1807.

(Printed by John Ware, in King-frect, Whitebaven.)

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T appears, from the Registers of this CHARITY, that fince its primary establishment, in 1783, a period of 25 years, the falutary aids of Medicine and Surgery have been administered to more than 94,000 perfons. Many of these unhappy objects, afflicted with the combined fufferings of poverty and fickness, had the strongest claim on the compaffion of all who enjoyed the power of mitigating their forrows. On many occasions, indeed, have the DIRECTORS of this DISPENSARY witneffed the melancholy fight of a fellow-creature enduring at the fame time the evils of extreme indigence, and of difease; accompanied with most excruciating pains. If there could be a gratification more exquifite in enjoyment, or reflection, than that which arifes

arifes from the confcioufnefs of having, through the medium of this HUMANE INSTITUTION, contributed to prevent, remove, or alleviate their complicated miferies, it is that, which they themfelves voluntarily afford, in their artlefs, but fervent effufions of heart-felt thankfulnefs. Fruitlefs would be the attempt to defcribe feelings, which it is fcarcely in our power to conceive.

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Humbly imitating our beneficent CREATOR, and regarding the fick and needy as His appointed representatives here on earth; and teftifying our gratitude to Him, by our zealous and charitable exertions for the alleviation of their diffrefs; in ftrict compliance also with His repeated injunctions, may we long bestow such bleffings, and be rewarded with fuch exalted delight! If in this world we can anticipate and experience any degree of that happiness which awaits us in a future state, it must be, when, in obedience to the divine precepts, we footh the bitter anguish of the wretched, and render their condition in fome measure fupportable, by communicating to them a portion of those many comforts, which we ourselves, by the kind bounty of Providence, possefs, whilst they are destitute even of the necessaries of life.

To these considerations, which may induce the opulent and humane to patronize such Charitable Establishments, might be added their beneficial effects in populous and confined communities.

That the salubrity of this situation * has been promoted by the unremitting exertions of the DIRECTORS of the DIS-PENSARY,

* WHITEHAVEN, in latitude 54° 32' North, longitude 3° 30' Weft, has not improperly been flyled the *Montpelier* of the *North*. The health of its inhabitants has been preferved by various advantages peculiar to its fituation. The foil is fandy and dry; and, though the hills on each fide and oppofite the harbour are lotty, the fea fhore is confiderably elevated. The coaft is remarkably bold and rocky; abounding with matine vegetables, whofe exhalations muft afford a copious fupply of vital air.

The town is fituated at the head of the Vale, which leads to St Bees, and the communication with the fea, at its further extremity, a range of four miles, occafions a regular fupply, and indeed conftant ftream, of frefh air; the immediate effects of which are gratefully felt in fultry weather; as its falutary influence must undoubtedly operate at all feafons; and to this circumstance alone the healthy state of Whitehaven and its vicinity has been attributed.

The town is fo contiguous to the fea, that the tide flows up to it. With regard to the interior, (a circumstance of no small confideration to the well-being of the inhabitants of any populous town) Whitehaven is remarkably well-built; the dwellings are generally commodious and comfortable. The houses, with a very few exceptions, are of free stone, covered with flate. There is not a tiled, nor a thatched roof in the town. Many of the flreets are spacious; and most of them crossing each other at right angles, the Ventilation (another important matter) is preferved clear and uninterrupted; in short, the principal flreets are completely ventilated by the north-west and fouth-east winds, and the opportunity which the inhabitants have of recreating themselves by their occasional walks on the noble piers, which form the HARBOUR of WHITEHAVEN, contributes still more to the falubrity of the place.

Sea-port towns, from the conftant effluvia of burning tar, are observed to be more healthy than the interior country. This, Whitehaven enjoys, of course, only in common with other maritime places of trade; but it possesses other advantages, which are not extended to all fuch places. It is fituated in the neighbourhood of extensive Cot-LIERIES and LIME WORKS; and the bowels of the earth also contain great abundance of free flone, flate, and iron-ore. The limeflone is burnt in the neighbourhood, and carted through the central fiteets, in large quantities, for exportation; and the coals, which are of excellent quality, are the only article of fuel.

But the occupation of the numerous, highly useful and ornamental Rows of Houses, (each two stories-in height) built upon the rising ground to the westward of the town, (in which every poor family, employed in the coal-works, possesses, a separate, convePENSARY, in preventing the introduction, and suppressing the progress, of contagious disease, clearly appears from the following fact.—Six years have elapsed since any powerful and alarming Epidemic has prevailed in this town; which, previously to the Institution of the CHARITY, was visited, almost annually, by a Fever of a most malignant nature.

The

nient, and rent-free habitation) has conduced most effectually to the general falubrity of this place.

Confiderable benefit likewife may be derived from the frequent application of frefhprepared white-wash; which is strictly attended to in the houses briefly described above. These buildings amount to three hundred; and, from the uniformity of their structure, and the cleanliness of their exterior, they make a very pleasing appearance.

This adjunct of the Town of WHITEHAVEN is not yet diffinguished by any other name than that of The New Houses, (all of which are numbered) except the Front Range, which is called Castle Row, possessing one of the most delightful situations, both as to air, light, and prospect, that is to be met with in this part of the country.

We have had feveral proofs of infectious fever being accidentally introduced into a fingle houfe; which, from indifcreet conduct, fpread to many families. in town; when, by the ufual precautions, not an individual, in those extensive buildings, has fuffered the least fymptom of difease.

Several alterations have lately been made, which cannot fail of contributing as well to the health as to the convenience of the inhabitants ;--fuch as widening the lower end of *Duke-fireet*, where it joins the *North-Tongue* ;—the fine, fpacious approach to the *North Wall* ;—the commodious new Road from *Branfty* ; the entrance to which, from the town, will fhortly be completed ;—and the enlargement of the Road, and excellent Pavement of the *New Town*.

The improvements now forming in the town, and the conftruction of its additional buildings, will also (it may be pretumed) contribute to mitigate the virulence, and prevent the diffusion of contagious distempers.

It has been formerly observed that the district of the town adjoining to the meadows was most liable to the prevalence of intermittent, or malignant fevers. The present falubrity of this situation may be justly attributed to the cultivation and draining of the ground, the considerable increase in the depth of the rivulet *Poe*, which flows through the whole extent of the vale; and to other modern agricultural improvements, preventing any accumulation of putrid vegetable matter.

Notwithstanding the population of the town has been lately very much increased, by the extension and improvement of the collieries, public works, and lime quarries, and the great encouragement given to various manufactories, and founderies; yet the general health of the people was never more perfect than it is at the prefent period: and when we compare the state of this situation with that of the neighbourhood, for the last three years, it will appear to have suffered much less fensibly from the fatal influence of Epidemic Contagions. The extreme severity, and remarkable vicissitudes of the weather, which continued from the beginning of *November* ill the end of *April*, were the immediately exciting causes of purely Inflammatory Diseases, chiefly affecting the throat and ungs. Their symptoms were relieved and removed by copious and repeated blood-lettings, the application of blisters, occasional laxatives, and the regular exhibition of Saline and Antimonial Medicines; which, with plentiful dilution, promoted a general, moderate, and beneficial state of perspiration. These attentions, however, were of no avail in a few cases, particularly where Medical Aid was required late in the disease; and we are sorry to observe, that the number of sudden deaths has been greater in this than in any preceding winter.

From the same causes, and within the same period, occurred a great variety of Chronic Disorders; the pains and dangers of which were aggravated by the imbecilities of Old Age. In such deplorable cases, it was only in the power of art to afford a temporary mitigation of the principal symptoms, delaying their inevitably fatal termination, and smoothing, as it were, the avenues of death. The applications, also, to the Surgical Department of this CHARITY were then remarkably frequent.

Whilst a powerful tendency to inflammation characterized the diseases of WHITEHAVEN, an Epidemic of a very different nature raged, with peculiar and extreme violence, in its neighbourhood. Scarcely a single family was exempt from its painful, dangerous, and debilitating influence. Numerous were its victims, and the recovery of many was accomplished with great difficulty, by the administration of proper remedies, and a strict attention to the regimen.—The symptoms of this disease, in its first stage, were those of Cholera Morbus; the irritations to nausea, vomiting, and diarrhæa being

being frequent and painful. Its duration was uncertain, and a manifest tendency to dysentery, distinguished the progress, and sometimes fatally closed the disease.—From a mature consideration of the various circumstances connected with the appearance and prevalence of this EPIDEMIC, it seems reasonable to impute its bilious and putrid nature to the employment of certain articles of diet; more particularly, perhaps indeed solely, to the liberal use of Potatoes. This Year has been singularly unfavourable to the production of that general and most useful article of food. The inclement state of the season rendered it requisite to take them up before they were perfectly ripe. Very probably the moist and clayey condition of the soil might also have an effect in rendering them less palatable and nutritive. In such situations, or in the towns and villages which were supplied with the watery and waxey potatoe, this dysenteric tendency was observed to prevail almost universally, and with an high degree of malignancy. It is, perhaps, no unreasonable conjecture, That the Potatoe, possessed of these properties, or employed in its unripe state, may retain a portion of that poisonous quality, which distinguishes the tribe of plants to which it belongs.

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The Scarlet Fever had generally and fatally prevailed, in the neighbourhood, for many preceding months; but its baneful influence had not been experienced in this town till the beginning of October, when a young man, who had previoufly suffered that distemper in Maryport, communicated it to two children, in Quay-street. As he was then perfectly recovered, the infection retained in his wearing apparel was probably the source of disease. The symptoms affecting these children were so mild, that it was difficult to discriminate the nature of the fever. From them it spread through the whole of an adjacent family. The husband was slightly disordered, the wife and eldest daughter suffered the usual symptoms symptoms of fever, with considerable ulceration of the throat, and their recovery was protracted by the general de-bility which succeeded the disease. In the two youngest, the one aged two years, and the other eight months, extreme languor, and a tendency to a state of most malignant putres-cency, marked the rapid and fatal progress of the disease.— The throat was so painfully tumified, that food and medi-cines were swallowed in small quantities, and with great difficulty. Not the smallest appearance of scarlet eruption could be discovered upon the skin; which proves the truth of the general observation, That, in the virulent and putrid states of this disease. a powerful determination to the throat is states of this disease, a powerful determination to the throat is a principal symptom. Profuse discharges took place from the eyes and nostrils. Pungent heat, frequent weak pulse, and insensibility to any irritation, were the other dangerous symptoms. The duration of this fatal malady, in both these deplorable cases, did not exceed six days. The further communication of this alarming contagion was prevented, most effectually, by a careful attention to cleanliness, clear ventilation, and the employment of the various most active fumigations. We could not by any means account for the unequested in appearance of the disease in November. unexpected re-appearance of the disease in November. Two children suffered it in Church-street. The one, very young, did not long resist its fatal malignancy, and the recovery of the other, for its accomplishment, required a considerable length of time, and frequent medical assistance.

During the first ten days of the month of *May*, in several high and exposed situations, within the district of this CHA-RITY, an *Influenza* prevailed almost universally: its symptoms were more catarrhal than inflammatory, and readily yielded to the usual diluting, saline, and pectoral remedies. The occurrence of this disease might be imputed to the state

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of the weather, which had then suffered the most remarkable vicissitudes ever remembered; extreme cold and excessive heat having rapidly succeeded each other.

It will be unnecessary to advance any argument in recommendation of the Cow-pox; its perfect efficacy in protecting the human constitution from the Small-pox contagion, being now generally acknowledged. To the attestations of the most eminent practitioners in its favour, in many populous and even pestilential countries—in every climate and season where its salutary influence has been long and happily experienced, may be added the decisive sanction of the ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS. After obtaining, from every possible source, the most authentic information relative to this important subject, and having maturely and judicioufly investigated the numerous facts, which could support or invalidate such evidence, they are become its zealous advocates; and strenuously recommend this practice as the most effectual preservative from the ravages of the greatest of human calamities. They produce not only the strongest proofs of the immediate and permanent efficacy of the Cow-pock Inoculation, but they have incontrovertibly established this important fact, That the number of cases in which the Cowpox has failed, is greatly inferior to that of the deaths, in the inoculated Small-pox. It is also remarked, that the operation and effects of the Natural Small-pox, upon these patients, are milder and less pernicious than in the usual course of that disease. It has been proved, by the extensive experience of every celebrated and impartial practitioner, that the benefits which the Community derive from the Cow-pock Inoculation, when compared with those of the Small-pox Inoculation, are in the proportion of 8000 to 6.—It must therefore be acknow-ledged that Vaccination possesses more than 1300 chances to one in its fayour!

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We have repeatedly stated the absolute expediency of selecting the Vaccine Matter at an early stage of the disease, whilst perfectly liquid; as the only method of rendering it an effectual antidote to the Small-pox contagion. Several instances have occurred lately, in which a disregard of this injunction has occasioned the various and painful symptoms of the spurious Cow-pox, and exposed the patient, equally as before the inoculation, to the dangerous influence of the Small-pox.

If the Cow-pock matter is to be conveyed to any distant situation, we must not neglect the precaution of carefully preventing the injurious effects of heat: for if taken from the same pustule, and at the same early period of maturity, it will communicate the genuine disease to a child, in town; but may disappoint our expectations if carried into the country; merely from the circumstance of the charged lancet being kept warm, in a waistcoat pocket.

The DIRECTORS of this CHARITY are impressed with sentiments of the most exalted admiration, and the warmest gratitude, when they contemplate that truly Christian spirit of Beneficence, which has induced the opulent inhabitants of WHITE-HAVEN and its VICINITY, to support the interests of this DIS-PENSARY, by liberal donations and annual subscriptions. In the accomplishment of the important and benevolent views of this Institution, their charitable zeal has obtained an ample gratification.

Dreadful, indeed, are the pains of disease, when aggravated by the acute sufferings of extreme want. Private, most munificent liberality has, for the last eleven years, been extended, in various modes, to the effectual relief of such complicated distress. It is impossible to express those emotions of admiration, which involuntarily arise, when we reflect on those high and invaluable obligations, which have been most bountifully conferred upon the indigent and distressed of every description. Genero-

sity,

sity, so disinterested and extensive, is exalted far above human praise. Long may those who exercise it, continue to enjoy that fortune, of which they make so noble an application! Enviable indeed is their happiness: they experience the purest of earthly delights, arising from the consciouness of having administered comfort to the sorrows of the most wretched of their fellowcreatures, and from the well grounded hope of that glorious reward, in a better state, which is promised to deeds of Charity.

To the exercise of this pre-eminent virtue we can not possibly require any incitement, if we only reflect that we possess a Religion, which enjoining universal and ardent philanthropy, under the most awful sanctions, and from the most powerful motives, has excited amongst mankind a spirit of benevolence unknown to the most learned and civilized nations of the Heathen world. They had no DISPENSARY, no Hospital, no Asylum for poverty or sickness. Surely this consideration should urge us, with irresistable force, liberally to support those noble Institutions, which are the exclusive boast of CHRISTIANITY, and reflect the highest lustre upon this age and kingdom.

To the performance of a duty to which we are impelled by an instinctive propensity, by motives of self-interest, and by the precepts of our Holy Religion, it has pleased the gracious Author of our Being to associate the most delightful emotions of which our nature is susceptible. In the hour of sickness and sorrow, (and to sickness and sorrow all men are liable,) at a time when all earthly pleasures vanish, this exquisite gratification is most powerfully felt: then it soothes the anguish of the troubled breast; it is capable of extracting the sting from the most painful of bodily diseases: and, when Death shall approach, the retrospect of a life spent in acts of beneficence, will impart to the soul that comfort and support, which will enable us to finish our earthly course with joy; animated by the bright prospect of that eternal recompence which will be assigned to those who pity and relieve the sufferings of indigence and disease.

A	An ACCOUNT of the PATIENTS admitted, from June 8, 1807, to June 13, 1808.														
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BENEFACTIONS and SUBSCRIPTIONS.

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Mr Anthony Adamfon	0	10	6	Mr John Crosthwaite	0	5	0
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Mr William Plafket		10		Mr Walter Thomfon	0	10	0
Mr R bert Paxton	0	5		Mr William Thompson	0	5	0
Mr William Patterfon	0	5	0	Mr Henry Thompson	0	-	0
Mr John Piele, jun	0	5	0	Mrs Topping	0	2	6
Mrs Ann Powe	0	5	0	M. T'l	10.2		1
A M TY D'L IC O II				Mrs Vickers	0	10	0
‡ Mr John Richardson, Carleton				W W			
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Mr George Raylon, Druggist,			1	John Wordfworth, Efq	1	1	0
Leeds	1	-		Mr John Ware	I.	T	0
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The same and the same and the same of the The		There BUILDER STORE - LIVE			

N. B .- Those marked thus + are New Subscriptions, and thus ‡ Augmentations.

The DIRECTORS of this CHARITY most gratefully acknowledge the kindness of several LABIES, for a considerable and repeated supply of OLD LINEN. Scr. phulous Difease, and the effects of external injury, render this article very necessary, in the SURGICAL DEPARTMENT of the DISPENSARY.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are taken in at the TREASURER's :- at WARE's PRINTING OFFICE ;- and at the DISPENSARY.

200

Blank Letters of Recommendation may be had at the Difpenfary.

All Perfons, who are difposed to contribute by WILL to this CHARITY, are requested to do it in the following Manner :

"I give and bequeath to A. B. and C. D. the Sum of upon Trust that they do pay the same to the TREASURER of the Whitehaven Dispensary; which Sum of I defire may be applied towards carrying on the benevolent Designs of the said CHARITY."

[16] OFFICERS for the Year 1808. PRESIDENT. The Right Honourable William Earl of Lonsdale. VICE PRESIDENTS. Rev. Wilfrid Hudleston,-Rev. John Myers. Thomas Irwin, Esq.-James Steel, Esq. Rev. Richard Armitstead. TREASURER. Robert Blakeney, Esq. SECRETARY. Mr. Peter How Younger. AUDITORS. Sir Joseph Senhouse.—Joseph Dixon, Esq. Mr. Isaac Bragg. COMMITTEE. Sir Joseph Senhouse, Knight.-Mr. Henry Birley. Mr. Isaac Gunson.-Mr. William Brown. Mr. Thomas Brocklebank.-Mr. Isaac Bragg. Mr. Peter Dixon.-Joseph Dixon, Esq. Thomas Hartley, sen. Esq.—Thomas Hartley, jun. Esq. Milham Hartley, Esq.-Mr. Peter Hodgson. MEDICAL COMMITTEE. Joshua Dixon, M. D.-Henry Crosthwaite, M. D. John Hamilton, Esq.-Mr. E. Dawson.-Mr. J. Robinson. PHYSICIAN. Joshua Dixon, M. D. SURGEON EXTRAORDINARY. John Hamilton, Esq. SURGEON. Henry Crosthwaite, M. D. APOTHECARY. Mr. Isaac Gunson.

Whitehaven : Printed by John Ware, in King-freet.

A SYSTEMATIC ARRANGEMENT OF THE PRECEDING DISEASES, WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE EVENTS.

- Scoletter	State -		11 A 19	InI	HE	IR	RE	SPE	CII	VE	EVI	ENT	S.						
FEBRIL	I. E DISEASES.	Under ² Years.	Beeween 2 & 5 Years.	5 & 10	10 & 15	15 & 20	80 & 30	30 &: 40	40 & 50	50 & 60	60 & 70	70 & 80	80 & 50	Cured.	S Refered	to Incomble	2 Dead.	s, Demaining	Total.
Intermitter Worm Fey External I	nt Fever	0 1.	30	0 37	0 25	0 2	0 4	0	1	0	0	0	0	1 03	0	0	0	0.	1
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Acute Rhe		1	2	21 ₁ 0	411	6	171	10 3	6	2	1	0	0	46	0	0	4	4	54
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