On epilepsy : and the use of the viscus quercinus, or, misletoe [sic] of the oak, in the cure of that disease / by Henry Fraser.

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ON EPILEPSY,

AND

THE USE

OF THE

VISCUS QUERCINUS,

OR,

MISLETOE OF THE OAK,

IN THE

CURE OF THAT DISEASE.

BY HENRY FRASER, M. D. &c.

Ὅτι ἂν ἀκριβῶς εἰδέναι βούλῃ ἐμτείριας μέτιθι καὶ φιλοσοφιας. ISOCRATES.

Natura tamen infirmitatis humanæ, tardiora sunt remedia quam mala, et ut corpora lente augescunt, cito extinguuntur. TACITUS.

London:

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R. Edwards, Printer,
Crane Court, Fleet Street.

TO

HENRY THORNTON, ESQ. M. P.

VICE PRESIDENT

OF THE

ROYAL JENNERIAN INSTITUTION,

ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY,

SMALL-POX AND INOCULATION HOSPITALS, &c. &c.

A SINCERE FRIEND

TO EVERY CLASS OF SUFFERING HUMANITY,

AND

A ZEALOUS PROMOTER OF EVERY PLAN

PROJECTED FOR THEIR RELIEF,

THIS ESSAY

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

Hatton-Garden,
March 13, 1806.

TO

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Hatton Garden,
March 15, 1806.

ON EPILEPSY,

AND THE USE OF THE VISCUS QUERCINUS,

OR MISLETOE OF THE OAK,

IN THE CURE OF THAT DISEASE.

ALTHOUGH Epilepsy has been noticed by every systematical writer on medicine, from the time of Hippocrates to the present æra, still this disease continues to be one of the most formidable and untractable in Nosology. To see the afflicted with this dreadful malady, going from place to place, from physician to physician, in search of that health they can nowhere

find, is truly lamentable. Death, which under such circumstances, must be far preferable to life, rarely comes to put a period to their sufferings, unless occasioned by some incidental occurrence, before the mind, debilitated by repeated paroxysms of the disease, sinks into idiotism. Where is the stoic, who in contemplating such a picture, could refrain from tears? Even the sullen apathy of the gloomy misanthrope would, upon such an occasion, forsake him! Still here is no exaggeration; that this is but too commonly the effect of the disease, few will deny. I am therefore free to confess, that, from describing and recommending a medicine, which experience has, in a few instances, proved to be sufficiently powerful to disarm this hideous monster of all its terrors, I derive the most genuine, heartfelt satisfaction.

Epilepsy

Epilepsy assails with equal virulence, and equal frequency, both sexes; and frequently robs the tender mother of her darling child.

Some may apprehend, that I have undertaken an arduous task, in endeavouring to rescue from oblivion a plant, which, in consequence of the prejudices excited against it as an object of superstition, has been long neglected. Any attempt, however, to prove before natural philosophers in this enlightened age, why a former object of superstition should not now, if possible, be turned to advantage, would be alike to trespass upon their time, and call in question their judgment.

The professed object of this essay is to persuade physicians to submit the Viscus quercinus to the test of experiment. If I

had not tried it as far as the limited opportunities of an individual would admit; if I had not found it efficacious in Epilepsy, even beyond my most sanguine expectations, I would not now presume to offer it as worthy of the most serious attention of the faculty. But since I am confirmed in my opinion of its utility upon the strongest foundation, philanthropy alone is sufficient to urge me to offer my mite, towards the relief of this wretched, and unfortunate class of my fellow-creatures.

My design is therefore rather to introduce this vegetable into general use, than to enter into a minute discussion of the theory of Epilepsy, because any thing advanced upon this part of the subject must be in a great measure hypothetical, and, from the acknowledged difficulty of the inquiry, most probably would not be

more

more satisfactory, than that given by far more able men, who have travelled over the same ground before. If, however, at any time, practical facts and observations should unfortunately induce me to dissent from the generally received, and most respectable authority; I hope, I may be allowed to explain my reasons without being branded with the imputation of arrogance.

The obstinate nature of this disease is so well known, that any attempt to render it less virulent, and more manageable, far from requiring apology, seems entitled to the most zealous co-operation of medical practitioners.

It must be evident from these premises, that I have no wish to obtrude my opinion upon practitioners without suffering them to try its validity. I come forward

with

with no dogma, which I am unwilling to submit to the test of experiment: on the contrary, my only desire is to induce them to try the Viscus quercinus, which from the acknowledged and well-known impotency of all other medicines, there can surely be no reasonable objection to. Let it be constantly remembered, that I have no favourite hypothesis to support; no claim of originality to be cavilled at. If the Misletoe of the Oak be found sufficiently powerful to merit, and gain the confidence of physicians, as a friend to suffering humanity, I shall certainly rejoice; if, on the other hand, it be found wanting, I will relinquish my opinion, although not without sorrow. But I have a hope, which I flatter myself is well founded, that its future success in other hands will be found commensurate with its past and present in mine.

The

The necessity of conducting these experiments, upon an enlarged scale, and in a judicious and impartial manner, must be obvious; and the observance of a most scrupulous regard to accuracy, in the narration of cases, equally so.

For a trial of this remedy, I shall feel particularly obliged by the exertions of Dr. Lettsom, Dr. James Sims, Dr. Cooke, Dr. Willan, and Dr. Babington; whose professional judgment is sound and mature; whose avocations are such, as must frequently afford them opportunities of prescribing the Viscus quercinus; and whose science and candor are equal.

I would also interest Dr. Haygarth, Dr. Wall, and Dr. Bourne, in this inquiry; their abilities are too conspicuous to render any panegyric worthy of their acceptance,

ance, and their deep classical erudition is such, as every scholar must feel delight in paying homage to.

In order to give this essay its proper form, I will describe the disease, for the cure of which this medicine is proposed; comment upon the various remedies at present employed in Epilepsy, and annex a botanical description of the Misletoe, with the directions necessary to be observed in preparing it for use.

DEFINITION.

After having consulted various authors, who have written professedly on Epilepsy, with the view of obtaining the most copious and satisfactory definition of the disease, we give a decided prefer-

ence

ence to Dr. Cullen, and shall therefore describe the general form and character of Epilepsy, in the professor's own language.

"Epilepsy may be defined," says the learned professor, "as consisting in con-
"vulsions of the greater part of the mus-
"cles of voluntary motion, attended with
"a loss of sense, and ending in a state of
"insensibility and seeming sleep. The
"general form, or principal circumstances
"of this disease, are much the same in
"all the different persons whom it affects.
"It comes by fits, which often attack per-
"sons seemingly in perfect health; and,
"after lasting for some time, pass off, and
"leave the persons again in their usual
"state. These fits are sometimes preceded
"by certain symptoms, which, to persons
"who have before experienced such a fit,
"may give notice of its approach, as we
"shall

"shall hereafter explain; but even these "preludes do not commonly occur long "before the formal attack, which in most "cases comes on suddenly without any "such warning. The person attacked "loses suddenly all sense, and power of "motion: so that, if standing, he falls "immediately, or perhaps with convul-"sions is thrown to the ground. In that "situation he is agitated with violent con-"vulsions, variously moving his limbs and "the trunk of his body. Commonly the "limbs on one side of the body are more "violently, or more considerably agitated "than those upon the other. In all "cases, the muscles of the face and eyes "are much affected, exhibiting various "and violent distortions of the counte-"nance. The tongue is often affected, "and thrust out of the mouth; while the "muscles of the lower jaw are also af-

fected;

"fected; and shutting the mouth with
"violence while the tongue is thrust out
"between the teeth, that it is often griev-
"ously wounded. While these convul-
"sions continue, there is commonly, at
"the same time, a frothy moisture issu-
"ing from the mouth. These convul-
"sions have for some time some remis-
"sions, but are suddenly again renewed
"with great violence. Generally, after
"no long time, the convulsions cease al-
"together; and the person for some time
"remains without motion, but in a state
"of absolute insensibility, and under the
"appearance of a profound sleep. After
"some continuation of this seeming sleep,
"the person sometimes suddenly, but
"for the most part by degrees only, re-
"covers his senses, and power of mo-
"tion, but without any memory of what
"had passed from his first being seized

"with

"with the fit. During the convulsions, "the pulse and respiration are hurried "and irregular; but when the convul- "sions cease, they return to their usual "regularity, and healthy state.

This is the general form of the disease; and it varies only in different persons, or on different occasions in the same person by the phenomena mentioned, being more or less violent, or by their being of longer or shorter duration.

Various parts of the body have been mentioned by different authors, as the seat of Epilepsy; some of whom have placed it in the cerebrum,[a] cerebellum,

[a] Vid. Autor. Libr. pseudohipp. de morbo sacro.
Galen. de loc. affec. Lib. iii. cap. 7.
Paul. Arginet. Lib. iii. cap. 13.
Carol. Piso de morb. a colluv. Seros. sect. ii. part 2 p. 145.

lum,[b] the different ventricles of the brain,[c] and nerves;[d] others in the heart,[e] and stomach.[f]

We have no doubt, that Epilepsy has been frequently connected with diseases of all those different parts, yet we are much inclined to believe, that the predisponent cause of this disease, be it whatsoever it may, resides in the nervous system.

There

Rolfink. Epitom: method. cognosc. et curand. affect. cap. 18.
Unzer l. c. lib. i. cap. 5.
Van Swieten l. c. T. iii. p. 401.

[b] Vid. Thom. Willis de morb. convulsie.

[c] Vid. Don. Ant. Altomare de medend. corp. human. malis. Lib. i. cap. 18. p. 168. Venet 1558. fol.

[d] J. Wallaeus rsp. Joh. de Schafter de Epilepsia § 5. Lugd. Batav. 1646.

[e] Quercetan. Tetras. cap. 8.

[f] Helmont. Tr. de sed. anim. § 7. p. 274.

There is perhaps no disease in Nosology, the nature of which has been more elaborately investigated, than Epilepsy; and the want of success, which has generally attended the efforts of those philosophers, who have attempted to elucidate this abstruse subject, affords the most irrefragable proof of the almost impenetrable obscurity, in which its various phenomena are involved; for, notwithstanding the many very ingenious speculations,[g] which their researches have

[g] Vid. Aretaeus de morb. acut. Lib i. cap. 5. Galen. de loc. affect. Lib. iii. cap. 5.—Matt. Unzer. de epilep. Lib. i. cap. 12.—Constantin. Medicus. vid. Barthol. Anglic. de propriet. rer. Lib. vii. cap. 9. —Barthol. de Moor patholog. cerebri. Amstelod. 1704.—Archib. Piteairn Element. Med. Leed. 1737. —Joel. Langelott. D. de epilepsia. Lugd. Batav. 1647.—Sennert. instit. med. Lib. ii. p. 3. Sect. 2. cap. 6.—Vid. Plater. l. c. T. 1. cap. 2.—Willis de morb. conv. cap. 2. et 7.—Michaelis oper. med. p. 574.—F. Hofman rsp. A. P. Bornemann D. sist. affect.

have given birth to, the proximate cause of Epilepsy is even at this time but very imperfectly understood. Indeed whoever considers the difficulty of demonstrating the nature of any disease, in which the general investigation of the principles of irritability and muscular motion is required, must easily perceive the difficulty of perfectly accomplishing our present undertaking. Conscious of this, we approach to the discussion of our abstruse subject with becoming diffidence, reserving only for ourselves, in the event of failure, the consolation of sharing the fate

hered. p. 23.—Halae 1699.—Tralles de usu opii. Sect. iii. p. 17.—H. Boerhave praelect. academ. T. 6. —Musgrave, Speculations, and Conjectures on the qualities of the Nerves. Sect. 1.—Pressavin, nouveau traité des vapeurs ou traité des maladies des nerfs. p. 102 à Lyon 1770.—Tissot. l. c. p. 27. 29.

fate of many far more able men who have gone before us.

We consider the real state or condition of the nervous energy of the brain, during an Epileptic paroxysm, to be collapse, which we will endeavour to prove, from the peculiar habit of Epileptic subjects, the occurrences which immediately precede the fit, and the state of the patient during its continuance.

The majority of persons, who are liable to Epilepsy, possess a considerable share of irritability, which disposes them to be quickly acted upon by any cause of excitement. This peculiar mobility of constitution renders them very subject to an alternation of *excitement* and *collapse* of the nervous energy of the brain; and it will be readily admitted, that

that the symptoms, which generally precede the paroxysm, are such as denote considerable excitement in the nervous system. That a state of increased irritability immediately precedes the epileptic fit, is also clearly proved by the good effects of opium, which, when administered at this period, either entirely prevents the paroxysm, or at least mitigates its violence. Therefore, as any violent excitement of the energy of the brain is invariably followed by a collapse, or diminution of the same; as in these peculiar constitutions, excitement and collapse quickly alternate with each other; and as considerable excitement of the nervous energy of the brain is uniformly the condition of the patient, immediately preceding the paroxysm, so there is some plausible ground for supposing, that the condition of the nervous energy

of the brain, during the continuance of the epileptic fit, is constantly collapse.

This doctrine is supported by the state of the patient immediately prior to, during, and directly after the paroxysm. The epileptic fit is almost constantly preceded by lassitude, a certain degree of stupor, giddiness, pain of the head, *tinnitus, aurium*, frightful dreams, difficult breathing, and palpitation of the heart; during the action of the paroxysm, the pulse is irregular, all sensation, and the faculties of the mind are extinct, semen, urine, and fæces are discharged involuntarily; but no sooner do the convulsions cease, than the patient, insensible to every thing which has passed around him, gradually, and sometimes even immediately, resumes his usual health. The temporary suspension of muscular motion, which frequently,

perhaps

perhaps generally happens during the course of the epileptic paroxysm, especially when experienced in a violent degree, admits of our drawing somewhat decisive conclusions, as to the condition of the nervous energy of the brain under those circumstances. Now, as most, if not all the occasional causes of Epilepsy, produce their effect by primarily exciting the nervous action of the brain, either through the medium of the sanguiferous system, or by acting immediately on that organ itself, we hope, it has been rendered tolerably manifest, that the nervous energy of the brain must be constantly in a state of collapse during the continuance of the epileptic paroxysm.

The remote causes of Epilepsy are to be considered as occasional, and predisponent.

Of the Occasional Causes of Epilepsy.

Epilepsy appears frequently to be hereditary, but not constantly; for it sometimes happens, that a person becomes epileptic, whose ancestors were never subject to this disease; while on the other hand, we have known instances of people passing through life without experiencing a single paroxysm, notwithstanding the parents, even on both sides, were the subjects of Epilepsy. It has been asserted, that the produce of sexual intercourse during the period of menstruation, is constantly epileptic,[i] and Frights, experienced by the female during gestation, are also said to entail Epilepsy upon her offspring.[j]

The

[i] Vid. Theoph. de Meza Compend. Med. pract. Fascic. V. p. 14. Havniæ, 1781.

[j] Vid. Hoffmann (Fr.) D. di Morb. fortuum in utero matern. § 7. p. 9. Halæ, 1702.—Fabric. Hildan. Observ. chirurg. Cent. iii. Obs. 8.

The occasional causes of Epilepsy, as enumerated by authors, are indeed various. Injuries of the head from external violence.[k] Malconformation, and wounds of the cranium.[l] Diseased changes in the structure, and substance of both the cortical

[k] Vid. Greding l. c. Th. ii. p. 56.—Alberti Jurispr. Medic. P. I. p. 411.—Meyer Abrahamson, in Mekel Archiv d. pract. Arzn. B. iii. Sect. 1. n. 2. —Ortlob in E. N. C. Dec. ii. ann. iv. v. obs. 198. —Pouteau Melanges de Chirurg. p. 85.—Schenk (Joh.) lib. i. obs. 202 & 213.

[l] Vid. Art. Nat. Cur. Cent. vii. p. 299.—Art. Nat. Cur. Dec. i. ann. 4, 5. obs. 35.—Bonet. Sepulchr. anatom. lib. i. sect. xii. obs. 4.—Cöler, vid. Schmuckers vermischt. Schrift. Th. i. p. 259.— Clossy Observations taken of morbid bodies. sect. i. obs. 9. p. 17.—Binninger. observat. medicinal. Cent. iv. obs. 64.—Bartholini Anat. reformat. lib. iv. cap. 5.—Anderson, vid. Auserl. Abhandl. f. pr. Aerzt. b. xiii. p. 712.—Morgagni vid. Lieutaud histor. anat. med. T. ii. p. 321. ed Schlegel. Longosal. 1787.

tical and medullary parts of the brain.[m] Sanguineus,[n] gelatinous,[o] serous,[p] aqueous,[q] and purulent[r] effusions within the different

[m] Vid. Greding, l. c. p. 309.—Morgagni de Sed. et caus. morb. Epist. ix. sect. 16, 18, 25, and 26.—Baader (Josep) Observat. Med. incis. cadav. anatom. illustrat. p. 107. Friburg. 1762.—Marchettis Observat. Chirurg. p. 59. Patav. 1664.

[n] Vid. Mekel Recherch. sur les causes de la folie, in Mem. de Berl. obs. 10, 1760.—Morgagni, l. c. Epist. ix. sect. 12, 14.—Bartholini Histor. anat. Cent. ii. obs. 92. Havn. 1654.—Valsalva, vid. Lieutaud l. c. p. 381. obs. 236.—Drelincourt, in Bonet. Sepulchr. anat. T. i. p. 294.—Marquisius in Zodiac. med. gall. Ann. 1682.

Vid. Drelincourt, v. Bonet. l. c. T. i. p. 296.—Lieutaud, hist. anat. T. ii. p. 444. obs. 470. a. Baader.

[p] Vid. Piso de Morb. a colluv. seros. Sect. ii. cap. 7.—Rhodii Observat. Med. Cent. i. Obs. 49.—Lieutaud, hist. anat. T. ii. p. 354. Obs. 150. Morgagni.—Thoneri (Agustin) de admirand. convuls. Motibus, lib. ii. obs. 2. p. 92. Ulm 1651.

[q] Vid. Greding, l. c. p. 294, 304, 310, 316, 326.—Lieutaud, l. c. p. 359. Obs. 167. p. 361. Obs.

different ventricles, membranes, and other parts of the brain. Schirrous tumours situated in the dura mater, and plexus choroides.[s] Flesy, and adipose substances in the ventricles and about the longitudinal Sinus.[t] Stony,[v] gravelly,[w] and

172. p. 375. Obs. 217.—Sauvage's Nosol. Method. T. iii. p. 106. ed. Daniel.—Roche (De la), in Edinburg. Med. Comment. b. i. p. 229.—Forest. (Petr) de capit. et ventr. Morbis, lib. iii. Leidæ, 1572.—Bonet. Sepulchr. anatom. T. i. obs. 7, 8, 10. 12, 13, 15, 17.

[r] Vid. Bauhin, v. Bonet. l. c. p. 371.—Clossy Observations taken from dissection of Morbid Bodies. Sect. i. obs. 9. p. 17.—Fernel. Pathol. lib. v. cap. 3.—Baader Observat. Medic. p. 107.—Lieutaud l. c. p. 346. obs. 118.—Morgagni l. c. Ep. ix. art. 20, 21.—Salmuth Observa. Cent. i. obs. 17.

[s] Vid. Baldinger (E. F.) Diss de epilepsia ex tumore schir. &c.—Fantoni (Jon.) opusc. Med. p. 37. Lieutaud l. c. p. 361. Obs. 172, 173. p. 376. Obs. 221.—Roederer Pr. de cerebri schirro.—Sorbait (Paul de) univ. medicin. theoretic. et practic. Norimberg. fol.

[t] Vid. Güntz. (F. G.) de cerebro. Prolus. 11.—Langlii opera omn. T. iii. p. 62.—Lieutaud l. c. p.

and osseous concretions;[x] polypi[y] and hydatids in various parts of the brain.[z] Congestion in, and a plethoric state of the blood-

375. obs. 217.—Journ. de Medec. p. 377. obs. 224. Mis. cur.—Greding l. c. p. 298.—Borelli Observat. Cent. ii. obs. 78.—Rhodii Observat. Cent. i. obs. 55. v. Bonet. l. c. p. 283.

v & w Lieutaud l. c. p. 55. obs 153. Guarinonius.—Güntz. Pr. de lapillis in glandula pineali inventis.—Brieu in Journal. de Medec. T. xiv. p. 319.—Bonet. Sepulch. anat. L. i. sect. xii. p. 276. Greding. l. c. p. 320.

x Vid. Lieutaud l. c. p. 322. obs. 41. Miscell. curios. Lieutaud l. c. p. 324. obs. 50. Lieut. adversar.—Hunauld, in Mem. de l'Acad. d. Sc. à Paris, 1734.—Motte (De la) Taitè complet. de Chirurg. T. ii. p. 397. ob. 171.—Fasch (A. H.) rsp. Boesio D. de epilepsia. p. 15. Jenæ, 1686.

y Vid. Blasius (Gerhard) v. Bonet. l. c. lib. i. sect. xii. addit. obs. 24. p. 283.—Wagner (Frid. Aug.) in epistol. gratulat. de morborum insanabilium curatione.—Greding l. c. p. 298.

z Vid. Johnstone, in Med. Obs. and Inquir. t. ii. n. 6.—Lyson's Pract. Essays, p. 160. Rath. 1772.—Moritz (F. C.) D. de convulsionum therapia, p. 34.—Valsalva, v. Morgagni, l. c. p. 68.

blood-vessels of the brain, arising from a tumour in the neck pressing upon the veins, and thus retarding the free return of blood from the head;[a] the application of cold to the lower extremities;[b] violent exercise;[c] inebriety;[d] cold bathing;[e] the effects of a warm climate;[f] and a general phlethoric

[a] Vid. Armot, in Journ. de Medicine, pr. Msr. Bacher. T. xci. à Paris, 1792.

[b] Vid. Baldinger von de Krankeit. einer. Armee. Th. i. cap. 4. Dolaei. (Jo.) encyclopaedia medica p. 126.—E. N. C. Dec. 11. Ann. 11. obs. 160. —Tissot l. c. p. 157.—Wedel, in Act. Nat. Curios Dec. 11. Ann. 11. obs. 160.

[c] Vid. Tissot. l. c. p. 155.—Untzer (Matth.) ἱερονοσολογία p. 102.—Bierling. adversar. curiosa. p. 218. Jenæ, 1697.

[d] Vid. Greding. l. c. p. 131.—Heers (ab) l. c. obs. 24.—Forest. (P) l. c. lib. ix. obs. 27.—Drelincourt v. Bonet. l. c. obs. 6. p. 294.—Brassavola (Ant. Mus.) comment. in Hippocratis aphorism. p. 152. Basil. 1541. fol.

[e] Vid. Marcard, (H. M.) über. d. Natur. u Gebrauch der Bäder. p. 410. 411.

Vid. Löffler Beiträge z. Arznew. und Wundarzniew. Th. 1. Leipzigu. Altona, 1791.—Richter chir. Bibl. B. xii. p. 327.

phlethoric state of the vascular system[g], and some affections of the spine.[h] The passions of the mind; joy;[i] grief;[j] disappointed love;[k] fear;[l] terror;[m] anger;[n] sympathy;

[g] Vid. Zacut. Lusitan. Prax. admir. L. i. obs. 21. obs. 27.

[h] Bonet. Sepulchr. anat. T. i. obs. 25.—Manardi (Joann.) Epistol. Lib. iii. Epist. 6.

[i] Vid. Boerhaave (H.) de morb. nervos. p. 804.—Sweiten (G. van) Comm. in Boerh. aphor. T. iii. p. 414.

[j] Vid. Hoffmann medic. ration. T. iv. P. iii. p. 39.—Nicolai Patholog. Th. i. p. 276.—Alberti Jurispr. med. Suppl. p. 407. § 30.

[k] Vid. Aaskow in Collect. Societ. med. Hafn. Vol. ii. p. 16.—Heucher (J. Henr.) opuscul. sist. morb. ex nimio veneris usu.—Donat. (Marcell.) dehist. med. mirab. L. ii. cap. 4.—Schenk (Jo.) observ. rarior. Lib. i. obs. 4.

[l] Vid. Burmester. (J. J.) D. Consult med. super morb. spastic. &c.—Lange. Diss. de morbo caduco.—Boerhave de morb. nervos. p. 411. et 803.

[m] Vid. Bartholin. histor. anat. Cent. iii. hist. 41.—Appel (J. J.) Discursus de epilepsia. p. 10.—Bagliv. prax. medic. Lib. i. cap 14. § 2.—Haen (de) Rat. medend. P. V. p. 121.—Camerar. Syllog.

pathy ;[o] and intense study.[p] Mechanical affections of the nerves producing Epilepsy

medic. morab. Cent. xvi. part. 26. 33.—Boerhave de morb. norvos. p. 801. and p. 833.—Bierling (C. Th.) medicus theoret. pract. p. 577.—Fothergill medic. Observat. and Inquir. V. vi. p. 79.—Morgagni de sedibus, et caus. morb. L. i. Ep. ix. art. 6.—Hoffmann medic. ration. system. T. iv P. iii. p. 25 and 27.—Wepfer observ. med. pract. de affectib. capitis. p. 626.—Zimmermann von d. Erfahrung, Th. ii. cap. 2. p. 444.

[n] Sauvages nosol. meth. T. iii. p. 117. ed. Dan.—Wieri de ird morbo ejusdemque curatione liber. recus. in oper. p. 771. Basil. 1577.—Nicolai Partholog. Th. p. 275, 276.—Morgagni de sed. et caus. morb. Ep. ix. art. 5.—Greding l. c. p. 54. 57. 70.—Hoffmann med. rat. syst. T. iv. p. iii. p. 39.

Vid. Marcellus Donatus l. c. Lib. ii. cap. 4. p. 146.—Salmuth l. c. Cent. ii. observat. 73.—Meza Compend. med. pract. Fasc. v. p. 15. Havniæ 1781.—Detharding rsp. G. H. Stieler, D. de chorea S. viti. p. 29. Rostock 1760.—Lettsom in Memoirs of the Med. Societ. of London, Vol. iii.—Askow, in Collect. Soc. Med. Havn. Vol. ii. p. 14—22.

[p] Vid. Galen. de loc. affect. Lib. v. t. vii. p. 492. ed Chart.—Hoffmann med. rat. syst. cap. de epilepsia,

lepsy are wounds penetrating their substance;[q] pressure from tumours, or concretions;[r] dislocations;[s] calculi of the kidneys, and bladder;[t] dentition,[v] and laborious parturition.[w] The occasional causes

sect. 19.—Pechlin. obs. phys. med. Lib. iii. Hamburg, 1691.

[q] Vid. Maret in nouv. Memoir de Dijon. Prem. Semestr.—Kaempf von d. Krankh. des Unterleib. p. 293.—Forest, l. c. Lib. x. obs. 99.—Appel (J. J.) Discurs. de epilepsia, p. 11, 12.

[r] Vid. Bonet. Sepulchr. anat. T. i, p. 291.—Cappel D. de tumore nervo vago inhærente. Helmstad.—Rhases continens, Lib. xv. cap. 1. fol. 307.

Vid. Dictionnaire universel de Medicine, T. i. p. 564.

[t] Vid. Motte (De la) Traite compl. d. chir. T. ii. p. 416. 419.—Hoffmann med. rat. syst. cap. de Epilepsia, ob. 3.—Barthollin. (Thom.) opusc. med. T. i. p. 59.—Beaumes, in journ. de med. T. lvii. p. 320.—Helmont de lithiasi, cap. 7.

[v] Vid. Sauvages nosol. meth. T. iii. p. 101. ed. Daniel Selle Medicin. clinic. p. 371.

[w] Vid. Mauriceau obs. sur la Grossesse, Tom. ii. obs. 552. à Paris 1728.—Motte (De la) Traité des Ac-

causes of Epilepsy, which operate by a direct stimulus upon parts remote from the brain, and from thence communicated to it, are tickling;[x] various changes which take place in the body at the time of puberty;[y] excessive venery;[z] gestation;[a] hysteria;

couch. L. iii. cap. xii. p. 307.—Petri (G. H. Ph.) D. de convulsion. gravidarum, parturientium, et puerperarum. Gotting. 1790.—Engelmann D. de tibus convulsiv. et partu difficili. Altdorf. 1752.

[x] Vid. Robinson's new System of the Spleen, Vapours, &c.—Swieten (Van) Comment. &c. T. iii. p. 415.

[y] Vid. Meza (S. Th. de) Observat. de adfectu spasmod. refractario, in Coll. Soc. Med. Havn. Vol. ii. p. 265.—Beaumes l. c. p. 253.—Willis (Th.) Patholog cerebri, p. 75. Oxon. 1667.—Stahl. (G. E.) D. de hereditaria dispositione ad varios affectus, p. 48. Halæ, 1706.

[z] Vid. Gallen. de loc. affect. Lib. v. cap. 6.—Lorry. vid Beaumes l. c. p. 131.—Haller. Element. Physiol, T. vii. p. 567.—Cole, in Phil. Transact. n. 174. p. 115.—Sauvages nosol. method. Cl. ix. artic. 31. n. 6.—Feurstein (J. H.) D. de epilepsia. p. 83. Gotting.—Tissot, l. c. p. 75. p. 207.

[a] Vid. Mauriceau observ. sur la Grossesse. T. ii. ob.

teria;[b] hypochondriasis;[c] and idiosyncracy.[d] Epilepsy is also sometimes produced by excessive evacuations either of blood;[e] perspiration;* semen, or serum;

552.— ——— derniers observat. obs. 93.—Fernel. pathol. L. v. cap. 3.—In opp. omn. Hanover, 1610. fol. p. 403.—Motte (De la) Chirurgie complette, T. ii. p. 422. obs. 176.—(This was a most singular and remarkable case, the subject of it being afflicted with epilepsy during her pregnancy with a male child, but not with a female.)

[b] Vid. Eikmeyer D. de epilepsia uterina.—Falk (J. G.) D. de epilepsia, seu convulsiv. motibus virginum. Gotting. 1754.—Andree on hysteric fits. p .27.—Wedel D. de epilepsia hysterica.

[c] Vid. Moor (Barthol. de) l. c. cap. 17.—Silemann (Ad. cognomine Schenk), D. de epilepsia hypochondriaca. Lugd. Batav.

[d] Vid. Sauvages l. c. T. iii. p. 117.—Ammann Medicin. critic. Consil. 59.—Act. Nat. Cur. Dec, iii. Ann. ix. x. obs. 92. p. 170.

[e] Vid. Hippocratis aphorism. Sect. vii. aphor. 9.—Morgagni (J. B.) l. c. Lib. i. Epist. x. art. 21.—Paul Aeginet. Lib. iii. cap. 19.

* Gabelchover, l. c. Cent. iv. Curat. 59. E. N. C. Dec. iii. Ann ii. obs. 46.

rum;[f] while on the other hand, the retention, or suppresion of natural, or preternatural evacuations, as nasal hœmorrhagy,[g] the menstrual flux,[h] bleeding piles,[i] the lochia,[j] alvine,[k] seminal,[l] or vesicular[m] discharges, the drying up of issues,[n] and

Schroeder D. de convulsionibus ex hœmorrhagia nimia oriundis Marberg. 1752.

[f] Vid. Hagendorn l. c. Cent. i. histor. 21. p. 36.—Tissot, l. c. Th. v. p. 86.

[g] Vid. Hagendorn l. c. Cent. i. histor. 20. p. 35.—Tissot l. c. p. 134.

[h] Vid. Sigwart D. sist. cas. puellæ post mensium suppressionem epilepticæ. Tubing.—Mangin histoire generale de l'Electricité, T. iii. p. 85.—Willis (Th.) Patholog. cerebri. p. 96.

[i] Vid. Rhodius l. c. Cent. i. obs. 65.

[j] Vid. Greding l. c. T. i. p. 56.

[k] Vid. Hollerii Comment. in coacas Hippocratis, p. 876.

[l] Vid. Kriinitz D. de matrimonio multorum morborum remedio. p. 21.—Stakl Theoria Medicin. ver. p. 1355.

[m] Vid. Zacut. Lusitan. Prax. admirab. L. i. obs. 35.

[n] Vid. Bartholin. (Thom.) histor. medic. Cent. xxx. hist. 20.

and the premature healing of old wounds[o] have been as frequently observed to occasion this disease. Organic diseases of the different viscera contained within the cavities of the thorax and abdomen, as carcinoma of the cardia;[p] diseased kidneys,[q] schirrous affection of the spleen,[r] a morbid state of the liver, and mesentery,[s] ulcers in the urinary bladder,[t] and fleshy and adipose adhesions to the intestines,[v] have been enumerated by authors among the occasional causes of Epilepsy. Crudities

[o] Vid. Marchettis (Petr. de) observat. chirur. Patav. 1668.

[p] Vid. Tissot, l. c. p. 57.

[q] Vid. Bartholin. histor. anat. Cent. v. hist. 61.

[r] Vid. Bonet. Sepulchr. anat. Lib. i. sect. xii. obs. 42.

[s] Vid. Rhodius l. c. Cent. i. obs. 61.—Welch Hecatost. ii. obs. 79. p. 49.

[t] Vid. Tissot, l. c. p. 73.

[v] Vid. Bresl. Samml. op. p. 421. 1725.—E. N. C. Dec. ii. obs. 152.

ties in the primæ viæ;[w] worms infesting the stomach, and intestines;[x] and acrid, chemical,[y] and narcotic poisons[z] have frequently the effect of exciting Epilepsy.

The writings of many of the most eminent

[w] Vid. Hippocrates Epidem. Lib. vi. cap. 54. ed. Foes.—Galen. Comm. in Hippocr. aphorism. Lib. v. aph. 1. T. ix. P. ii. p. 195, 296. ed. Charter.—Rahn de consensu. P. iii. p. 114.—Rhases Continens, L. v. cap. 1. fol. 96.

[x] Vid. Medical observat. and inquiries. Vol. vi. p. 68. 70.—Phelsum (Van) historia ascarid. p. 212.—Forest. (Petr.) observat. L. x. obs. 64.

[y] Vid. Camerarii (Js. Rud.) Memorab. med. Cent. xx. Tubingæ, 1683.—Montani (Js. Bapt.) Tr. de morbo gallic. recus. in Collect. Lecisin. et in Ej. opp. variis cura Hier. Donzellini. T. ii. Basil, 1558.

[z] Vid. Sauvages, l. c. p. 103. p. 11.—Valentinus (M. B.) in E. N. C. Ann. x. obs. 118.—Wepfer (J. J.) Cicutæ aquat. hist. p. 5. and 24. Basil, 1679.—Negendorp, Cent. iii. hist. 84. p. 395. Sq. —Ackermann, in annot. ad Tissot, l. c. p. 58. not. 20.

nent Medical authors[a] of antiquity, present us with elaborate discussions on the influence of the planets in the production of Epilepsy; this species of logic is however at this time, perhaps very deservedly expunged from the theory of medicine.

Of the Predisponent Cause of Epilepsy.

As most of the occasional causes of Epilepsy, produce upon certain persons effects, which are by no means analogous to that disease; as many of those causes act powerfully upon certain persons, and not

[a] Vid. Galen de deibus critic. Lib. iii.—Jason a Pratis de cerebri Morbis. p. 349. Basil, 1549.—Paracels. oper. omn. T. i. Argentor. 1616.—Aretacus de caus. et sign. morb. Lib. i. cap. 4.—Arnoldus a Villanova, in Breviario. p. 1076. (edit. opp. Taurell. Basil, 1585. fol.)—Helmont. opera om-

not at all upon others; and as, in several instances, this disease is occasioned by causes of a nature diametrically opposite; I conclude, that in all epileptic patients there is a strong predisposition to that disease. In consequence of this predisposition, Epilepsy frequently results from the action of any cause of excitement in itself sufficient to derange the equilibrium, which nature has established between health, and disease; and it is through the agency of this principle alone, that the operation of causes, which are in their

 qualities

nia. Venet. 1651. fol.—Bartholomæus Anglic. de proprietatibus rerum. L. vii. c. 9.—Hoffmann (Fr.) Institut. L. iii. cap. 88.—Read. D. de imperio solis et lunæ in corpora humana. Londini, 1704.—Riverii. Arcana. Venet. 1676. p. 97.—Stahl Theor. med. pathol. P. ii. sect. iii. p. 683.—Do. D. de hæreditariâ dispositione in varios morbos. § 76. p. 48. Halæ, 1706.

qualities totally different, is uniformly followed in these peculiar subjects, by the same effects. We profess ourselves entirely ignorant of the precise condition of the brain, or nervous system, which constitutes the predisponent cause of Epilepsy; nor do we feel disposed even to hazard a conjecture upon it. Although dissection, so far as our observations go, has thrown no light upon this abstruse, but interesting subject; and notwithstanding the opinions of many of the most eminent anatomists of the present day have afforded us no conclusive evidence; yet we have been enabled to collect the most irrefragable proof, that this predisposition does not consist in original malconformation, or diseased alteration of, either the structure, or substance of the brain,

brain, as many former authors[h] have asserted.

In order to ascertain the predisponent cause of Epilepsy, the brains of thirteen subjects, who were known to have fallen victims to this disease, were dissected with the greatest care and attention, under the immediate direction of an eminent anatomist; in which, far from discovering congestion, malconformation, tumours, or effusion, we found nothing in any respect preternatural, or inconsistent with the healthy state of that organ. My ingenious

[h] Vid. Greeding, l. c. Th. i. p. 289. 291. 295. et Th. ii. p. 71.—Bonet Sepulchr. Lib. i. sect. 12. obs. 3. Tom. i. p. 273.—Lieutaud, l. c. p. 377. obs. 224. p. 324. obs. 48. p. 359. obs. 167.—Baader (J.) obs. med. insionibus cadaverum anatom. illust. p. 107.—Morgagni, l c. § 25, 26. 16. l. c. Epist. lxii. § 15. 17, 18.

nious friend, Mr. Astley Cooper, has favoured me with the following description of the dissection of the brain of a subject, who for many years laboured under a most virulent Epilepsy; and as this dissection was performed by himself, there can be no doubt of its accuracy.

"Mr. George Johnson, of John-street, Minories, requested me to accompany him to inspect the body of a gentleman who had died of Epilepsy at the age of 47 years. He had been the subject of the disease from two years of age, and every remedy which had been suggested to his parents, had been tried without affording him any relief. At first his fits occurred at the interval of a month, they then became more frequent, and towards the conclusion of his life, they took place every third or fourth day. His mind, which

had

had been naturally strong, became so much impaired, that for sixteen years before his death, he was becoming imbecile, and he died idiotic."

DISSECTION.

"It excited great surprise in me to find upon opening the head, that, excepting a turgid state of the vessels of the Pia Mater, there was not the smallest deviation from the natural structure, and as the brain was not only dissected in the usual manner, but by incisions made through every part of it, no altered organization could have escaped detection.

"It is, however, undoubtedly true, that fits in all respects apparently similar, are produced by altered organization."

Our

Now if the predisponent cause of Epilepsy consisted in original malconformation, or diseased alteration of the structure or substance of the brain, these preternatural appearances might be readily demonstrated by dissecting of the brains of epileptic subjects, but the united experience of the most eminent anatomists of the present time, scarcely affords a single instance of such a circumstance.

Our researches in this particular part of the subject, have, notwithstanding our failure to ascertain the exact nature of the predisponent cause of Epilepsy, been attended with more important, and satisfactory success, than our most sanguine expectations, at the commencement of our undertaking, dared aspire to; inasmuch, as they have afforded us an opportunity of drawing fair inferences in favour of the

general

general practicability of curing this disease, which under other circumstances would have been inadmissible.

The modus operandi of the various occasional causes of Epilepsy, is said to consist one while in the Excitement of the nervous energy of the brain; another, in the Diminution of it. The several occasional causes of Epilepsy acting by excitement are *stimulants;* either applied directly to the nervous energy of the brain itself; to other parts of the body, and from thence communicated to the brain; or through the medium of the sanguiferous system. The several occasional causes of Epilepsy acting by diminishing the nervous energy of the brain are *Sedatives;* either applied directly to the nervous energy of the brain itself; or through the medium of the sanguiferous system.

But,

But, let the modus operandi of the various occasional causes of Epilepsy be whatsoever it may, the ultimate effects produced upon the body are uniformly the same, for the phenomena of an epileptic paroxysm never vary, except in duration, or violence; and so intimately connected are the nervous, and sanguiferous systems, that it is utterly impossible to excite the one, without exciting the other, or depress the one, without depressing the other.

In the hope of being enabled to illustrate this position, we have selected the two occasional causes of Epilepsy acting by excitement, joy, and anger. The first of these mental irritations acts strongly and immediately on the nervous energy of the brain itself; the second acts powerfully on the sanguiferous system. We will endea-

vour to show how these opposite affections of the mind produce ultimately the same effects upon the body, which will offer some explanation of the nature of the connexion between the nervous and vascular systems.

Although the muscular fibres of the heart possess a vis insita to a certain degree, still this inherent power is not of itself sufficient to carry on the circulation, but is constantly dependent according to the opinion of Dr. Cullen, upon a due, and regular supply of nervous energy sent into it from the brain. If, therefore, this due and regular supply of nervous energy were to be altogether withheld from the heart, the action of this most important musele, and consequently life itself must cease; and this is easily proved, by placing a ligature upon the nerves going to

the

the heart, which eventually and speedily stops its motion. Now as nervous energy is, in a great measure, the primary cause of action in the heart, so it must be sufficiently obvious, that any inordinate degree of excitement in the nervous energy of the brain must be invariably followed by an inordinate degree of action in the heart, and consequently the whole of the vascular system. On the other hand, as a certain fulness and tension of the blood-vessels of the brain are necessary to the constant support of the nervous energy, so I conclude, that any over-distension, and inordinate action of these blood-vessels must be uniformly followed by considerable excitement of the nervous energy of the brain. Therefore, anger, which acts powerfully on the sanguiferous system, will occasion such a degree of excitement in the nervous energy of the brain,

brain, as is exactly proportionate with the degree of over-distension in the blood-vessels; and joy will produce such an inordinate degree of action in the vascular system, as is proportionate with the increase of the nervous energy of the brain.

Although these mental irritations are very frequent occasonal causes of Epilepsy, still when they have proved fatal, it appears to have generally been by inducing apoplexy. Tradition informs us, that Viator Piso, Admiral of the Venetian fleet, a man remarkable for his personal courage, *suddenly* expired from violent passion, excited by the ignominious de feat of his countrymen.

Chilo, the Lacedemonian, one of the wise men of Greece, *suddenly* expired in

the

the act of embracing his son, who was a conqueror at the olympic games.

Sophocles, the justly celebrated Greek poet, who, whether we consider the sound morality of his sentiments, or the harmony of his numbers, is alike worthy of our most profound admiration, *suddenly* fell a victim to excess of joy, in the ninety-first year of his age, having unexpectedly gained a prize at the olympic games.

We believe, that anger proves fatal more frequently than joy, because it is oftener excited to an extreme degree, and not from any specific difference in their effects upon the body, when proportionably excited; and we can easily conceive, that, as fatality only follows an extreme degree of excess in either joy, or anger, a minor degree of either of those

mental

mental affections may frequently have the effect of producing Epilepsy.

There is another peculiar circumstance disposing to Epilepsy, which is a state of sleep. However difficult it may be to account for this peculiar disposition, there can be no doubt of the fact. In a case related by Dr. De Haen, this disposition of the body in sleep was clearly proved. The case was very singular. The circumstances of it were, that the boy was more liable to the paroxysms when lying, and asleep, than when sitting up and awake. This peculiarity was not observed till the disease had been of some standing; and, on a more minute attention, the paroxysms were found to be more frequent when the patient was in a peculiar state of sleeping, namely, when he was drowsy, or when he snored in his

sleep,

sleep, the paroxysms were more frequent, than when he enjoyed an easy and quiet sleep. A natural, quiet, and easy sleep was procured by the use of opium, and in a short time the disease was perfectly cured.

The prognosis of Epilepsy depends upon the duration of the disease; the virulence of the paroxysms, and a knowledge of the several peculiarities of the patient's constitution.

We proceed to treat of the cure of Epilepsy, which is to be attempted by studiously avoiding the occasional causes, and by correcting, or removing so far as may be within our power, the predisponent.

Although we profess ourselves ignorant

of

of the precise condition of the brain, which constitutes the predisponent cause of Epilepsy; and although we are aware that a radical cure cannot be effected in this, or any other disease, without the correction, or removal of this cause, still we know, that the Viscus Quercinus has frequently performed such cures, even under circumstances the least favourable to its administration.

Epilepsy, at times, depends upon primary affections in some parts of the body, remote from the brain, therefore it is obvious, that such primary affections must be removed for the cure of the disease; but, after the removal of these primary affections, should the Epilepsy continue, the Viscus Quercinus may be administered even to these patients, with the fairest prospect of success.

Over-distention of the blood-vessels of the brain, arising from a general plethoric state of the system, is frequently a cause of Epilepsy, and with a view of preventinting the morbid effects, which speedily ensue under these circumstances, we find the ancient physicians,[a] as well as the moderns,[b] recommended the employment of the antiphlogistic plan of treatment. No one can deny that under such circumstances, moderate blood-letting, saline purgatives, and perhaps the prudent administration of digitalis would be followed by almost immediate advantage. Still, as

[a] Vid. Themison, v. Cael. Aurelian. Chron. Lib. i. cap. 4.—Celsus (Aur. Corn.) de medicin. p. 172. ed Almeloven.—Hoffmann (Fr.) D. de verâ mali. epilep. caus. § 31.—Moor (Barthol. de) Patholog. cerebri.—Barbette (Paul) Prax. Barbettian. p. 93.—Zacut. Lusitan. Prax. admirab. Lib. i. obs. 21, 29, 30, and 32.—Valleriolæ (Franc) Observation. medicinal. L. vi. Lugdun. Batav. 1587. L. iii. obs. 7.

[b] Vid. Cullen (Wm.) First Lines, V. iii. p. 371.

as in those peculiarly irritable constitutions, a plethoric state of the sanguiferous system is generally, if not uniformly connected with a laxity of the solids, and consequently great debility in the muscular fibres, the antiplogistic plan of treatment cannot either with propriety or safety be carried to any considerable extent; and experience has given us abundant proof, that whoever attempts to effect a radical cure of idiopathic Epilepsy by such means, will be uniformly disappointed.

The most general causes of Epilepsy are those of debility, and this is proved from the circumstances of children, women, and other persons of manifest debility, being the general subjects of this disease.[c]

The

[c] Vid. Cullen, (Wm.) First Lines, Vol. iii. p. 371.

The means of obviating the debility, so far as it can be done, are, the person's being much in the cool air; the frequent use of cold bathing; the use of exercise adapted to the strength, and habits of the body; and the employment of astringent and tonic medicines, with a nourishing diet.[a]

Of the antispasmodic class of medicines recommended by authors, and generally employed by practitioners in the cure of Epilepsy.

The wild valerian has been long regarded as a medicine of considerable utility in the treatment of most convulsive or nervous disorders, and particularly esteemed

[a] Vid. Cullen, First lines. Vol. iii. p. 386.

teemed for its efficacy in epileptic cases; it therefore becomes both necessary and proper to inquire how far the merits of this article of the Materia Medica entitle it to such pre-eminence.

It was first brought into estimation by Fabius Columna,[e] who relates, that he cured himself of an Epilepsy with the root of this plant; we are, however, assured, that Columna suffered a relapse of his disorder, and no further accounts of the efficacy in valerian in Epilepsy followed, till those published by Dominicus Panarolus,[f] fifty years afterwards in which three cases of its success are adduced. Other instances of the utility of this root are mentioned

[e] Phytobasanos, Napoli 1592. p. 97.
[f] Vid. Jatrologism. Pentecost. 1. obs. 33. p. 20.

mentioned by Arataeus,[g] Comparetti,[h] Chomel,[i] Bergius,[j] De Haen,[k] Haller,[l] Locher,[m] Quarin,[n] Plancus,[o] Whytt.[p] Willis,[q] Dresky,[r] Tissot,[s] Cullen,[t] and others.

Notwithstanding all these favourable reports of the valerian, we are informed that is has been given in Edinburgh to the

[g] Vid. Diuturn. curat. Lib. i. cap. 4.
[h] Vid. Occurs, med. de vag. agritud. infirm. nerv. p. 303.—Venetiis. 1780.
[i] Vid. Abregè de l'histoire des plantesu selles. T. i. p. 71 and 228.
[j] Vid. Mater. Medic. e regno vegetab. T. i. p. 31.
[k] Vid. Rat. Med. p. v. c. 4. sect. 2.
[l] Vid. Histor. Stirp. helvet. p. 92. p. 210.
[m] Vid. Observat. pract. p. 40.
[n] Vid. Animad. practic. p. 25.
[o] Vid. Annot. ad Fab. Columnæ. Phytobasan.
[p] Vid. On Nervous Diseases. p. 213.
[q] Vid. Tr. de Morb. Convulsiv. c. 24.
[r] Vid. D. de Valerian. officinali.
[s] Vid. Traitè de l'epilepsia. p. 310.
[t] Vid. Mat. Med. Vol. ii. p. 372.

the extent of two ounces daily without any beneficial effect; and this perfectly coincides with our own experience, for in two cases of Epilepsy, wherein this root was given in very large doses, and continued for a considerable length of time, it proved entirely useless; and both the cases have been since completely cured by the Viscus Quercinus. Bergius, when speaking of the valerian, observes, "emeticam nunquam illam vidi nec laxantem," but in the cases abovementioned, it frequently proved both emetic and purgative. Dr. Home, in his clinical experiments, relates, that out of nine convulsive cases, for which this remedy has been reckoned almost a specific, it not only performed no cure, but could be scarcely said to do any good. Though much used at this time, he adds, that it has always appeared to him a weak, often a useless

medicine. Upon the whole we readily join Dr. Woodville[v] in observinig, that our experience warrants us in asserting that it will be seldom found to answer the expectations of the prescriber.

Asafœtida, which ranks high in the class of antispasmodics, has also been recommended for the cure of this disease; and it is but fair to acknowledge, that it possesses a greater claim to the character of being at least useful in Epilepsy, than the celebrated root just mentioned. Although we cannot justly ascribe the performance of a radical cure of Epilepsy to this drug, yet we have frequently seen it employed, and have also often used it ourselves, with considerable advantage in mitigating the violence of epileptic

[v] Vid. Woodville. Med. Bot. Vol. ii. p. 264.

leptic paroxysms. When we wish it to act immediately as an antispasmodic, it should be used in a fluid form, as that of tincture.[w] There are, however, many, to whom the nauseous smell, and taste of asafœtida are intolerable, and who constantly reject it, as soon as received into the stomach, to such it may be advantageously given in the form of enema, and although the antispasmodic effects of this gum when exhibited under this form, may not be so speedily produced, still they are generally of longer continuance. One instance has come within our knowledge, where the epileptic paroxysms were completely suspended for some time, by taking the asafœtida in substance, prior to the use of which, the patient, a delicate female, had been harassed almost daily

[w] Vid. Woodville. Med. Botan. Vol. i. p. 216.

daily with the fits. It must be acknowledged, that after a few months, the asa-fœtida lost this good property, and the patient relapsed into her former condition. In this case, the Misletoe, in the dose of two scruples of the powder, prepared in the manner to be directed hereafter, taken twice daily, and continued without intermission for about two months, performed a radical cure; at least so far as we may be allowed to use the term radical, after a lapse of more than two years, without the return of even one paroxysm.

In many irritable habits where opium has been found to disagree, or where by long continued use, the habit has become so far reconciled to it as to reduce its effects, we have found this medicine eminently useful, frequently, and indeed, generally, producing all the good effects which

which commonly result from opium, when administered in the most successful manner. According to Kaempfer,[x] who published the earliest, and most elaborate account of asafœtida, the juice is infinitely more odorate when recent, than when in the dried state, which we receive it. He says, 'Affirmare ausim, unam drachmam recens effusam, majorem spargere fœtorem, quam centum libras vetustioris quem siccum venundant aromatarii nostrates.' Instances of its utility in Epilepsy have been related by Beaumes,[y] Berger,[z] and Tissot.[a]

We come now to the consideration of the chief of the antispasmodic class of medicines,

[x] Vid. Amœnit. Exotic. p. 535.

[y] Vid. l. c. p. 205.
Vid. D. de remediis in epilep. specific. usit. p. 13.

[a] Vid. l. c. p. 326.

dicines, opium, and experience authorizes us to affirm, that its virtues justly entitle it to such a distinction. The only case however in which we believe a radical cure of idiopathic Epilepsy has followed the use of this medicine, is the peculiar one before mentioned, as related by Dr. De Haen; nevertheless, the powers of opium in mitigating the violence of this disease are well established.[b] Many epileptic patients have a presentiment of the approach of the paroxysm, and to such subjects we have no hesitation in asserting, that opium may be generally given with the greatest benefit. Whether opium can be safely administered without any auxiliary in every case

[b] Vid. Sennert (Dan.) Medicin. pract. Tom. i. p. 370.—Tralles de usu opii. Vratislav. 1760. p. 16.—Murray Appar. Medicam. T. ii. p. 272.—Aetii Tetrabibl. t. v. Serm. i. cap. 96.—Fothergill (J.) Medical Observ. and Inquir. Vol. vi. p. 80.—Aaskow, in Act. Havnien. T. ii. p. 17.

case of Epilepsy, may probably be doubtful, but, except where an obvious plethoric state of the system is the certain occasional cause of the fits, this remedy may be employed, not only with safety, but with great advantage. When however, a plethoric state of the sanguiferous system is the occasional cause of this disease, the paroxysms of it cannot be relieved without the employment of the lancet; the administration of active purgatives, or digitalis; but, as there is manifestly a great mobility of constitution in all persons who are subject to Epilepsy, and as over-distention of the blood-vessels of the brain is invariably followed by violent excitement in the nervous system, thus it is somewhat probable, even in those cases, if the fits should continue after the previous plethora has been properly reduced, opium may be very beneficially employed.

As

As soon as the symptoms, which generally precede the epileptic paroxysm, make their appearance, the patient, if an adult, should swallow from thirty to forty drops of laudanum in a draught of camphorated emulsion; the common effect of which is found to be the complete prevention of the paroxysm, and the restoration of the patient to his usual health. When the medicine fails in entirely preventing the succession of the fit, its violence and duration are uniformly mitigated.

Castor has been recommended for the relief of Epilepsy, and has occasionally been found useful.[c]

Musk has been celebrated as a medicine

[c] Thouvenel, Mem. sur les principes et les vertus des substances animales medicamenteuses. p. 357.

cine of considerable efficacy in Epilepsy, as well as other convulsiwe disorders, and instances of its success in these complaints have been published, by Hoffmann,[d] Maurer,[e] Faber,[f] Quarin,[g] Thouvenel,[h] Cullen,[i] Unzer,[j] Akermann,[k] and others; against which may be opposed the testimony of Dr. Home, who says that "six convulsive cases treated with large doses of this remedy, were neither cured, nor in the least relieved by it." It is generally found most efficacious when given in substance,

[d] Vid. Hoffmann, Medic. Rat. Syst. T. iii. p. 25. Suppl. p. 59, 60. T. iv. p. 531,

[e] Vid. Comm. de Medicam antepil. p. 25.

[f] Vid. Anatom. Universal. L. iii. c. 15.

[g] Vid. Animadv. pract. p. 27.

[h] Vid. Memorres sur les principes et vertus Medicamenteuses des substances animales. p. 352. à Bourdeaux, 1779.

[i] First Lines. p. 395.

[j] Vid. ιερονοσολογ. Lib. ii. cap 2.

[k] Vid. In not. ad vers. german. Tissot. l. c. p. 310. not. 66.

stance, and in the quantity of from one to two scruples.

The Flores cardamines have been strongly recommended for their antispasmodic virtue, and they hold a place in the Materia Medica of the British Pharmacopeia upon the authority of Sir George Baker, who, in the year 1767, read a paper at the London College, on this subject. In this account, which has been since published in the Medical Transactions,[1] Sir George relates five cases, wherein the flores cardamines were successfully employed, and in a P. S. to the second edition, he says, "Since the first edition of this volume, I have seen several instances of the good effects of the flores cardamines in convulsive disorders. Berger[m] relates one

[1] Vid. Medical Transactions, vol. i. p. 442.

[m] Vid. D. de remed. specif. in epilepsia usitat. 1795. p. 11.

one instance of their utility in Epilepsy; and Greding,[n] who tried it in a great number of cases, and in large doses, found it successful in one case only. When employed in other hands it has generally failed to cure Epilepsy.

The Stramonium has been successfully administered to patients labouring under Epilepsy, and from the powerful narcotic effects, which it uniformly evinces, there can be but little doubt, that it would frequently be found an efficient remedy in many cases of this disease. It was first brought into notice by Baron Stoerck,[o] who employed it in all convulsive cases with advantage, and it has since been recommended by Reef, a Swedish physician,[p]

[n] Vid. Ludwig. Advers. Medico. pract. vol. iii. p. iii. p. 564.

[o] Vid. Lib. de Stram, &c. published in 1762.

[p] Vid. Strandberg, om. chron. spikd. p. 16.

Spalowsky,[q] Razoux,[r] Dürande,[s] and Wedenbergh,[t] on the authority of experience. But Dr. Odhelius appears to have employed this medicine with even greater success than any of his cotemporaries, for he assures us, that of fourteen patients suffering under epileptic and convulsive affections, to whom he gave the stramonium in an hospital at Stockholm, eight were completely cured, five were relieved, and only one received no benefit.[v] Greding,[w] however, who made many experiments with a view to ascertain the efficacy of this plant, was not successful; for out of

[q] Vid. Diss. de Cicuta, Flammula Jovis, Stramonio, &c. p. 30.

[r] Vid. Epistol. de Cicuta, Stramonio, &c. Nemausi, 1780.

[s] Vid. Gardane Gazette de Santè. 1773, 1774. p. 143.

[t] Vid. Diss. de usu Stramonii, &c. Upsaliæ, 1772.

[v] Vid. Vetensk. Acad. Handl. 1776. p. 277. sq.

[w] Vid. Ludwig. Adversar. Med. pract. vol. i. p. 259, 345.

of the twenty eight cases in which he employed this remedy, only two were completely cured, fifteen received temporary relief, and the remainder not the least benefit. Bergius[x] speaks favourably of the stramonium, declaring, "Delirium post puerperium sœpe curavi cum daturâ, ubi alia fefellerunt," adding, "Paritu illa profuit adversus ideam fixam ex moerore cum deliratione mansueta conjuncta." Dr. Cullen,[y] speaking on this subject, says, "I have no doubt that narcotics may be a remedy in certain cases of Mania, and Epilepsy; but I have not, and I doubt, if any other person has, learned to distinguish the cases to which such remedies are properly adapted. It is therefore, that we find the other narcotics as well as the stramonium, to fail

[x] Vid. Mat. Med. p. 122.

[y] Vid. Mater. Medic. vol. ii. p. 338. sq.

in the same hands in which they had in other cases seemed to succeed. It is this consideration that has occasioned my neglecting the use of the stramonium, and therefore prevented me from speaking more precisely from my own experience on this subject."[z] We have seen two cases of Epilepsy, in which the administration of the stramonium was attended with temporary success.

We did not however, introduce this article, so much with the view of extolling its virtues in Epilepsy, as of marking with just indignation and abhorrence, a practice, which, we have some reason to fear, is but too common, even in this civilized metropolis. Various authorities might be cited to prove that the peculiar powers of this plant, which are too well known here, as

[z] Vid. Woodville. Med. Bot. vol. ii. p. 338. sq.

as well as in eastern countries, have been applied to purposes the most diabolical and unnatural; one instance of which, in the course of the last three years, has come to our knowledge by the confession of the perpetrator; and here Haller's assertion, "Somnum adeo profundum facit, ut impunè pudicitia puellœ violari possit quœ hoc toxicum sumpserit," was cruelly verified. This villain had long urged an unhappy female, with all that mellifluous flattery, which so readily drops from the tongue of a hypocrite, willingly to sign her own destruction; when, insulted, as he thought, by the constant resistance of one so much beneath him in circumstances, but far superior in all the virtues which adorn humanity, fired by his insatiable lust, which was allowed to reign without measure, and without control, he conceived the horrid idea of degrading himself so basely, as to

owe

owe the accomplishment of his wishes to the sporific powers of the stramonium. A just sense of religion was insufficient to deter him from his purpose, and no sentiment of pity ever softened his inhuman heart; the medicine was therefore given, and, as he had easy access to her residence, her ruin followed. This wretch, writhing under the agonies of a wounded conscience, having doomed the unhappy victim of his passion to endless misery, has left this country and gone, where sooner or later, vengeance due to the enormity of his crime will surely overtake him.

Both the leaves and flowers of the orange tree, but more especially the former, have been held in high estimation as a remedy in Epilepsy, and other convulsive disorders. Westerhoef, who first made

made public this virtue of the leaves nearly fifty years ago, transmitted an account of their efficacy to Dr. De Haen,[a] who also experienced their good effects in some convulsive diseases, but never in Epilepsy, after which they became a favourite remedy at Vienna. Instances of the efficacy of this medicine in Epilepsy and many other convulsive disorders, are published by Comparetti,[b] Gesner,[c] Stranberg,[d] Marx,[e] and Loof.[f] Locher[g] also, who gave this medicine to fifteen epileptic patients, asserts, that nine were evidently relieved by it,

[a] Vid. Rat. mendend. T. vi. p. 305. sq.
[b] Vid. Occursus Medici de vaga ægritudine. infirmitatis nervorum. p. 304. Venetiis, 1780.
[c] Vid. Schwäb. Samml. und. Beob. b. i. p. 198.
[d] Tid. Rosenstein in Haller. Epist. vol. v. p. 174.
[e] Vid. Observat. quœd. Med. Berolin. 1772. p. 33.
[f] Vid. Diss. Sist. Hist. Epilep. fol. aurant. sanat. Groningæ, 1771.
[g] Vid. Observat. Pract. p. 47.

it, but not cured; and Hanes,[h] out of a number of cases wherein he employed the leaves of the orange tree, cured but one. Their employment in this country, has however, been attended with still less success, as the experiments of both Professors Home[i] and Cullen,[j] sufficiently testify. We cannot close our description of the vegetable class of medicines recommended in the cure of Epilepsy, without mentioning that powerful plant digitalis. We are not aware that any radical cure of Epilepsy has been performed by digitalis, except the formidable one mentioned by Parkinson;[k] but from its powerful effects in reducing any inordinate action in the vascular

Vid. Epistola ad Büchnerum de puero epileptico foliis aurantiorum recentibus servato. Vesaliæ, 1776.

[i] Vid. Clinical Experiments. p. 211.

[j] Vid. L. c.

[k] Vid. Theatre of Plants. p. 654.

cular system, we conclude, that it might be very advantageously employed, in those particular cases of Epilepsy, where the paroxysms evidently depend upon such a cause, and thus generally, if not uniformly, supersede the employment of the lancet, which is too often found ultimately to increase that plethora which it was intended to remove.

Several metallic medicines have been strenuously recommended in the cure of Epilepsy. Arsenic has been employed, but we have no experience of either it, or the Limatura Stanni, which have been extolled by some. There are, however, many symptomatic cases of Epilepsy, depending upon the irritation of worms in the aldinentary canal, in which this medicine, if it really possess the anthelmintic powers commonly ascribed to it,

may

may be administered with a fair prospect of success.[1]

The most celebrated remedy in the Materia Medica, for the cure of Epilepsy, and other convulsive disorders, is the Flores Zinci. This oxyd has been considered almost as a specific in all convulsive cases. Mr. Benjamin Bell has related two cases of Epilepsy in the *Edinburgh* Medical Commentaries, where the oxyd of Zinc was found useful in mitigating the paroxysms, but did not, in either instance, cure the disease. The learned Dr. Gaubius[m] was in the constant habit of prescribing this preparation of Zinc in Epilepsy, and all other convulsive diseases, and has related several cases

[1] Vid. Fothergill, in Med. Obs. and Inq. Vol. vi. London, 1784. n. 9.

[m] Vid. Adversar. var. Argument. p. 113. Sq.

cases, in which its exhibition was attended with success. Dr. Hart, in an inaugural dissertation published at *Leyden*, has energetically contended for the utility of Zinc, and has adduced several instances, wherein this oxyd proved efficacious. This medicine has also been warmly commended by Fouquet,[n] Liffler,[o] Mönch,[p] Percival,[q] Rush,[r] Dehne,[s] and others; while, on the other hand, there are not wanting authors who have declared it to be generally inert, frequently noxious.[t]

Our

[n] Vid. Gardanne Gazette de Santè, 1775.

[o] Vid. Bèiträge z. Arzm. und. Wundarzn. Th. ii.

[p] Vid. Systemat. Lehre von d. Arzneimitt. p. 277.

[q] Vid. Duncan's Medic. Commentar. Vol. ii. P. ii. p. 257.

[r] Vid. dttto ditto ditto Vol. iii. P. i. p. 114.

[s] Vid. Martini Diss. cit. p. 56—62. 64.

[t] Vid. Cullen. First Lines, Vol. iii. p. 392.—Meza (Theoph. de) Compend. Med. Pract. Fasc. v. p. 7.—Hartmann. Diss. sist. quest. med. super Flor. Zinc usu interno.—Carminat. Opuscul. Theraput. Vol. i. n. 2.

Our experience leads us to incline to the latter opinion, for out of seven cases of Epilepsy, in which we have seen this remedy employed, it not only performed no radical cure, but could scarcely be said to do any good. It did not even appear to us to possess powers equal to either the Cortex Peruvianus, Cuprum Ammoniacum, or Ferrum Vitriolatum.

Of all the medicines hitherto recommended, and at present employed in the cure of Epilepsy, no one has supported its credit so well as the Cuprum Ammoniacum. The active nature of this metallic tonic renders it, in unskilful hands, a dangerous medicine; but judiciously managed, it may be given with safety, and often with success, to the youngest infants. This was a favorite remedy with Dr. Cullen, who first brought it into notice

notice in *Edinburgh,* and the preparation of it was consequently inserted in the Pharmacopœia of that College. We have experienced the good effects of this remedy in two cases of Epilepsy, after the failure of the Flores Zinci and Valerian; in one of which, the disease was completely cured for more than sixteen months, and the other eleven. After the lapse of these periods the paroxysms returned with increased violence, when the former successful remedy was again resorted to without producing any beneficial effect. At all events, this preparation of copper is entitled to more confidence than any other medicine in the present practice; and, although the physician will be frequently disappointed in his expectations of its efficacy, still it will sometimes perform a partial cure even under unfavourable circumstances.

Michaelis,

Michaelis,[v] who administered this medicine to fourteen patients labouring under Epilepsy, relates, that four were completely cured, and the remainder received considerable benefit. Pfundel,[w] Reil,[x] Willan,[y] and others, join in the commendation of the Cuprum Ammoniacum.

Another metallic tonic, which has been frequently employed in the cure of Epilepsy, is to be found in the various preparations of iron, and although experience does not admit of our bestowing great praise on the use of this medicine in

[v] Vid. Medicin. Pract. Bibl. B. i. St. iii. p. 335.

[w] Vid. Uber d. Gebrauch d. Kupfersalm. in Edir Epil. in C. W. Hufeland Journ. d. Practisch. Arzn. B. ii. St. ii. p. 271.

[x] Vid. Resp. A. Neumann D. de crisibus genninis morbis nervosis peculiaribus. Halæ, 1792.

[y] Vid. Medical Journal. London, 1786. Vol. iii. n. 13.

in this particular disease, yet we have no hesitation in pronouncing it, in a general sense, one of the most useful articles in the Materia Medica. Of late years, the Argentum Nitratum has been much employed in the cure of Epilepsy, but we have not been fortunate enough to find it efficacious.[z] The Cerusca Acetata, has been recommended in the cure of Epilepsy, on the authority of Agricola,[a] and Jacobson.[b]

It might be reasonably expected from the state of debility which frequently accompanies Epilepsy, that the Peruvian Bark would be as frequently found useful in the cure of this disease; and it is but

[z] Vid. Sims Mem. Med. Soc. London. Vol. iv. n. 25.
[a] Vid. Comment. et Obs. in Jo. Poppii chym. Medic. p. 223.
[b] Act. Soc. Med. Havniens. T. iii. p. 345.

but justice to admit, that in many cases this expectation is certainly fulfilled. But experience does not warrant us in bestowing a greater share of commendation upon this article, as a remedy in the Epilepsy, than justly belongs to some of the medicines before enumerated, and as such we particularize the preparations of copper and steel. The objections which some physicians have urged against the use of Opium in Epilepsy, apply with equal force, and consistency here; and the same reasons, which authorized us to countenance the administration of opium in this disease, in conjunction with those, which induced us to enter our caveat against the free exercise of the lancet, warrant us in strongly recommending this medicine in many cases of Epilepsy; particularly in certain periodical cases unattended with a plethoric

state

state of the system, for which we have the authority of Dr. Cullen.

Dr. Home relates, that "of seven spasmodic cases, six were either cured, or mitigated by the bark. An Epilepsy of eight years standing, was much relieved by taking the bark for a month, and one of two years standing, taking it for ten days."

There have been some instances of the cure* of Epilepsy by the use of mercury; and Dr. Cullen appears to have countenanced the practice. That they are many,

 both

* Housset (E. J. P.) Diss. sur les parties sensibles du corps animal, suivi d'un memoire sur les avantages, que procurent les frictions mercurielles dans le traitement des quelques epilepsies idiopathiques etc. à Lusanne.——Willis (Th.) Pathologia cerebri, p. 46. De morbis convulsivis. cap. 3.——Riedlini (Vit.) Observat. med. Cent. iii. obs. 71. p. 389.

both complicated and symptomatic cases of Epilepsy, wherein mercury may be not only useful, but indispensably necessary to the cure of this disease, we can easily conceive; but, in all idiopathic cases of Epilepsy, the good effects of mercury must be at least questionable.

Having enumerated many of the remedies usually resorted to by physicians, either for the radical cure, or mere palliation of Epilepsy, and having also shewn, that scarcely any one of them is worthy of much confidence; we shall now proceed to describe the Viscus Quercinus, which, we flatter ourselves, practitioners will find not only the most safe, but the most efficacious remedy at present employed in the cure of Epilepsy.

The Viscus is a parasitical evergreen shrub,

shrub, insinuating its radical fibres into the wood of the trees on which it grows. Branches numerous, regularly dichotomous, covered with smooth bark, of a yellow green colour. Leaves spear-shaped, blunt, entire, striated, standing in pairs upon short footstalks. Flowers male, and female in different plants, small, axillary, in close spikes, Calyx of the male flower divided into four ovate equal segments. Corolla none. Filaments none. Antherae four, oblong, attached to the Calyx. Calyx of the female flower divided into four leaves, which are small, ovate, deciduous, placed on the common germen. Corolla none. Germen beneath oblong, three-edged, indistinctly crowned with a border with four clefts. Style none. Stigma blunt, and somewhat notched. Fruit a globular white smooth one called Berry, containing a fleshy seed, which is inversely

heart-shaped, blunt, compressed. It grows on various kinds of trees producing its flowers in May, but its berries remain throughout the winter. This singular parasitical plant grows on apple trees, also on the pear, hawthorn, service, oak, hazel, maple, ash, lime-tree, willow, elm, hornbeam, &c.

The Viscus is the ἰξὸς of the Greeks, and it is supposed to be propagated by birds, especially by the Field-fare, and Thrush, which feed upon its berries, the seeds pass unchanged through the bowels, and adhere with the excrement to the branches of the trees, where they vegetate. Both the leaves, and branches of the plant have very little smell, and a very weak taste of the nauseous kind. In distillation, they impregnate water with a faint, unpleasant smell, but yield no essential oil. Extracts

made

made from them by water, are bitterish, roughish, and subsaline. The spiritous extract of the wood has the greatest austerity, that of the leaves the greatest bitterness.[c]

The Viscus should be separated from the oak about Christmas, then gradually dried. It is afterwards to be ground into a fine powder; which ought to be confined in a bottle, and kept in a situation, where both light and air are excluded; as the admission of either tends to deprive this vegetable of its natural efficacy.

Instances of the efficacy of the Viscus Quercinus in Epilepsy, are published in the writings of Paracelsus,[d] Lemnius,[e] Loseke,

[c] Vid. Woodville. Medic. Botan. Vol. iv. p. 151.
[d] Vid. Paracelsus de morbo caduco. p. 602.
[e] Vid. Tr. de mirac. occult. natur. p. 148.

Löseke,[f] Hannes,[g] Koelderer,[h] Cole,[i] Pliny,[j] Swieten,[k] Pfündel,[l] Borellus,[m] Boyle,[n] Colbach,[o] Baier,[p] Cartheuser,[q] and Hartmann.[r]

We are also informed, that the late Dr. Fothergill and Dr. Gilbert Thomson employed this medicine with great success in the

[f] Vid. Abhandl. von auserles. Arzneim. Vierte Aufl. p. 400.
[g] Vid. Diss. de puero. epileptico etc. p. 39.
[h] Vid. Diss. de Visco. Argent. 1747. p. 23.
[i] Vid. Consil. ætiolog. de casuquodam epileptico. Lond. 1702.
[j] Vid. Histor. natur. Lib. xvi. cap. 45. Lib. xxxv. cap. 4.
[k] Vid. Commentar. § 1084.
[l] Vid. Diss. de spasmis tonicis visco persanatis. Jenæ, 1783.
[m] Vid. Observat. medic. Cent. ii. obs. 96.
[n] Vid. Usefulness of experim. philos. p. 174.
[o] Vid. Diss. concerning Misletoe, &c. Edit. 3.
[p] Vid. Diss. de visco. Altorf. 1706.
[q] Vid. Fundam. mater. medic. T. ii. p. 528.
[r] Vid. Prax. chymiatr. p. 20.

the cure of Epilepsy; and my learned friend Dr. Willan has experienced the utility of this plant in the treatment of that disease.

We have already confessed ourselves ignorant of the precise condition of the brain, which constitutes the predisponent cause of Epilepsy, we have also stated our concurrence with the opinion that no radical cure can be effected in this, or any other disease, without the correction or removal of the predisponent cause, and we come now to the confession of our ignorance of the modus operandi of the Misletoe. No theoretical deductions can therefore be made in favour of the Viscus Quercinus, and it must stand, or fall, by its own merit. There is however one consolation in knowing that the fate of this plant cannot be more severe, than that

which

which has invariably attended every favourite remedy, hitherto recommended in the cure of Epilepsy.

The only person, except myself, who has lately, within my knowledge, employed the Viscus Quercinus in the cure of Epilepsy, is an ingenious Surgeon resident at Moreton in Glocestershire.* Mr. Heynes has experienced the efficacy of this vegetable in at least three different cases of Epilepsy, all of which had previously baffled the skill of several eminent practitioners; and I believe myself correct in stating that he has never known this remedy fail in the cure of Epilepsy, on the contrary, its exhibition has been uniformly attended with success under his direction.

My

* Mr. Heynes.

My own experience warrants me in declaring, that of eleven cases of Epilepsy, which were treated with the Viscus Quercinus under my direction, during the years 1802, 1803, and 1804, nine were radically cured, one was fatal, and one received no benefit. It is however but justice to observe, that although the Misletoe was administered in consequence of my advice and according to my direction in the last mentioned case, yet I never have had an opportunity of seeing the patient, and consequently cannot speak of the particular circumstance of the case; and it is also proper to state, that by far the greater part of the Misletoe, which was employed in this case, was not the Viscus Quercinus, but Misletoe collected from the apple tree.

Since the last-mentioned period, I have employed the Misletoe with success in other

other cases of Epilepsy, but a sufficient length of time has not elapsed, to authorize me to pronounce them radical cures.

I shall state the leading circumstances of the eleven cases above mentioned, as briefly as possible.

The first case, in which I employed the Viscus Quercinus in the cure of Epilepsy, was that of a gentleman in the twenty-third year of his age, who had been the subject of Epilepsy from the third, or fourth year of his birth. This case was hereditary, and had gradually increased upon the patient, until it was become so considerable, as to threaten his intellectual faculties with destruction. This gentleman had been under the care of many eminent practitioners at different times with various success; one while finding

finding the violence of his paroxysms mitigated under their management, another while increased. On the fifth of March, 1802, he began to use the Misletoe, by taking two scruples of the powder in a draught of camphorated emulsion twice daily, and the use of this medicine, (the dose of the powder being gradually increased to two drams) was continued without intermission till the twenty-first day of June. The violence, and frequency of the paroxysms experienced no visible abatement before the expiration of the first month, from the commencement of the use of the Misletoe; but after this period, they became considerably milder; and about the middle of June, he bade farewell to his almost constant but disagreeable companion. This gentleman has since filled up the measure of his mortality under the exhausting influence of an eastern

tern clime, without having, as I am assured, ever suffered any relapse.

The second and third cases were alluded to in the course of our observations on the article "Valerian."

The subjects of these cases were in the prime of life, and the fits, which had harassed them for several years, were in both very severe. These patients took one drachm of the powder of the Viscus Quercinus twice daily for nearly three months, at the expiration of which time, they were both completely cured; nor has the disease manifested any disposition to return in either. These patients were treated with the Misletoe in the latter end of the year 1802.

The patient in the fourth case, in which the

the Viscus Quercinus effected a radical cure, was a delicate female, who had been the subject of Epilepsy five years. Several physicians had been consulted for her relief, and consequently various medicines employed, of all which, the asafœtida was the most useful. She was at last cured by the combined powers of the cold-bath, and Misletoe.

Two of the patients treated with the Misletoe, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh cases, were boys, and the third a young girl. The age of the elder boy was fifteen, the younger twelve, and the girl nine years. These cases were neither hereditary nor violent, and were speedily cured by the Misletoe, after a combination of bark and valerian had proved ineffectual. These cases were treated with this remedy in 1803.

The

The eighth case was the most violent, I ever witnessed. The patient was apparently a robust man of thirty years of age, twenty-two of which he had been at various times the subject of Epilepsy ; the paroxysms in this case did not occur very frequently, nor even ever without giving warning of their approach; but when occurring, were excessively violent, and long continued. The plethoric state of the patient naturally led to the employment of the antiphlogistic plan of treatment; by a rigid perseverance in which, he was twice reduced nearly to the grave, without reaping the least benefit in his complaint. This patient continued the use of the Misletoe at stated intervals for nearly six months, and during this period, he drank regularly every second or third morning, half a pint of tepid water, in which two to three drachms of the sulphate of magnesia had been previously

viously dissolved. By persevering in this plan of treatment for the length of time before mentioned, and by studiously avoiding irregularities in living and excessive exercise, he has been fortunate enough to shake off his complaint. This case was hereditary, was cured by the Viscus Quercinus in 1804, and has since manifested no disposition to return.

The ninth case was similar to the fourth.

The tenth and fatal case, in which the Misletoe failed, was that of an elderly lady, and here the Epilepsy was complicated with a paralysis of the right side. During the short time, this lady used the Viscus Quercinus, her attendants thought, that the violence of the paroxysms was mitigated; but upon being strongly recommended

commended to try Bath, she went and soon afterwards died there.

Having now related the state of our experience of the efficacy of the Viscus Quercinus in the cure of Epilepsy, we take leave of the subject, in the full confidence and hope, that future experiments will evince this plant to be an efficient remedy in this disease.

The Powder of the Viscus Quercinus may be obtained by applying to Messrs. ALLEN and WOOD, *Ploughcourt, Lombard-street;* or Messrs. JACKSON, MANLEY, and ELDRIDGE, *Paternoster-row.*

FINIS.

R. Edwards, Printer,
Crane-Court, Fleet-Street.