

Examination of the prejudices commonly entertained against mercury : as beneficially applicable to the greater number of liver complaints, and to various other forms of disease, as well as to syphilis / by James Curry.

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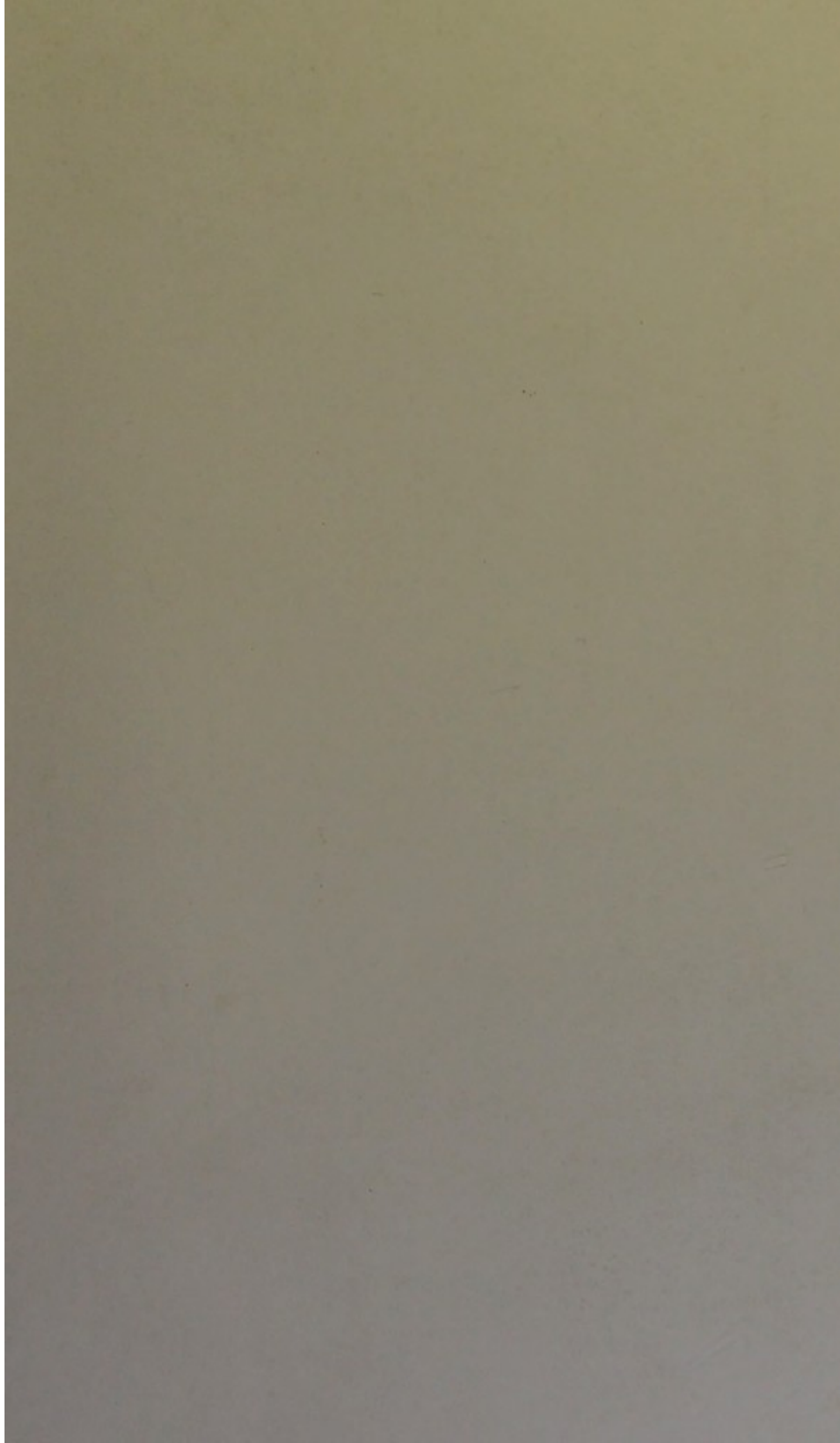
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W. Pearson.
with the Author's
EXAMINATION
OF
Respects.

THE PREJUDICES COMMONLY ENTERTAINED

AGAINST MERCURY,

AS

BENEFICIALLY APPLICABLE TO THE

GREATER NUMBER OF

LIVER COMPLAINTS,

AND TO VARIOUS OTHER FORMS OF DISEASE,

AS WELL AS TO

SYPHILIS.

BY

JAMES CURRY, M.D.F.A.S. &c.

ONE OF THE PHYSICIANS TO GUY'S HOSPITAL, AND LECTURER ON
THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.

SECOND EDITION,

CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

Speak of me as I am;
Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.
SHAKSP.

LONDON:

Printed by J. M'Creery, Black Horse Court,

AND SOLD BY J. CALLOW, CROWN COURT, PRINCE'S STREET, SOHO,
AND E. COX, ST. THOMAS'S STREET, SOUTHWARK.

1810.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

AND E. CO., ST. LOUIS, MO.
AND 1012 ST. LOUIS, MO.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first impression of this pamphlet, consisting of a few hundred copies, was printed in August 1809, and chiefly distributed among those of the profession to whom I was personally known. Numerous applications to purchase it, however, having been made to the booksellers, I put into the hands of the persons mentioned in the title-page, what copies I had remaining; and these being now all gone, while the applications not only continue but increase, I am induced to let a second small impression be struck off, to meet the public demand.

It is now, I believe, pretty generally understood, that I have been for some time pledged to the publication of a Treatise

On the Nature of the Hepatic Function ; the Purposes it serves in the Animal Economy ; and the powerful Influence which a disordered state of it exerts, in Exciting, Aggravating, and Modifying various Forms of Disease, both General and Local. In addition to professional avocations, ill health has contributed its share to prevent me from completing the task; but should Providence spare me a little longer, I still hold myself engaged to perform the undertaking; a great part of which, as some of my medical friends have had the opportunity of seeing, is now in considerable forwardness. In the mean time, public opinion, which is seldom long stationary, received an impulse additionally adverse to the employment of that remedy, without the aid of which all our efforts to cure many forms of hepatic disorder, will prove as unsuccessful as those which we daily witness the trial of, to cure, or even suspend, confirmed Phthisis Pulmonalis. On this

account then, however premature and imperfect the attempt might appear, I thought it right to offer to the perusal and consideration of my medical acquaintance, as I now do to the profession at large, the following pages, (originally drawn up as an Introduction to the intended work) by way of temporary caveat at least, to stay their judgment on the question, until the evidence *for*, as well as the objections *against* the use of Mercury, shall be fairly laid before them.

J. C.

Bridge Street, Blackfriars,
July, 1810.

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A. C.

EXAMINATION,

&c.

I THINK it will be readily admitted, that there is no moral law more certain or more powerful in its influence, than the law of habit. Long use becomes second nature; and early bias, whether from education or from accident, often determines the cast of our opinions throughout the remainder of life. We are but too apt to form a rule of judging, from which we never willingly recede; and thus convert our minds, like the bed of Procrustes, into an unerring standard, to which all facts must be accommodated, by curtailing those which exceed, and stretching those which fall short of the prescribed limits. It would be insufferable arrogance in me, to claim an exemption from what is the common failing of human nature. But I trust the reader will ere long see, that although I hold my opinions with firmness because I believe them true, I have not been so blind to error in my progress,

as to continue undeviatingly in the same path in which I had first set out; and having once so strikingly experienced the fallacy of human judgment, in those whose natural sagacity, long experience, and great learning, gave them every claim to belief,* I trust I am still open to conviction, whether it arise out of more correct and extensive observation of my own, or is obtained from that of others. I am now, indeed, arrived at a time of life, and placed in a situation of responsibility both as a practitioner and a teacher, that render every professional error in me, of greater consequence than it might be in many others: and although, like mankind in general, I should be highly gratified in being found right, yet I need not be ashamed, because I do not feel that I am culpable in being, what all are liable to, eventually wrong. The opinions advanced in the treatise intended to follow this, are not the offspring of youthful imagination, working on a few general principles, and making up by ingenuity for what was wanting in observation, but requisite to give form and consistency to the whole; on the contrary, as our great English Lexicographer has feelingly said of his philological labours, they were produced and matured, “not

* This refers to the opinion maintained by the late Dr. Cullen, respecting the *non*-efficiency of bile as an agent in disease, and especially in fevers.

in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness, and in sorrow." In fact, much of what I have to describe, I first experienced in my own person; and what was wanting to complete the outline, has been abundantly supplied by long observation on others. Although the injunction of Horace* has been more than twice fulfilled, yet I should still be inclined to postpone the business of publishing, were it not that I have been upwards of four years indirectly pledged to it, through the liberal mention of my opinions by a gentleman to whom chirurgical science stands deeply indebted,† and the subsequent notice taken of my thus announced intention, by some highly respectable journalists.‡ Several of my friends too, have urged, that I should be anticipated in my claims by others. This, however, is a motive which I feel the least cogent of any; because it will at least prove, that the truth of the doctrine does not rest upon my solitary evidence, but is supported by the independent testimony of others: nor have I much reason to fear, that the due meed of praise, if any be thought due, will be snatched by an occasional correspondent to some peri-

* 'Nonumque prematur in annum.'—HOR.

† Mr. Abernethy, in the Preface to his Surg. Obs. pt. 2d.

‡ Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal, for Oct. 1806,

odical collection, from one who has publicly taught these opinions for the last nine years, in the longest established school of medicine in this metropolis, to an audience consisting of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred pupils annually; by whom they have since been widely disseminated, not only through every part of the British empire, but to the most distant quarters of the world. There are, indeed, two treatises expressly bearing upon the general principle, which certainly stand in a different predicament, and entitle their respective authors to a fair share of credit, as careful observers of disease; but, for the reason assigned, I equally rejoice in their previous appearance, as being, in fact, so many progressive steps towards that more general doctrine which it is now my intention to develope. In the first of these,* the advantage of the practice is rested upon the ground of simple experience; and if it might not be deemed invidious, I think there would be no difficulty in shewing, that the respectable author is yet unacquainted with the true principle upon which his success depended. The second† stands in a much higher rank, as

* Observations on the Utility of Purgative Medicines in several Diseases. By James Hamilton, M. D. Senior Physician to the Royal Infirmary at Edinburgh.

† Surgical Observations, Part II. by John Abernethy, F.R.S. &c. 8vo. 1806.

connecting successful practice with ingenious theory. Mr Abernethy, however, with a candour which equals his acknowledged ability, not only attributes his first hint upon the subject, to his friend the late Mr Boodle, of Ongar, in Essex, but, with corresponding liberality, states the mutual surprise which he and I felt, on discovering how great a coincidence of opinion existed between us, on a point hitherto so little adverted to; mine arising out of my own feelings on a voyage to India more than twenty years ago, and gradually matured during the subsequent period in this country; his, though at first the suggestion of another, yet, confirmed and illustrated for the preceding seven years, by an extensive public and private practice in the metropolis;—mine in a great measure confined to the medical branch of the profession,—his almost as exclusively to the surgical department. Nevertheless it will soon be discovered, that although we nearly agree in the leading principle, we differ considerably in our application of it; and that, what he refers to the chylopoietic viscera in general, I look especially to the liver for. Let it not, however, be supposed, that I exclude the powerful influence of the stomach and intestines, as being often the chief source and focus of disorder which affects the system at large; or mean to deny, that corresponding advantage will frequently arise from attention to these organs; on

the contrary, it will be found, that it is what I both inculcate and practise, as a part of my general plan. But what I venture to alledge is, that in many instances, after we have done all we can in cleansing and strengthening the primæ viæ, we shall still fail of ultimate success, unless we restore the *hepatic function* to a more healthy state; and that by uniformly keeping this in view as a principle, and generally beginning with it in practice, we shall not only greatly abridge the time, and save both to ourselves and our patients much of the trouble, necessary to effect a cure, but shall be able to explain satisfactorily to our own minds, the immediate cause of relief, and (what is of no little consequence) often foretel to our patients, the variations which they will experience during the progress of the treatment.*

* Since these pages were written, another, and a still more considerable step has been made towards the complete establishment of this; I mean the valuable publication of Dr Cheyne on Hydrocephalus. From the time I became a public teacher on the Practice of Medicine (now nine years), I have uniformly taught a doctrine with respect to this disease, which, like some other of my opinions, has been generally considered as wild and visionary; it is, that acute hydrocephalus is seldom if ever a primary and idiopathic disorder of that organ in which its prominent symptoms and fatal consequences are so conspicuously displayed; but that it is a secondary and symptomatic operation on the brain, arising

With respect to the opinions which I entertain, and the practice which I recommend as the

arising from an inflammatory erethism or irritation of the liver, in consequence of that intimate sympathy which exists between these two viscera at all stages of life, but especially during the infantine and puerile periods; and as a corollary from this, that, although at no time during the progress of the complaint, are we to omit the use of means directed to the head itself as a measure of security, yet that the most successful plan is, to take up the disorder in the early and probably the only curable stage, as hepatitis, and treat it by leeching and blistering the right hypochondrium, and by calomel given in such doses as, first to excite the secretion, and next to emulge the ducts, of the liver. Although, from what I recollect as common in my own time, I thought it not unlikely, that the singular opinions of a London teacher might have been promulgated in the societies at Edinburgh by some of the students who annually go from hence,—and in that way a hint have reached the acute and observant author (then residing in the immediate vicinity of the Scottish metropolis), yet I was very far from insinuating any thing like plagiarism on his part: and by a letter lately received from him I am perfectly convinced, that he drew his conclusions from his own observation, and is therefore equally entitled to the claim of originality in the doctrine. I am additionally gratified to learn from him, that a treatise which he is now about to publish on Apoplexy, will shew a similar coincidence in our peculiar opinions; and thus tend to elucidate and confirm another point in that comprehensive Pathology which I have been so long labouring to complete.—In the mean time, I earnestly recommend an attentive perusal of his work on Hydrocephalus, as displaying not less acuteness of remark, than soundness of judgment, and unwearied assiduity in observing disease.

best I am acquainted with, like most others that have deviated from the hackneyed routine of the day, they have been at first ridiculed as absurd novelties, next abused as dangerous innovations, and lastly attempted to be followed;* because, on a little farther examination, they were discovered to be not altogether absurd—not often danger-

* A few years ago a gentleman who had been under my care for a liver complaint, when convalescent, went to a watering place on the coast; and having occasion for temporary medical aid, applied to a fashionable physician then resident there. No sooner had the Doctor learnt under whose care the gentleman had been, than he launched out into a strain of invective against my opinions and practice; declared Calomel to be universally a poison, and asserted, that he never gave a single grain of it in any case. Having thus vented his abuse of a person whom he never saw, and knew only by name, he wound up in a manner which perfectly accorded with the liberality of his previous proceeding; he wrote a prescription, in which the first article was *HYDRARGYRUS MURIATUS MITIS*, a name then given to *CALOMEL*, when prepared in the mode recommended by the celebrated Swedish chemist, Mr Scheele, but which the Doctor supposed would pass without a question as to its identity. My patient, however, was so struck with the whole of the interview, that he inquired of the person who made up the recipe, whether it contained Calomel, and being informed that it was the same medicine under a different name, took the earliest opportunity of expressing the indignation and contempt which he felt for such duplicity, and informed me of the circumstance as soon as he came back to London.

ous—and finally, because, when these rigorous censors had not only expended their stock of

In the following instance the conduct was of a very different kind, being equally marked by candour and by confidence ; but will serve to shew how little I am understood by many who believe themselves acquainted with my practice. About nine years ago, I was requested by a practitioner in Southwark, since dead, to see his daughter, who he said was affected with dysentery ; adding, that he had latterly, but without benefit, been acting on the principles which I taught in my lectures respecting this disease, viz. that whether it arise from contagion or from other causes, it is aggravated and prolonged by a disordered state of the Hepatic function ; and that the most speedy and effectual relief is obtained by correcting this morbid state, and bringing into the intestines a regular supply of healthy bile, which is their natural stimulus and tonic. I found the patient about twenty years of age, of a slender form, and highly sensitive mind ; and upon inquiring into the rise and progress of the complaint, I learnt, that she had been brought up entirely in the country, where she had resided till lately, and enjoyed very good health ; that she had a great dislike to London, and soon after coming home to stay, she lost her appetite, became pale, languid, and greatly dejected in spirits. To these marks of general indisposition, soon succeeded irregularity of bowels, being at one time confined, and at another relaxed ; for which she took Rhubarb, or Chalk Mixture with Aromatic Confection, accordingly as the one or the other seemed necessary ; and, to allay griping and pain, occasional opiates were given. After pursuing this plan, for some time, without more than momentary relief, while the symptoms were progressively increasing in degree, and the evacuations consisting merely of ragged
mucus

palliative means, but also nearly exhausted their patients' hope of any thing like a cure, they

mucus tinged with blood, he had recourse to what *he conceived* was my method, by giving Calomel repeatedly, in doses of four or five grains, either alone or with Rhubarb, and a considerable Opiate at bed-time: but the disorder was augmented, instead of being mitigated by this. She had now from twelve to fifteen evacuations in twenty-four hours, composed of bloody mucus, with constant bearing down, and considerable tenderness of the abdomen when pressed: her pulse was upwards of 100 and small; her skin, though generally cold, especially the hands and feet, was occasionally hot, and she had an obvious periodical attack of pain at her stomach every afternoon, continuing for several hours in the night.—The history of the disease afforded a clue to its nature, and to the treatment proper under the existing circumstances. There was every reason to believe, that it had its origin in uneasiness of mind; the influence of which in deranging the function of the liver, is one of the most common, yet one of the most overlooked causes of hepatic disorder, especially in females; and often leads to that which gives a temporary relief, but which ultimately aggravates the mischief, and is then accused of being the sole cause, though in fact it only renders more conspicuous, the symptoms of a malady that had its foundation already laid: I allude here to the misuse of spirituous liquors. In the present case, no such aggravating cause could be suspected. As there was now an evident paroxysm of pain every afternoon, I prepared to meet this, by directing a grain and half of Opium to be given immediately, and a second grain in an hour after, if the first did not prove sufficient; and that, as soon as the irritation of the bowels was allayed, she should have four grains of the Pil. Hydrargyri, with as much Calumba root, in form of a bolus, every four hours whilst she

was

began to think with Celsus, that even a doubtful remedy (*i. e.* one, the mode of operation and the

was awake. These steps were punctually attended to; and upon calling next afternoon, I found that the second pill of Opium had completely removed all pain and griping before bed-time; that she then began with the bolus, of which she had taken three. There had been no stool, nor any tenesmus since the second pill; her skin was now comfortably warm, pulse soft and less frequent, and her whole appearance confirming her own declaration, that she felt scarcely any thing beyond languor and drowsiness. Having thus, as I believed, procured a complete relaxation of the hepatic ducts, I wished to avail myself of the effect, by emptying them as quickly as possible; and for that purpose ordered a little Castor Oil to be taken in Peppermint Water. The medicine soon operated, and in the course of the evening procured several evacuations, the first of which was composed of small hardened lumps, and the subsequent ones of extremely viscid, dark-coloured bile. These last were attended with sharp pain and heat of the bowels, especially at the moment of passing off; but were succeeded by a gentle perspiration, by a quiet and refreshing sleep, and, in short, by such complete relief, that it was with difficulty I could persuade her any more medicine was necessary. One grain of opium, however, was taken at bed-time again; the same bolus was repeated three times the next day, together with a mixture containing a little Magnesia and Aromatic Confection, in Cinnamon Water. On the third day, the evacuations became fæculent, duly impregnated with bile, and well digested; the Opiate pill and the bolus were then omitted, and only the mixture continued for a day or two longer; at the end of which her appetite, spirits, and complexion, were restored, and she has remained free from any complaint of the kind ever since. A short retrospect of
the

management of which they did not clearly understand) was better than no remedy at all.* In saying this, however, I by no means wish to include all those who may have felt reluctant in yielding their assent. I make due allowance for the powerful effects of education and habit; and still more for the dread which is very generally entertained with regard to the remedy especially requisite, from the effects occasionally observed to follow its *mal-administration*, in that disorder

the case, will clearly explain the train and order of the symptoms, as well as point out the cause of failure in the two first attempts, and of success in the last. That depressed action of the brain which anxiety occasions, produced a corresponding defect of action in the liver; whence the intestines, from not being supplied with bile sufficient in quantity or healthy in quality, became irritated by the food passing through them in an undigested state. The purgatives, astringents, and opiates, which were first employed, gave temporary relief, but left the *source* of the disorder as it was; whilst the Calomel acting merely as a simple evacuant, carried off nothing but the existing contents of the intestines, and still farther weakened their tone. But, by allaying intestinal irritation by Opium, then relaxing the hepatic ducts by the Pil. Hydrargyri, and lastly emulging them by the aid of a mild cathartic, the order of nature was restored, and that harmony of function between these parts which is necessary to health, completely established.

* *Melius est anceps remedium experiri quam nullum.*—
CELSUS.

where it is the only specific that can be relied on. Now, as persons of this cautious character, are those upon whom the general and successful application of any active remedy will for the most part depend, it is to their judgment and candour I would desire to appeal upon the question. For this purpose, I would begin by asking them—how many instances have they met with, where Mercury has produced mischievous effects in venereal cases under their own direction?—for I must altogether exclude from our present consideration, its consequences when exhibited by quacks, or when taken by patients themselves without proper advice. I think there will be a general demur to this interrogatory; and that each will alledge, though it has seldom or never occurred within his own practice, yet that it has happened to others. Let those again be asked the same question, and we shall have the same answer; so that in the end, though all may affect to dread the remedy under others' hands, yet all continue, without hesitation, to employ it under their own, because their daily experience assures them equally of its safety as of its success. It is thus virtually admitted, then, that it is not the remedy that does the mischief, but the mismanagement of it.* Now I

* In the following extract this question is met fairly and answered explicitly.—“As a particular objection to quick-

am very ready to go not only to the full extent of this admission, but to grant still more, that, like Antimony, Opium, and every other active remedy, Mercury would probably do little good, if it were not also capable of doing some

“ silver, it has been repeatedly urged, that its use is highly injurious to the constitution. Although I have never met with any instance of the kind where the complaints could be fairly attributed to the remedy, yet I have no doubt but such cases do sometimes occur. I am persuaded, however, that the generality of instances adduced in support of this opinion, will be found to arise more from some fault of the constitution than from the effects of the medicine. In a number of venereal cases, I have known the use of mercury carried to a most extravagant length, and the unfortunate patients suffer greatly for the time ; but I never found that one of them afterwards experienced any of these melancholy symptoms which are supposed to be induced by such treatment. The largest quantity I ever heard of used by any person, was by a syphilitic patient, who at last put himself under my care, about four years since. The quantity of the stronger mercurial ointment he used in the space of two months was immense, besides calomel internally to a great amount. He was reduced to the lowest state of debility and emaciation, and had eleven large spreading foul ulcers on his body. By the help of the nitric acid, and other medicines, he recovered in three months. Since then, he has continued free from any complaint, and is at present one of the most robust and healthy men I am acquainted with.”

See a paper in the Medical and Physical Journal, vol. 21. p. 109. Feb. 1809.

Though

harm. The knife and the caustic are unquestionably powerful, and in so far may be made dangerous instruments ; but who ever blames the surgeon for employing a sharp knife or an active caustic, seeing that both the one and the other is to be directed by his eye, and guided by his hand ? or who would be so absurd as to expect, that the couching needle and the scalpel, which perform such wonders in the hands of an expert Oculist and dexterous Lithotomist, can be employed with equal safety or success, by every clumsy or inexperienced person who may fancy himself equal to the task of using them ? What these instruments are, then, with respect to the Surgeon, I contend, and hope to prove, that Mercury is, under the management of a judicious Physician,—capable of doing, with a speed which is often indispensable, and for the most part with perfect safety, what no other means hitherto known, can at all effect.*

Though the theory which the ingenious author adopts, of *mercury curing or suspending one disease by inducing another*—is certainly erroneous as a general position, as I shall shew in its proper place, yet the cases he relates are not only valuable in themselves as facts, but are peculiarly so to me, as affording incontestible evidence of the principles I have adopted ; and I shall duly avail myself of their assistance hereafter.

* Without accusing the male youth of the present day of greater laxity of morals than those of former generations, it
may

I do not mean, however, to confine this decided superiority of mercury over other medicines, to that particular disease, in which the

may be asked—how many arrive at the adult age without having had occasion to use mercury?—Surely, then, if it be so highly pernicious, and if but few escape the necessity of using it, the destruction amongst men from this cause alone, should equal that from almost every other disease to which the male sex is liable. Let those who are inspired with such terrors respecting Mercury, look round, and candidly say, how many such victims they have seen among their own acquaintance; and whether by far the greater number of young persons who die of consumption, (the disorder which it is especially accused of bringing on) are not *females*, whose rank and character not only place them above all suspicion of such necessity, but who actually never took a grain of Mercury in their lives. Nay, in many instances of *men* whose indiscretions had led to former venereal disorder, and in whom some ambiguous symptoms of still lurking taint, were attended with cough and other evident marks of pulmonic mischief, the whole of the latter complaints have been entirely removed, by a course of Mercury given to extinguish the supposed remains of the former: an event which has often surprised medical men, and led them to conclude (what I believe is to be more satisfactorily explained in a different way) that the poison of Syphilis sometimes attacks the lungs. That mercury cannot be borne by some constitutions, is incontestible: but what remedy is free from this objection? Antimony often causes such prostration of strength, as to require the utmost caution, or to preclude its use altogether; Opium, instead of inducing sleep, will in some persons occasion fainting, and in others frantic delirium; but we never think of banishing those articles

common experience of ages, and the express testimony of the ablest practitioners, unite in considering it as the only certain remedy; but would extend it to most forms of *hepatic* complaint, and to various disorders which arise in other parts as their consequences. By way of encouragement on this point, then, let us for a moment turn our eyes from the doubts and fears so commonly entertained about it here, and contemplate the very different light in which it is universally viewed in India, where the powers and effects of the remedy have been more fully tried, than in any other part of the world. The

ticles from *general* use, because they prove so unfriendly to individuals. The purposes of Antimony indeed, may *frequently* be answered by other remedies; and the Hyoscyamus Extract will *sometimes* fulfil the object for which we commonly employ opium; but for Mercury we have no such substitutes.

Although I admit, that there are constitutions to which, perhaps, Mercury can never be well accommodated, yet I think these are far from being so numerous as they are at present supposed; for I believe I have not only discovered the reason *why*, in *many* cases where it was administered under the direction of very able surgeons, its use was obliged to be given up whilst palpable proof of venereal taint (such as ~~the~~ nodes, &c.) still existed; but that I can point out a principle hitherto overlooked, on which its employment can be continued, so as not only to eradicate the Syphilis, but to improve the general health to a degree beyond what the patient had enjoyed for some time before.

inhabitants of that country, whether natives, settlers, or those who merely sojourn for a short time, are so familiarized to its use, and so convinced of its superior efficacy in most of the disorders which prevail there, that they have less dread of mercury, than was once entertained even by the faculty in England, with regard to the Peruvian bark. Why is this? It is, because there are few inter-tropical complaints, in which the liver is not either primarily or secondarily a considerable partaker; and in the successful treatment of which, therefore, the previous removal of the hepatic derangement is not more or less necessary. Mercury, then, is the remedy which long continued and daily increasing experience has taught them to employ on such occasions; and, accordingly, mercury is held by them, nearly as indispensable to the cure of hepatic disorder, and its numerous allied and dependant complaints, as it is with us to the cure of syphilis. But in reply to this it will most probably be said, that as liver complaints are comparatively rare in Great-Britain, why should we have so much recourse to mercury? This is the very point on which I wish to join issue; and I think I shall be able to prove (what daily observation is tending to confirm) that the liver is as often disordered in England as in India, though commonly not in the same mode,

and certainly not in the same locally conspicuous degree; and that, to the single circumstance of its being less obvious, is owing its having been so much overlooked; as with us it far more frequently consists in derangement of function, than in change of structure; and is oftener shewn in symptoms that affect remote parts, than in those which refer us directly to the liver itself as their seat.*

There is still another view, however, in which this question respecting mercury ought to be considered; but which, as far as I know, has never

* Ample proofs of this will be given in the course of the treatise intended to follow. But until these can be brought forward, it may not be amiss to offer an example of the position, which will not only claim attention from the celebrity of the person in whom it occurred, but may induce many who now think otherwise, to admit, that intemperance of any kind is not necessary to the production of liver disease; and consequently, that it may exist in numberless instances where its presence is never once suspected.

“ For a very long period, Sir Joshua Reynolds enjoyed an
“ uninterrupted state of good health, to which his custom of
“ painting standing may be supposed in some degree to have
“ contributed; at least by this means he escaped those disorders which are incident to a sedentary life. He was indeed, in
“ the year 1782, distressed for a short time by a slight paralytic affection; which, however, made so little impression
“ upon him, that in a few weeks he was perfectly restored, and
“ never

been adverted to by any one. It stands acknowledged by the latest and best writers on syphilis, that whatever be the essential nature of its peculiar poison, there is no person, however healthy, that is absolutely proof against its infectious

“ never afterwards suffered any inconvenience from the ma-
 “ lady. But in July 1789, he for the first time perceived his
 “ sight so much affected, that he found it difficult to proceed;
 “ and in a few months afterwards, in spite of the aid of the
 “ most skilful oculists, he was entirely deprived of the sight
 “ of his left eye. After some struggles lest his remaining eye
 “ should also be affected, he determined to paint no more.—
 “ Still, however, he retained his usual spirits, was amused by
 “ reading, or hearing others read to him, and partook of
 “ the society of his friends with the same pleasure as formerly;
 “ but in October 1791, having strong apprehensions that a
 “ tumour, (afterwards found to depend on extravasated blood
 “ unconnected with the optic nerve) accompanied with an
 “ inflammation, which took place over the eye that had pe-
 “ rished, might affect the other also, he became somewhat
 “ dejected.

“ Meanwhile he laboured under a much more dangerous
 “ disease, which deprived him both of his wonted spirits and
 “ his appetite, though he was wholly unable to explain to his
 “ physicians the nature or seat of his disorder. During this
 “ period of great affliction to all his friends, his malady was
 “ by many believed to be imaginary; and it was conceived
 “ that if he would but exert himself, he could shake it off.
 “ This instance, however, may serve to shew, that *the patient*
 “ *best knows what he suffers, and that few long complain of bodily*
 “ *ailments without an adequate cause;* for at length (and not
 “ till

influence; or in whom, when the contamination has once decidedly taken place, the powers of the constitution are adequate to its radical cure,* unless assisted by medicine, and especially by

“ till about a fortnight before his death) the seat of his disorder
 “ was found to be in his LIVER, of which the inordinate growth,
 “ as it afterwards appeared, had incommoded all the functions
 “ of life; and of this disease, which he bore with the greatest
 “ fortitude and patience, he died after a confinement of
 “ near three months, at his house in Leicester-square, Feb. 23,
 “ 1792.”—

“ On his body being opened, the liver, which ought to
 “ have weighed about five pounds, was found to have increased
 “ to an extraordinary size, weighing nearly eleven pounds.
 “ It was also somewhat scirrhus.”—*Malone's Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds, prefixed to his works.*

I trust it will not be considered disrespectful to the character of the two eminent physicians who attended Sir Joshua (both of them dead several years) to say, that upon the principles of pathology which I adopt, and the mode of searching after the *source* of disease which I mean to recommend, the primary cause of his disorder would have been ascertained, early enough to point out clearly the employment of such means as might perhaps have superseded all the symptoms that took place subsequent to the slight paralytic affection in 1782.

* I have heard it advanced on high authority, that *genuine* chancres will sometimes heal of themselves. Now although I doubt the position, I cannot absolutely contradict it; but admitting it to be true, I would ask—whether in such cases,

its great antidote, mercury. Now it is a notorious fact, that if to a person who is otherwise in the most perfect health, we give mercury for the cure of a small and recent venereal ulcer, and carry it (as is generally required) so far as to affect the mouth,—we shall seldom fail to find, that, frequently, as soon as it has got to this point, and very generally when it has been continued for a little longer, the appetite diminishes, and a degree of languor and weakness is felt over every part of the body.* As the medicine is left off, however, these inconveniences gradually subside; and the patient, if he does not incautiously expose himself to cold (to the impressions from which he is for the time rendered much more sensible), will find not only the ulcer cured, but his appetite and strength restored as perfectly as before. Here it will not be denied, that the sensible effects of the medicine, inde-

the constitution remains free from taint, and whether, although the ulcer has not so much of the venereal disposition as to prevent its healing, like simple ulcer, by common means, a portion of the poison has not entered the system, and will not display itself in the secondary form, of ulcers in the throat, &c. at some future period, so as to require the use of mercury for its removal?

* The reason of this will perhaps appear, when we come to investigate the mode in which mercury acts upon the human system.

pendently of its curing the ulcer, are in themselves morbid; and *in such instances* the utmost we can say for it is, that while we thus induce one morbid state, which is limited both in its degree and continuance, we eradicate another, the duration and mischief of which are known to terminate only with life. But, is this exactly the case in hepatic disorders? I do not hesitate to affirm, that it is not; and that, on the contrary, in very many instances of hepatic derangement, where the symptoms were so prominently displayed in the shape of indigestion, as to make the complaint be referred to the stomach alone as its source; mercury, under proper management, so far from lessening the already impaired appetite, or exhausting the diminished strength, has increased the former to a degree which was even distressing to the patients, from the mouth being so tender as to prevent their indulging in solid food to the extent they craved for,—and has so much improved the latter, as to enable them to go through their ordinary business, with greater ease and alacrity than they had done for many months before;—and these desirable changes, so far from being merely temporary, have continued.* Surely, then, it will

* Four years ago, a gentleman put himself under my care, on account of a herpetic eruption affecting small patches
of

not be asserted, after the multiplied evidence which I can produce of this fact, that the two cases are exactly parallel; and that mercury is as injurious to the constitution in hepatic as it

of skin on different parts of the body, attended with heat and itching, and latterly with a disappearance of the hairs from the parts affected. He had been subject to this complaint for several years, and it was usually treated by local applications, which removed the heat and itching, but left behind a shining redness, especially on the face, which has continued more or less ever since. His general health was always affected at those times, but of this no notice was taken by his medical advisers. Several years ago, while at Oxford, a superficial inflammation and abrasion took place spontaneously on the glans penis; and the surgeon there to whom he applied, taking it up at once as syphilitic, put him immediately upon a course of mercury; under which not only the local complaint gave way, but his general health was so much improved, that when he returned to town, he received the congratulations of his friends, upon his having acquired flesh, and looking better than he had done for several years. His London medical friend, however, who had certainly a very extensive opportunity of seeing such complaints, was convinced by the account he gave, that there was nothing syphilitic in its nature, and blamed the Oxford practitioner for having used mercury unnecessarily. The truth, however, is, that both were right, and both wrong; for the one gave a remedy which he intended should cure a venereal taint that really did not exist, and by so doing he removed a state of constitutional disease which he neither understood nor suspected, and of which the local affection in this instance was merely an effect; the other would have treated the local affection

is in *mere* syphilitic complaint ! Yet it is almost entirely from the inconveniences which are ob-

affection entirely by topical means, and probably have succeeded in healing it, but he would thereby have left the constitution still labouring under the previous morbid tendency, and ready to display this in some palpable form, either in the same or in some other part, accordingly as co-operating circumstances might determine it. The result of this case amply confirmed the truth of what I here advance. As besides the cutaneous affection, he complained of general irksome sensations, which he could describe no otherwise than by saying he was not well, I was led to inquire particularly into the state of his alimentary canal. I found that although his appetite was not deficient as to the quantity of food, yet that he neither ate with the same relish, nor experienced the same refreshment from what he took, as he had formerly done ; and that notwithstanding his bowels were evacuated every day spontaneously, yet that the fœces were evidently unhealthy, being generally of a clayey appearance, and when thin, very like yeast. His urine likewise was usually pale. These circumstances left no doubt in ~~my~~ mind, either as to the source of his complaints, or to the plan I ought to pursue to restore the free excretory office of the liver, which was evidently suspended. Accordingly, after two or three unsuccessful attempts to bring bile speedily into the intestines, by giving at bed time a few grains of Calomel, joined with an opiate, and with a small proportion of Tartarised Antimony, and followed by some Colocynth Extract on the succeeding morning, I found it necessary to proceed more slowly, and endeavour to rouse the liver, and free its ducts from obstruction, by the use of the *Pilula Hydrargyri*. For several days no sensible change took place, but at the end of that time,
he

served *occasionally* to follow its administration in SYPHILIS, and this administration in many instances acknowledged to be ill conducted, that the general dread of the article has arisen; for as hepatic disorder is commonly believed to be rare in this country, *a fortiori*, the use of this remedy with a view to remove such disorder, cannot be very frequent, and, of course, its

he became suddenly affected with nausea, followed by retching, during which he threw up some bile from the stomach, and soon after passed a considerable quantity downwards, mixed with a matter very much resembling minute portions of cord, or as if the patient had been eating nuts, which had passed through undigested. [The nature of this matter will be particularly considered hereafter; as its occurrence will serve to explain the *kind* of obstruction present, and its complete removal be found the necessary precursor of recovery.] To allay the sickness, a saline effervescing draught was ordered; and this was the only medicine he required afterwards; as the nausea quickly subsided, his bowels became regular, and the fœces duly tinged with bile, at the same time that his appetite and sleep were perfectly restored. During the progress of his indisposition, and until the obstruction was removed, the hair had continued to fall off, not only from a great part of the scalp, but had begun to do so from his chin, and from his legs; and the baldness was at last so conspicuous, as to require the use of a wig. But in a short time, as his strength improved, the hair returned to the denuded parts; and his general health has since continued with fewer interruptions than he had experienced for many years before.

evil or good under such use, cannot be fairly appreciated.

Such are the arguments which may be offered, to rebut those heavy and indiscriminate charges so commonly brought against the use of mercury in general; and, in my opinion, they are quite sufficient for the purpose. Let us now carry the investigation a little farther, and inquire—whether these arguments may not be greatly strengthened, by equally valid evidence, shewing the unexpected collateral benefit obtained from it, in many cases where it is expressly given to extinguish syphilis. It has repeatedly happened, that persons who had been long complaining of general indisposition, marked by symptoms so vague in their character as to be often referred to a distempered fancy, have, unluckily, as they at first thought, though fortunately as it turned out, become the subjects of venereal infection; but, not less to their own agreeable surprise, than to that of their medical attendants, have had all the symptoms they previously complained of, completely removed, by the remedy which was given merely with a view to cure the syphilis, and which was probably the very last that would otherwise have been resorted to.* Now, as many of their

* An instance of this has been related in the preceding note.

most distressing sensations had existed long before they had become the subjects of syphilitic infection, it surely will not be alledged, that the first in order of time were an imaginary anticipation of, or in any way connected with, those of later and purely accidental occurrence. But if they were not, how are we to explain the great relief obtained under the administration of a remedy which, it is allowed on all hands, never improves a constitution already healthy? It is, by removing a state of disease, which the faculty and the public have alike agreed to acknowledge their ignorance of, by embracing its numerous and Proteiform shapes, under the equally comprehensive and vague term of Nervous. That the human frame is liable to various forms of disorder, to discriminate which individual terms are still wanting, will readily be granted. But admitting this, are we never to attempt an investigation of them on some general principle, whereon we can systematically and satisfactorily proceed in their treatment? and, whilst we are inveighing against quacks and quackery, are we tacitly to acknowledge ourselves the former, and either daily practise the latter, or candidly tell our patients that they may do this, or that, or the other thing; or, as some do (who, for humanity's sake, we would hope are strangers to indisposition themselves,) bid them be content under their sufferings, and do nothing at all?

Our pride and self-love ought to forbid the one, and our acquaintance with what has already been effected in science and in medicine, should stimulate us to rescue the profession from being reproached with the other. Who, for example, would have believed only one hundred years ago, that the same power which amused children by attracting straws towards a piece of amber when warmed by friction, or by sparkling on the hair of a cat's back when gently rubbed in the dark, should afterwards be completely identified with that tremendous agent which sets the atmosphere in a blaze, shivers the tallest masts, and demolishes the strongest ramparts; and that farther discoveries should have taught us to protect ourselves against its violence, by conducting it silent and harmless to the earth, through a piece of wire, or even along a wetted pack-thread? Or who could have anticipated, even at the period of the latter discovery by Dr. Franklin, that the same influence which thus operates so destructively in the thunder-storm, should be found nearly allied to, if not completely identified with, that principle which resides in the brain and nerves of all living animals,—to be absolutely necessary to the performance of their functions,—and to be usefully super-added or abstracted by art, for the removal of certain diseases to which these organs are liable? Again, can we doubt that the man who first cut into the human bladder to extract a

stone, or who plunged a needle into the eye to displace by force a part of that delicate organ, must have been considered by his cotemporaries as a rash and dangerous experimenter? even though it was done, in the one case to prevent a lifetime of pain, and in the other, to remedy the privation of sight; both of which, but for these *innovations!* would have still remained incurable. Yet do we now see these operations performed daily, with the utmost safety, and the happiest success. Surely then, if such invaluable improvements have resulted from combining accurate observation with cautious trial, there is no occasion to abandon as hopeless, and still less right to censure as absurd, any premeditated attempt at carrying the science and the practice of medicine, to a higher pitch than they have yet attained. It is with the hope, and in the belief, that I can add something to the present stock of knowledge in both departments, that I shall undertake the task of publishing; and that those who hear of what I teach, and what I practise, only through the tortuous channels of ignorance and of prejudice, may be able to decide for themselves, and bring the question to final issue, under their own impartial trial and adjudication.

Happily for the cause of truth, the claims of this doctrine to notice, do not rest upon my

authority merely; for I shall hereafter shew, that most of the same facts and observations with those upon which I have grounded it, are to be found scattered through the writings of the ablest physicians, from the earliest ages down to the present day. I can assume no superiority then, in merely seeing what others had seen, or in noting what they likewise had recorded; for it required only the same watchfulness to observe, and the same fidelity to describe. But what I think I may claim some merit for, is, the bringing together those detached facts originally collected by myself, and uniting them into a chain of evidence, so as to render them mutually illustrative of each other, and give strength and uniformity to the whole. Neither does the eventual fate of the principal remedy at all affect the stability of the principles upon which it stands recommended to our attention; for experience teaches us, that the same indication of cure can often be fulfilled by several different means, though certainly not by all in an equal degree; and in the course of the work intended to follow this, it will be seen, that although certain forms of hepatic obstruction may be removed by merely lessening general plethora or local congestion of blood, and others by repeated gentle purgatives, such as Cheltenham water, &c. either alone, or aided by warm

bathing, and diaphoretics, yet that there are *other* forms, and these by far the most numerous, wherein their employment can be of little avail, unless aided by mercury, or by some other equally powerful remedy, with which we are yet to be made acquainted.* I should, therefore, deeply lament the hasty rejection of this invaluable article; because I believe, that, if impartially estimated, it will be found to be, like small-pox inoculation, though occasionally productive of inconvenience, yet the preventative of infinitely greater mischief from the spontaneous course of the disease which it is intended to mitigate; and that, until Providence shall vouchsafe to make some fortunate individual the rival of a JENNER in fame, by discovering to him (if any such exist) a perfectly

* Some of the most striking cases of the efficacy of mercury that I have ever seen, were those in which Cheltenham water had been tried, not only without benefit, but with manifest injury. It is much to be regretted then, that those who have the greatest opportunities of ascertaining to what form of the disease it is especially adapted, have not thought proper to instruct us upon this point; and thereby save to many the great expence and disappointment, as well as loss of time and of strength which they suffer. From my own observation I am led to believe, that there are certain circumstances, which, if duly inquired into, would enable us to do this; and I shall accordingly notice them in their proper place.

harmless antidote to syphilis, and an equally efficacious remedy in hepatic complaint, we ought still to employ, with proper caution, the best in either view that we at present possess, namely—MERCURY.*

On a subject of such importance, and where the current of popular prejudice runs so strong, it becomes a duty to oppose this by all the argument in our power; and as the authority of an individual, who is perhaps little known, and certainly much misunderstood, if not purposely misrepresented, cannot be supposed ade-

* Though from the general bounty of Providence, we ought not to despair of there being hereafter discovered, either individual remedies, or particular modes of treatment adequate to the cure of almost every disorder; yet it should not be forgotten, that to ensure success even with acknowledged specifics, it is necessary to employ them early, and before the structure of the part affected, or the strength of the constitution at large, is so much injured as to be incapable of bearing their administration. I am sure the faculty will agree with me, that this is the cause of almost every fatal termination of Syphilis; and, with regard to Liver complaint, I will venture to affirm, that partly from the general dread of Mercury, and still more from the great variety of forms which hepatic disorder will assume, the disease is often either trifled with or overlooked, until it is too late; and Mercury, if then had recourse to, will, probably, from its failure, have to sustain that odium which ought in justice to attach only to previous misapprehension or neglect.

quate to the task, let us hear the sentiments of one whose ability is acknowledged, and whose long and extensive experience has given him, perhaps unrivalled opportunities of forming a correct judgment; only premising, that what HE so forcibly and elegantly says with respect to the use of mercury in syphilis, I hold to be, with few exceptions, applicable to its employment in liver complaints.

“ Men (says he) may amuse themselves by
“ declaiming against mercury, as an uncertain
“ remedy ; they may utter querulous details of
“ its baneful effects, and retail tragical stories
“ of its malignant influence on the bodies and
“ minds of those who use it ; but surely all
“ this turbulent eloquence may be directed with
“ equal advantage, not only against every po-
“ tent article of the materia medica, but
“ against the very aliment by which we are
“ sustained.

“ Almost every department of physical science
“ contains propositions which require excep-
“ tions, or against which objections may be
“ brought that scarcely admit of a satisfactory
“ solution. Yet, notwithstanding these, philoso-
“ phers do not suppose it necessary to abandon

“ duly verified axioms, because a few pheno-
“ mena not perfectly understood, seem to mili-
“ tate against them.

“ He who shall discard all general rules be-
“ cause they admit exceptions, ought likewise
“ for the sake of consistency, to renounce all
“ science, because human knowledge is fallaci-
“ ous and imperfect.

“ My opportunities of administering mercury
“ have not extended to less than twenty thou-
“ sand cases ; and I feel myself authorized to
“ assert, that it is a remedy always to be con-
“ fided in, under every form of Lues Venerea ;
“ and where we have only that one disease to
“ contend with, that it is a certain antidote,
“ and as safe in its operation, as any other
“ active medicine drawn from the vegetable or
“ the mineral kingdom. Let me not be mis-
“ understood here, as if I meant to say, that it
“ is a certain and safe remedy in the hands of
“ any one who undertakes to dispense it. Quite
“ the contrary ; for a multitude of indisputable
“ proofs might be adduced, that ignorance and
“ error often render it one of the most precarious
“ and mischievous medicines in use.”*

* Observations on the various articles of the Materia Medica
in the cure of Lues Venerea ; illustrated by cases, (2nd ed.)
By JOHN PEARSON, Surgeon to the Lock Hospital, &c.

As I expect it will here be objected to me, that I have strained the testimony given in favour of mercury in a disease where it is indispensable, in order to apply it to cases which can be cured with equal certainty and greater ease by other means, I have particular pleasure in quoting in favour of this article as a general remedy, the opinion of a gentleman, whose views of disease are marked by so much soundness of reasoning, and supported by such a strength of facts, as entitle him to the very universal respect and attention which his publication has excited.

“ We are often told of the pernicious effects
“ of mercury on the constitution ; but if I were
“ to judge from my own experience, I would
“ form an opposite conclusion. In cases where
“ mercury was carried to such a length, that
“ the patients have been for two weeks without
“ tasting almost either meat or drink, the cure
“ was most complete. In some instances this
“ was done where the patients - were supposed
“ to have suffered greatly from previous saliva-
“ tion ; and so far from injuring the constitution,
“ the process appeared to give it new energy,
“ and the most perfect health has been the con-
“ sequence.”*

* Cases of Diabetes, Consumption, &c. with Observations on the History and Treatment of Diseases in general. By ROBERT WATT, 1808.

Unfortunately it is not the case with the practice of medicine, as it is with several other branches of science, that a proposed improvement of it can be rendered so immediately demonstrable, as to supersede all farther objection; on the contrary, a full proof of the superiority of any one plan of cure over others, can only be obtained by an extended consideration of numerous facts and observations, and by a general conclusion drawn from thence, which at once fully accords with the phenomena, and is perfectly consistent with itself. The history of medicine, and the fluctuations it has undergone in the progress of ages, will sufficiently evince the truth of this; nor has any general doctrine, or individual remedy, however superior it has ultimately been found to those before in use, ever made its way to an immediate and general adoption among contemporary practitioners. Antimony, now so universally resorted to, was once expressly prohibited by the Faculty of Medicine at Paris, and the interdict not taken off for half a century. The Peruvian Bark, which has held so distinguished a place in the *materia medica* for the last 130 years, and even been looked on by a late physician of high repute* as

* Dr. Heberden, in his *Comment. de Morbis*.

almost an universal remedy, met with violent opposition on the continent, till sanctioned by the authority of the Pope's physician, and supported by the powerful influence of the Jesuits, from whom, on that account, it received what was long one of its most current names.* In this country, Sydenham was for a long time adverse to its employment; and though it was strongly recommended by his friend and correspondent Dr. Brady, Professor of Physic at Cambridge, and by Dr. Prujean, then President of the College of Physicians, its use for the cure of Intermitting Fevers did not become general, until its superior success under the management of Dr. Talbor, overcame all further opposition.†

* Jesuit's Bark.

† Talbor shewed the disingenuousness common to all empirics. Though he wrote upon the subject, he carefully concealed the remedy, until his secret was purchased by the king of France; when it was found to be the Peruvian Bark, and that his success depended solely upon his previously clearing the stomach and intestines by vomiting and purging. That the indiscriminate mode of employing the Cinchona as a specific, which was followed at its first introduction, was often injurious, cannot be doubted; and we can still trace in the language of the vulgar, the prejudices once entertained against it by the faculty, on this account. The phrase of "the Bark having got into the bones," though false in its reasoning, yet expressed an important fact not sufficiently attended to, namely, that the aguish *form* of disease may be suppressed by Peruvian Bark,

With regard to mercury, it will have still greater obstacles to encounter in the public opinion, from its being so long and so intimately associated with an opprobrious complaint; and we must expect, that there will still be found many, who are so much under the dominion of prejudice, and so little influenced by reason, as to reject every evidence in its favour. The history of variolous, and still later of vaccine inoculation, affords melancholy analogous proofs of this, which the memory of every experienced practitioner will readily supply to him. I have twice in my life been told by patients, who were snatched from the brink of the grave by the aid of mercury—the one under obstructed liver, attended with dropsy, which threatened speedy suffocation, the other under a very singular and distressing complication of disorders which had resisted the various means employed by different practitioners for several years—that they would never have taken the remedy, had they known what it was; although neither of them experienced much inconvenience from its use:* and a

Bark, while there is still a morbid state left, which will afterwards display itself in rheumatic pains, or in jaundice, dropsy, &c. accordingly as constitutional tendency, or accidental causes, may favour one or other of these.

* It may be proper to add, that the first patient probably paid the forfeit of her life as a tribute to her obstinacy; as I

gentleman lately assured me, that he lost the business of a family by proposing, and that family soon after lost their child, in all probability by rejecting, the external employment of mercury in hydrocephalus, although by means of this medicine given internally, and consequently unknown to the parents, an elder child had before recovered from an almost hopeless stage of the same disease. With such persons, argument and reason will seldom avail much; but they ought still to be urged by us as a part of our duty; and if obliged to retire from the contest without effect, we can only say, should they have decided for themselves—" *quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat.*"

Having now offered such preliminary remarks as appeared to me necessary and proper on the occasion, I would address a few words to my professional brethren; upon whose decision the

understood, that about a year after I left the part of the country where I then resided, she had a return of the obstruction, accompanied with dropsy, which proved fatal. The other made the *amende honorable* most completely; for the remedy having being suspended only at her own desire, the symptoms recurred again, and she was easily persuaded to resume its use, which amply rewarded her by removing the complaint entirely, and with even less inconvenience than before.

immediate fate of any new proposal must in a great measure depend. To their judgment and candour I shall willingly submit it ; neither contemptuously challenging their hostile opposition, nor meanly soliciting their partial favour. Whatever may be our difference of opinion at present, still the question is not a personal one between them and me ; but one in the just determination of which we are equally interested. To all liberal criticism, from whatever quarter it may come, I shall respectfully attend ; and will readily acknowledge any correction which it offers ; for, on such a question, I consider an author as standing *in foro conscientiae* ; and, where the issue may involve the future comfort, if not the existence, of thousands, I hold, with the amiable Bonnet, that “ one candid acknowledgment of error, “ is of more real value than a hundred ingenious “ replies.”*

* “ *Un j' ai tort vaut mieux que cent repliques ingenieuses.*”

Valeat quantum valere debet.

immediate fate of any new proposal must in a great measure depend. To their judgment and candour I shall willingly submit it; neither can I temptuously challenging their hostile opposition, nor meanly soliciting their partial favour. What ever may be our difference of opinion at present, still the question is not a personal one between them and me; but one in the last determination of which we are equally interested. To all liberal criticism, from whatever quarter it may come, I shall respectfully attend; and will readily acknowledge any correction which it offers; for, on such a question, I consider an author as standing in his own conscience; and, where the issue may involve the future comfort, if not the existence, of thousands, I hold, with the amiable Bonnet, that "one candid acknowledgment of error is of more real value than a hundred ingenious replies."

"But, as I have said, the text is not mine; it is the property of the author."

Valent parant velle debet.

