

**Snuff-taking : its utility in preventing bronchitis, consumption, etc. (with prescriptions) / by John C. Murray.**

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SNOUT TAKING

ITS UTILITY IN PREVENTING  
BRONCHITIS, CONSUMPTION, ETC.

(WITH PRESCRIPTIONS)

—BY—

JOHN C. MURRAY, M.D., F.A.S.L.

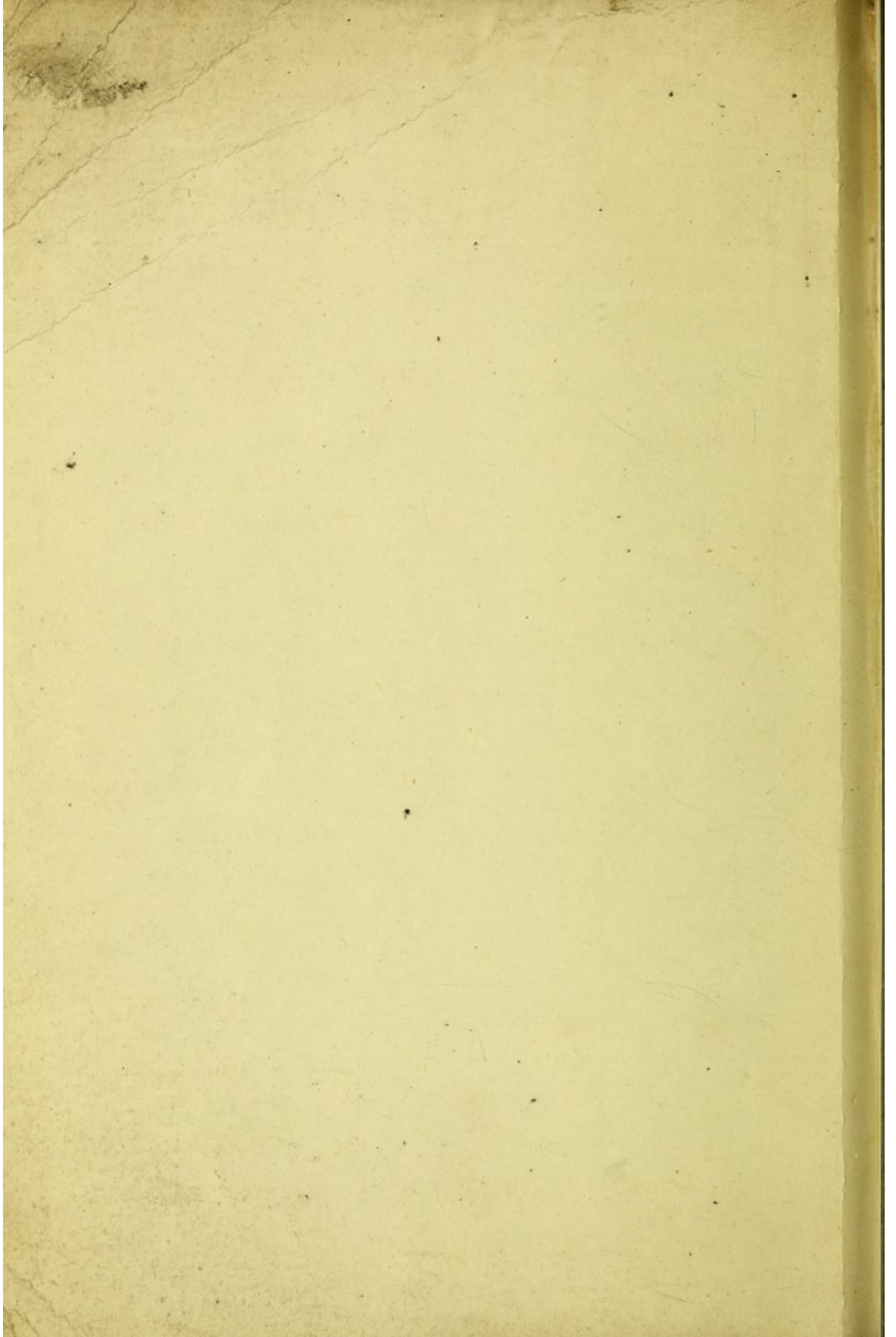
LONDON, J. C. HURCHILL & SONS.

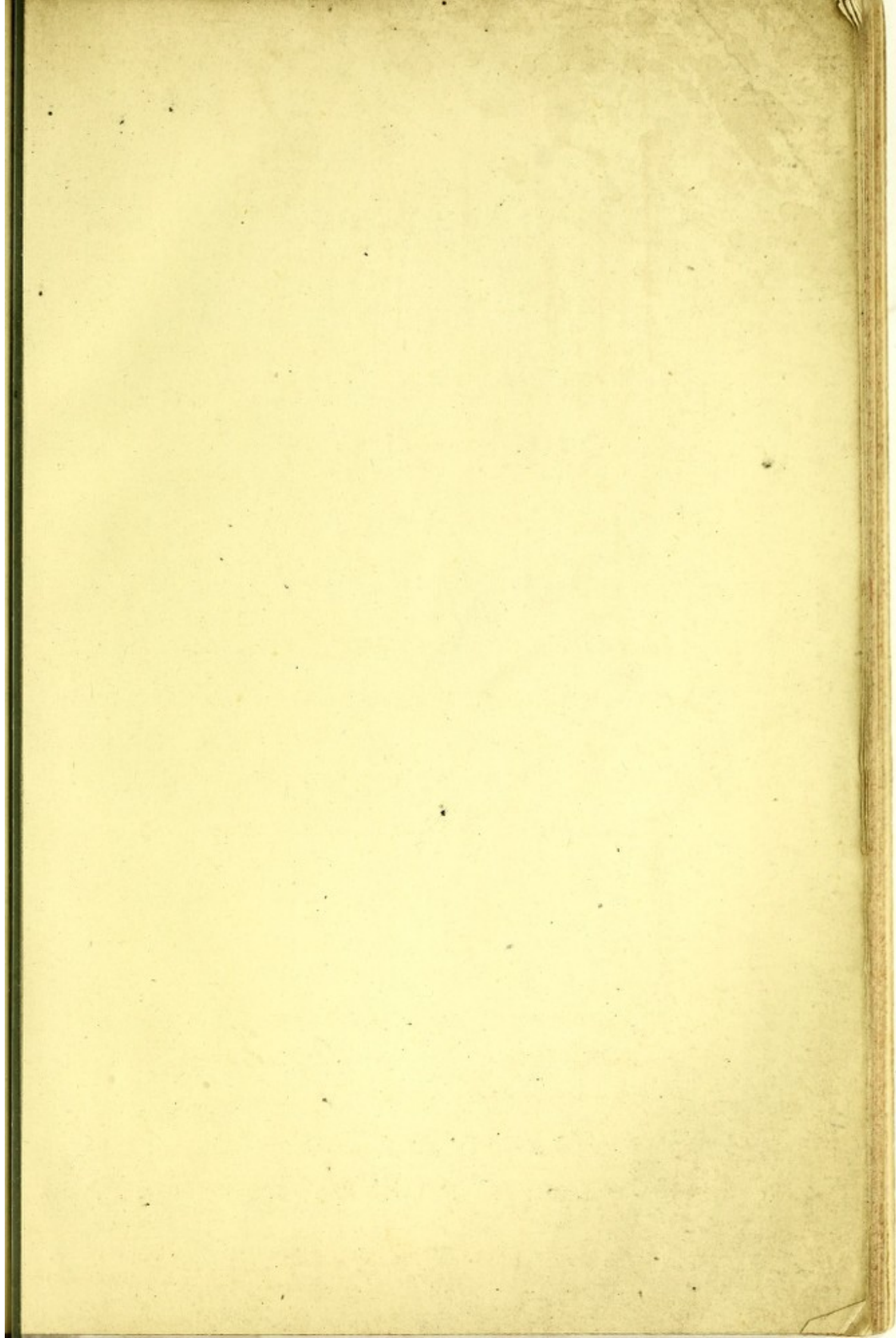
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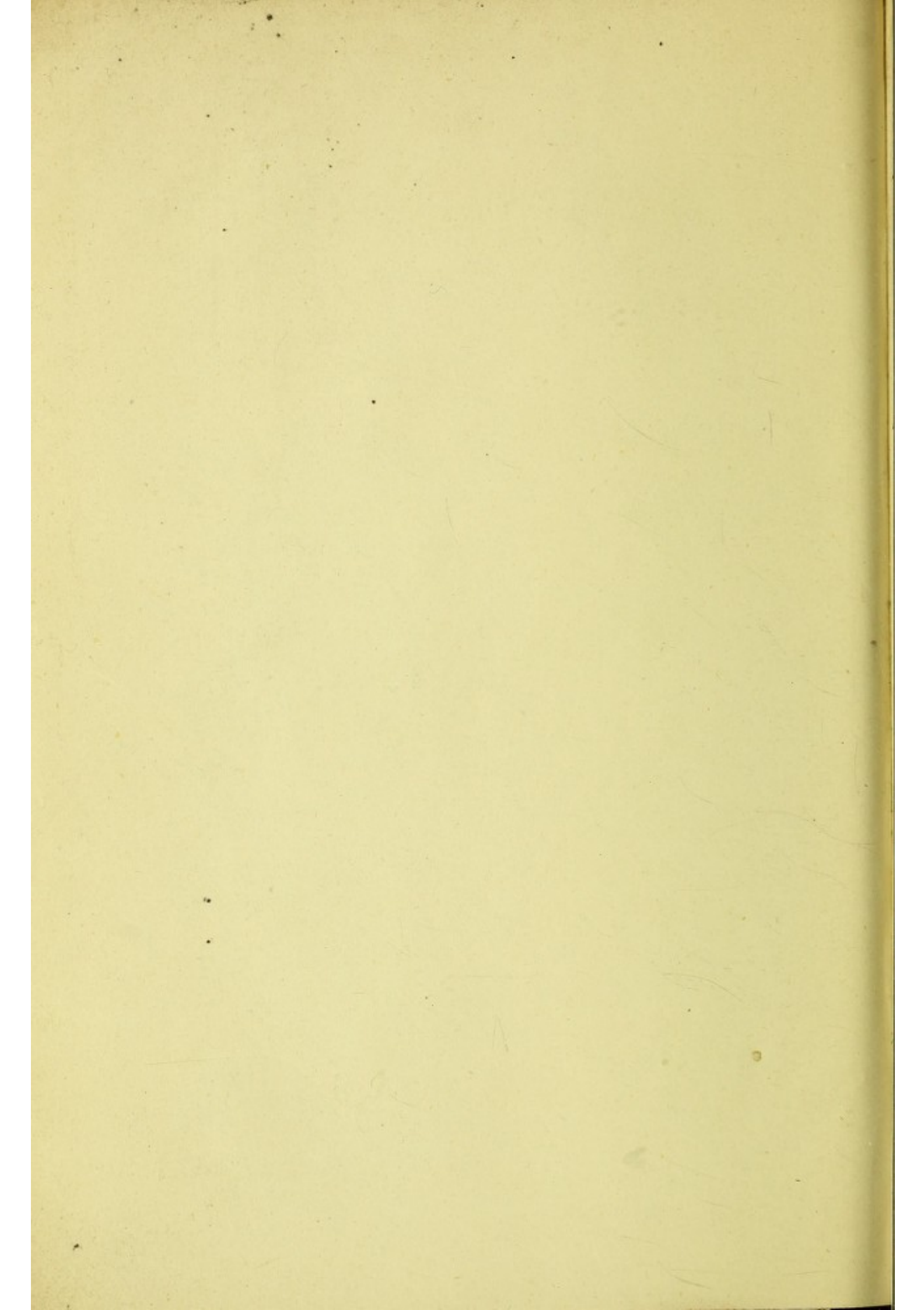
1870.

ONE SHILLING.









# SNUFF-TAKING :

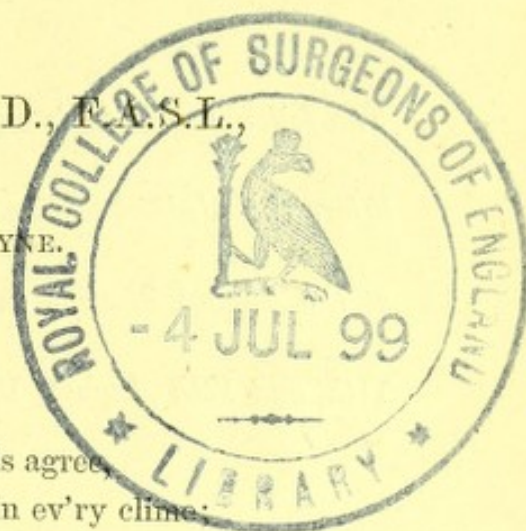
ITS UTILITY IN PREVENTING BRONCHITIS, CONSUMPTION, ETC.

*(With Prescriptions.)*

BY

JOHN C. MURRAY, M.D., F.A.S.L.,

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.



"Thus all esteem thee, and to this agree,  
Thou art the drug preferr'd in ev'ry clime:  
To clear the head, and set the senses free,  
And lengthen life beyond the wonted time."

*SECOND THOUSAND.*

LONDON: J. CHURCHILL & SONS.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE: D. H. WILSON.

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1870.

[ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.]

*The following Essay is an extension of a Paper read August 11th,  
before the Medical Section of the British Medical Association, held  
at the Annual Meeting in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on the 9th, 10th,  
11th, and 12th August, 1870.*

TO THE  
ADULTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,  
THESE PAGES  
ARE HUMBLY AND MOST RESPECTFULLY  
DEDICATED.



## PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

THE most important of the following pages were written three or four years ago, and then laid aside in order, that like the careful painter, anxious to see his work again with a fresh eye, or, as much as possible, like others see it, over-painting might be avoided. Upon resuming my task, the first criticism with which I was favored, was the well-known and somewhat admonitory one, "are you writing this as an excuse for taking snuff yourself?—do you intend to

‘Compound for sins you are inclined to?’”

Although I probably did not think so, at the time, my friend may have made a remarkably accurate hit. But it takes many blows to drive a nail home, and more than one motive to write anything beyond a letter; so the truest and sharpest strokes have been from

conviction, corroborated by my own observations and those of a number of medical *confreres*.

The primordial conception of the following essay came into my head, after vainly scratching it for the purpose of bringing forth, in array, all the obvious and reliable signs of health and disease, which could be recognized by the eye. Not being very successful, I had recourse to another excitant to the memory—snuff. My mixture, on that particular occasion, was probably the same which the philosophic Des Cartes originated. Thus invoked, the shade of that genius came to my relief, after such a powerful ptarmic effect, as shook me to the central grain of my pineal gland—the inspiration pivoted upon that grain. Instantly it occurred to me that I had never seen a snuff-taker die of consumption. Down it went! Since then, I have kept a fraternal eye upon snuff-takers, with most assuring results, and now feel emboldened to present my observations and lucubrations to the public.

J. C. M.

*Newcastle-upon-Tyne,*

*August, 1870.*

## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

ONLY thirty days have elapsed since I wrote the last line of the first edition on Snuff-Taking, and a second is already called for.

The most gigantic and murderous racial war the world has ever witnessed, has meanwhile so engrossed the time and attention of reading men, that, after perusing the tales of blood, and discussing the latest telegrams, but little remained for other reading. Nevertheless, my theory has received so much support from new and unexpected sources, that I confess to less trepidation in presenting to the public this carefully revised edition.

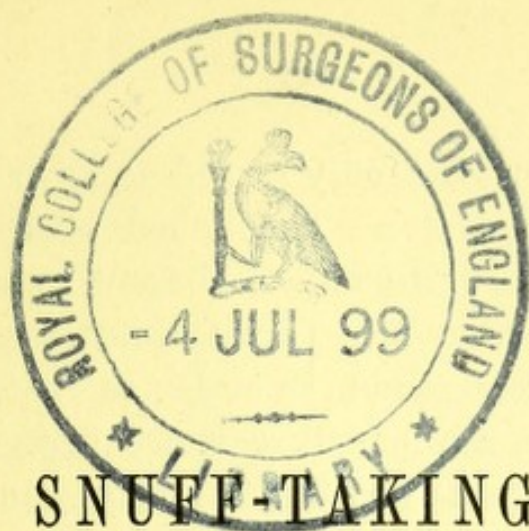
J. C. M.

*September, 1870.*

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## SNUFF-TAKING;

ITS UTILITY IN PREVENTING BRONCHITIS, CONSUMPTION, ETC.

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### CHAPTER I.

“Our senses, our appetites, and our passions, are our lawful and faithful guides in most things that relate solely to this life; and, therefore, by the hourly necessity of consulting them, we gradually sink into an implicit submission and an habitual confidence.”

JOHNSON.

**I**NHABITANTS of every clime have discovered or acquired some method of producing exalted sensation, in order to appease, what seems to be an ever and universal craving of humanity. Such desire was probably experienced by our first parents, and perhaps had its influence in inducing Eve to eat the forbidden fruit; at least, we find that 1656 years after the creation (a period equivalent to little more than a century now) undeified Bacchus gained ascendancy over Noah, although he had “found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”

The lapse of time has only served to give greater intensity to the appetite. The naked savage, when he finds his stock of the usual exhilarant exhausted, and is unable to procure more, poises himself on one heel and spins swiftly round, in order to snatch from his sentient nature, a brief but delirious period of altered innervation. Our own children, too, are equally inventive. Observe them at play upon the grass, and every now and again they will delightedly turn "round about, round about," till they are unable either to see or stand, until they are intoxicated, in short; who have not, in childhood, expended their sum-total in order to experience the joys of vertigo on a "merry-go-round," or the oscillating ecstasies of the swing? Nor do children monopolize these pleasureable sensations.

"When youth and beauty meet,"

their yearning hearts confess that no source of pleasure charms half so much as

"Chasing the glowing hours with flying feet,"

in the "giddy mazes of the valse," or the enrapturing round-dance.

The longing for nervine excitement is so deeply implanted in our natures, that it must be deemed a natural appetite. In babyhood, it is lulled by the rocked cradle; in childhood, soothed by the circular game; in adolescence, appeased by the round-dance, and sundry other devices, to which I am glad to see the velocipede (a healthy excitant) added. But what is to

afford contentation to those of mature years, to pater and materfamilias, when the cares and burdens of life press heavily upon them? Can the toil-worn man forget his aching weariness, or the studious one calm his tortured brain, and prepare themselves for slumber by twirling round in imitation of their sons' spinning-tops; or may the anxious mother forget what is due to matronhood, and do her best to make "pretty cheeses" before retiring for the night, in order to break the fine-linked chain of petty annoyances? From the cradle to the grave, the restless brain eagerly seeks an occasional change from its usual state, as if in order to charge or discharge a deficiency or excess of nervous force. Happy is the man whose parents have allowed him suitable liberty in youth, in which to exhaust his then excess of *vis nervosa*. Too much restraint then, will either burst forth in the waywardness of the "minister's son," or the victim will ultimately evince a dullness quite incompatible with any spark of genius.

What *is* life?—a ceaseless and well-balanced building up and waste of substance; excitation followed by sedation. The auditory nerve is stimulated, and the brain recognizes melodious harmony, or discordant jar; the optic, and a beautiful landscape, or a dark and noisome alley appears; the gustatory, and we are reminded of honey, of tobacco, or of wormwood; the olfactory is provoked, and we "die of aromatic pain," or are roused from lethargy to briskness by sensific snuff; the feet are dressed in new boots, and the spirits rise under the pleasant stimulus, or the irritated corn elicits a cry of agony. Hunger excites appetite, we eat, and the



salivary glands are stimulated to pour forth their secretion ; the pulpified food provokes an irresistible impulse to swallow, then, in turn, excitement, consequent upon the digestive process, occurs in the stomach, liver, spleen, pancreas, and bowels; the nutrient part of the food next incites the lacteals to take up the pabulum required to renew the exhausted blood; which, being revived, gives force to the brain, and through the nerves, tonicity to the tissues, and keeps the powers of life flowing with spring-tide vigour, soon to ebb into rest or sleep commensurate with the previous excitement. Should stimulation cease, or fail to cause reaction, death must inevitably result—deprive, *e. g.*, the body of the animating influence of external warmth, and dissolution quickly ensues. Heat, air, bread, and water, are some of the stimulants which nature demands for the continuance of life, but extraordinary re-agents capable of raising the vital energies and letting them gently down again, such as opium, spirits, wine, beer, tea, coffee, and tobacco, are often essential to aid her operations, especially in our present artificial manner of living. Among those, tobacco, in its various forms, is acknowledged to be the least injurious, and, therefore, the most appropriate. I conceive this to be the solution of the great problem, which, for more than two centuries, has bewildered every thoughtful mind, that a practice so disagreeable, at first, as smoking and chewing, so pungent as the partaking of snuff, should have been imitated from the savages of America, and adopted by every nation in the world, despite the infliction (on its first introduction) of fines, imprisonments, stripes, mutilations, excommunications, and even death itself.

Nor is the universal dominion of the balmy weed to be wondered at. Chemistry has said—the best of tests, lengthened observation and experience has proved, that tobacco *can* recruit the overtaxed brain, and conserve or aid the repair of exhausted muscle. Who, then, so cruel as to deny the book-worm, the means to preserve his brain's integrity?—who so dead to the comfort and requirements of his toil-worn brother, often engaged a day and a half every twenty-four hours, with no Sunday to himself, and but few holidays, whose hasty and inadequate digestion, short and perturbed slumber, is unequal to the just repair of his jaded and weary frame? I would not even withhold the kindly services, and beguiling fascination of the charmer, to the lordly victim of ennui.

Cicero said, "to live long it is necessary to live slowly." This prescription might be followed by a country squire—sleep and rest twelve of the twenty-four hours, repose one day in the seven, and a change one month, at least, in the year, but——there is the telegraph boy again!

## CHAPTER II.

The medic use of snuff my novel theme,  
The virtues of a sneeze,  
Instead of liver oil or Devon cream,  
Each anxious breast to ease.

**T**HE literature of snuff-taking is remarkably meagre. During the classical era of English history, the practice is often spoken of as an established usage of society, especially among ladies and gentlemen of *tôn*. At the present period it is the custom only of individuals who are conceived to be in arrears of the times; consequently it is thought a dirty, disgusting, and pernicious habit, which, from having nothing whatever to recommend it, must cease in two or three generations. Why then come to the rescue? Why aid in redeeming this bad habit from well-merited desuetude?

Such is apparently the sentiment of authors with regard to this subject. From strong feelings of conviction, I beg leave to break through the reticence which has for a long time been observed upon this now unfashionable foible,

having something new to advance in its favor, which, for reasons to be by-and-bye submitted, cannot be said equally of tobacco chewing and smoking, viz., that **an habitual snuffer seldom, I had almost said never, dies of consumption.** This remarkable proposition I have suggested to not less than five hundred snuff-takers, many of whom are in the medical profession, and all that I have hitherto learned has only strengthened my conviction in the truth of my theorem. One medical friend, himself a snuff-taker, writes "with regard to snuff I know no facts on the subject, but can see nothing, physiologically or pathologically speaking, in the use of snuff, which can render it beneficial in or prophylactic of phthisis." Since snuff has been taken out of the list of remedies, and become an article of luxury, it is difficult to see how it can so act, and for belief requires observation. Another gentleman, partial to the same weakness, writing from the snuff-consuming county of Lancashire, having given my affirmation his earnest attention for six months, was at last enabled to bring forward a case of a snuff-taker succumbing to consumption. As he was indefatigable in his search, and had excellent opportunities for observation, I look upon his single case as only confirmatory of the rule, especially as circumstances were against the patient. A correspondent from Dumfries, writes, "since you first bruited your singular idea about snuff, I have interested myself to find whether there is anything in it; the result is, I have frequently observed that those who snuff are ruddy, look, and are, strong; on the contrary, that smokers, frequently, are pale, thin, and cachectic." He also gives it as his opinion, "that

phthisis is much more prevalent in this neighbourhood, since smoking took the place of snuffing. The average quantity consumed, by those still addicted to the practice of snuff-taking, is two ounces per week, but only one person carries a box now, for ten in my grandfather's time, the revenue being, however, more than made up by the extraordinary extension of smoking." Since the receipt of this letter, I have daily observed the ruddy appearance of snuff-takers, and recently, at a tedious case, it was singularly corroborated by an old lady of charming complexion and full contour, who, between her sniffs, and without my introducing the subject, said "it is surprising what a good color snuffers generally have." This lady had been recommended to snuff by the late Dr. Bleasby, for continuous pain in the back of her head and weakness in the eyes; ailments which she told me she had not suffered from since adopting the remedy. A Liverpool surgeon, after giving the question his best attention, said he "could not name a case of a snuffer who was phthisical, but he might say he had observed that those who partook of snuff, as a rule, attained old age." Upon incidentally stating my assumption to a very intelligent gentleman connected with the profession, he said he "could not confute it; on the contrary, he was the only one, in his father's family, that consumption had spared, and, at the same time, the only one who took snuff. One of his brothers, who regaled his nostrils with an occasional pinch, survived the longest." A similar concurrence was lately seen by myself, that of a well-to-do family, some members of which have already died of consumption—of those who remain only one, and he not

the eldest snuffs and is strong. Since the publication of the first edition, a brother-medico has told me of two other instances where families have died out from consumption, the snuff-takers being the only survivors. See also Mr. McLeod's case at page 66. Many of those referred to could not, at the moment, remember any instance of a person fond of snuff, dying of phthisis. The idea had never occurred to them, but should a case present itself in their practice, they would let me know. From a considerable number of these, I have since received letters stating that, after observation and enquiries, they are inclined to believe that there is more truth in my theory than, at first sight, appeared to them, for they have not as yet been able to oppugn it.

*The Tobacco Trade Review*, of April 9th, 1870, in a leader replying to a letter of mine, asking the editor or any of his readers for corroborative or adverse facts in point, says, "we have failed, so far, to trace a single instance in support of Dr. Murray's view, that regular snuffers never die of consumption, simply because *we have not found an instance of a person, of a consumptive tendency, who could take snuff, under any circumstances.*" I have italicised the latter part of the sentence, as I think it important to the question, and susceptible of nearly all I claim: in addition, I am led and inclined to believe that the capability or inclination for snuff-taking may prevent and check tubercle in the lungs, indicate its absence, or, if present, a tendency to recovery in the same way that being able to eat fat is known to do. The editor also states in his reply, "the taking of snuff excites two sensibilities, the sensibility of smell and the

sensibility of taste. To a regular snuffer, snuff is really food, and he derives the same gratification from its use that he would from taking food." Every one, who has been in the habit of indulging his olfactor, will coincide with the editor in this opinion.

I have *not* had an instance, in my own practice, of any one who enjoyed his snuff, falling a victim to phthisis pulmonalis, but, in contradistinction to this negative testimony, I *have* had six cases of recovery from phthisis, after the exhibition of its most reliable signs and symptoms, some of them even in the second stage; one each in the years 1860-62-64-65-66-69. The first three commenced of their own accord to snuff with avidity, as if they had been favoured with a special revelation upon the subject, or, as frequently happens in medicine, experienced a longing for that which would benefit them. In the fourth and fifth cases, I advised its use. The last had been a light snuff-taker, he is now more intemperate. Five of the number are strong and active members of society, bearing their share of the fatigues and exposures of busy life, and evincing remarkable stamina--the sixth is following his avocations, and daily gaining strength. Three other patients, whose lungs for some time, have not been in a satisfactory state, have, during the current year, purchased tabatieres, and are giving the "dusty god" a trial. The latest bulletin is, "they are doing as well as can be expected." Further, I have attended some, and know others, who have thrown off the consumptive malaise, after acquiring a taste for snuff, from taking occasional pinches from the box on the desk before them, in the case of a clerk, or *pro bono publico*,

in that of a traveller, but who do not wear a reservatory, and consequently may not be entitled to primary rank.

I have been guarded in recommending the adoption of a practice now so generally disliked, and so enslaving, as that of snuff-taking, but, during the last three years, I have had many opportunities of observing that, in hopeless cases of consumption, patients could not stand snuff; on the other hand, when they were able to tolerate it, they have recovered from that attack, although it may be premature to say that they are permanently restored to health. It is with great diffidence, and only after due consideration, that I venture to moot the pungent statement corollary to this chapter. The individuals who have tried snuff, through my almost reluctant advice, are too few, the practice of one medical man is too limited, and I am aware that it is no novelty for a person to have such a bias for anything his own conception, as to be but an indifferent guide to others. However, having now the honour of broaching the question, I trust that friends from Scotland, and the great snuffing centres of Lancashire and Yorkshire, will avail themselves of the opportunities which are so open to them, and corroborate or condemn the tenet that *snuff-taking is nearly incompatible with, and, in some degree, preventative of consumption*. More facts are desirable, seeing that a patient may recover from a number of attacks of phthisis, only to sink from one at last, and that other, and more orthodox, treatment was pursued in each of my cases.

It being difficult, in this smoking age, to collate



sufficient evidence to be quite unimpeachable, that snuff is curative of phthisis, I must, therefore, do my best to prove that the habit in question is, in some degree, preventative of consumption, and its frequent concomitant bronchitis. By titillating the lining membrane of the nostrils, snuff acts as a powerful derivative and counter-irritant, and the mucous discharge, which follows its use, will tend to preserve the more important and susceptible pulmonary mucous membrane from evil. The sneezing which succeeds the unaccustomed application of the errhine, or agitates even an old and seasoned nose, when a new titillant is tried, and the cough which is induced when, by chance, some of the lighter particles get into the throat, may be of some avail in effecting the elimination of albumenoid matter (the precursor of tubercle) from the lungs, ere it has had time to fill the air-cells, minute bronchi, and coagulate; in like manner, as sea-sickness is believed to do. The majority of medical men, when recovering from a common cold, will take a pinch in order to "speed the going guest." If good to expedite the departure of a cold, I have no hesitation in affirming that it will be better still, as an expedient in altogether preventing the catarrh: *e. g.* when on a journey, if you experience a succession of chills, in due time, you may expect an attack of bronchitis, an infiltration of pneumonic or tubercular plasma, or illness in some other form, each tending to reduce the powers of life, and consequently liable to set up consumption in those predisposed. If a snuffer, you relieve the discomfort by having recourse to your box, from which, after gently tapping, you proceed to take a pinch of the agreeable and,

in this case, useful stimulant. The exercise, slight though it be, the engrossed attention, the pleasureable sensation, the smart glow and the diaphoresis, which is at once diffused throughout your system by the pungent diversion, the generally welcome conversation which the acceptance or refusal of a proffered sneeze is likely to elicit, materially serve to ward off, and make you forget, the dangerous chill. Should it return, nothing is more easy than to repeat the excitation.

It may be said that a cigar, a pipe, or some alcoholic refreshment, would be more potent and effectual, as a preventative of cold, but snuff is emphatically a stimulant. Tobacco, although useful, is more strictly a sedative; besides, smoking is only practicable to the initiated, and, where permitted. Wine or spirits—although excellent as a prophylactic of catarrh, when only taken medicinally, upon an occasion like the one suggested—is apt to un-hinge for the day's business, and their frequent use has a tendency to engender disease of the liver, kidneys, blood-vessels, brain, nervous exhaustion, indigestion, and consumption itself.

I do not agree with those who say that a practiced snuffer ceases to sternutate; that he is too inured to the sternutant for the blunted olfactory nerves to react. Such cannot be the case until he has exhausted the 50 (more or less) kinds of the pulvil. I have seen men who have known nose-hunger for 50 years, get three hearty sneezes out of a new kind of naso-palatine food. But even if the connoisseur has been accustomed to variety, and his run of snuffs have at least failed to be errhine sternutative,

or even inciting, he has reason to be grateful. He must be 38 years of age, and whatever else he may die of, it will scarcely be true tubercular consumption in the lungs.

Since the foregoing was written, I find that in France, where Tobacco is grown under State supervision, and manufactured by government, in nearly equal proportions, into tobacco, cigars, and snuff, the health of the *ouvriers* has been the subject of official report, of which the following summary may not inaptly be given here. The workmen, in tobacco factories of the State, do not suffer from any disease which the tobacco could be imagined to occasion; on the contrary, the employees seem to have had an immunity from typhus fever, as at Lyons; from dysentery, as at Morlaix; from miliary fever, as at Tonneins; and from cholera, everywhere. The majority of physicians to the State factories, believe employment among tobacco to be instrumental in preventing consumption in the lungs, and may even restore consumptives to health. As the paternal government of France have taken up this question, I hope, when peace is re-established, to be enabled to give the result of extensive observations upon this important point. Having made enquiries of many manufacturers, and surgeons in charge of tobacco factories in England, I find that, as far as they could say, the opinion of M. Parent Duchatelet, and his medical confreres, is borne out in this country, but, as tobacco hands are a migratory class of men, little reliance can be put in English statistics.

In order to test the soundness of my elementary

proposition I have carefully looked through the Registrar General's reports, which, curiously enough, were first made up for the year in which snuff-taking began to decline, 1837. It is, consequently, impossible to give, with accuracy, the number of deaths from phthisis pulmonalis, previous to that year, but it is a germane and notable incident that, since the practice has become more and more obsolete, and the one-time popular errhine been trifled with, and vitiated in its fabrication, consumption has been increscent. In the years 1846-48-50-51-52-54-56-57-59 and 68, *i.e.* only in ten of the thirty-two years during which vital statistics have been taken, were the deaths from phthisis below the progressively increasing average. I have classed together the returns of deaths from consumption, bronchitis, and *lung disease*, in the foregoing statement; for, in consequence of a variety of causes, one of which being to allay the inquietude of friends, a large proportion of deaths from phthisis are returned as having died of bronchitis, or included under the generic term, *lung disease*. If we admit this to be often the case, then the nostrils, and through them the chest of the present generation, must acutely feel the deprivation of their former fillips. How otherwise can it be explained that only 235 persons, in each million of the population, died from these two diseases in 1837, and an average of 1895 in recent years, the number for 1867 being 2128? Grant such arrangement, and I will spare you the infliction of a paragraph showing some potent cause or causes of disease-- let me suggest as one, that the disuse of snuff is now occasioning a loss of about 40,000 lives per annum in England and Wales. Upon these very

striking facts I might be pardoned perhaps for dilating, but do not wish to special-plead the case more than it may justly bear, knowing, as I well do, that most of the circumstances which favor the propagation of consumption are steadily gaining intensity in Britain: such as increasing density of population; greater number and size of factories, causing an annual multiplication in the number of indoor workmen, who, instead of the fresh air of the country, are compelled for ten or more hours daily to inspire pre-breathed air, often rendered still more effete by innumerable gas lights; certain employments, especially amidst mineral dust, *e.g.*, in Sheffield, where "grinder's rot" is considered inevitable; mental inquietude; the telegraphic and velocipedean way we live; want of natural diet, as too little milk, or only the thin azure secretion of byre-fed and consumptive cows; indigestion, produced by intemperance in drinking or smoking, with its frequent accompaniment of salivary waste; hurrying to, waiting for, and travelling by, trains; sedentary life, and the declivitous extension of syphilis. But these and a few minor causes, which tend to make consumption more prevalent now than formerly, are probably counterbalanced; indeed, in the opinion of many eminent authorities, are overbalanced, by the increasing dryness and constancy of our climate; the result of drainage, and other changes; also, by the institution of improved hygienic measures, empowered by The Health of Towns Acts of 1848, such as disinfection and isolation, thereby preventing the spread of epidemic and infectious diseases, which weaken the body, and leave it prone to consumption; by the ventilation of sitting-rooms and bed rooms, factories, workshops, streets, and alleys; drainage of

streets, and houses; supervising the building of new dwellings; paving, cleansing, widening, and sewerage of streets and closes; removal of nuisances, as pigstyes, midden-steads, refuse of manufactories, slaughter-houses, and intra-mural interments; licensing of lodging-houses; opening of public parks, walks, and dead-houses; the recent enactment for causing consumption of opaque smoke, thereby promoting cleanliness, &c. The propriety of utilizing sewage, instead of transforming the river of each town (from which the drinking water is generally taken) into a great common sewer, is now happily engaging attention, and will, I trust, soon be enforced. But probably the most efficient defence, against tubercular disease, is vaccination. Had this inestimable boon to mankind not been discovered and adopted, many of the individuals, who, in their ingratitude, are vehemently agitating against it, would now have been blind, disfigured, and sheepish in body and mind, or altogether deprived of existence, for if spared by the then unmodified small pox, their system would not be cleansed thereby, but only rendered more liable to disease, and more than ever pre-disposed to consumption. The Registrar General's reports tell us that "phthisis is twice as fatal as any other disease in England." It is never, however, fairly established, (except it may be when induced by an acute disease,) without a previous period of general ill health, and a certain form of indigestion. During this warning stage, it is quite possible to ward off the threatened death, by attention to the sanitary laws, which are very comprehensive, as will be seen from the cursory enumeration of some of them, in this rather crowded paragraph; by nourishing

food, suitable to age and habit of body; spending as much time as possible in the open-air; and, if necessary, by tonics, stimulants, and change, from a low and damp locality, to a high and bracing situation. In no other ailment is the axiom that "prevention is better than cure" so well exemplified. The anticipation of disease, in a curative sense (interesting as it must be to every one, from it being impossible, with our present knowledge, to say how far a given malady may be communicable) ought to be, and is already, partially recognized as public or state medicine. In order to render it more useful, a health medical officer should be appointed for every town and rural district in the kingdom. Such an ordinance would abundantly repay the tax-payers, and be the means of saving innumerable and, as it generally happens, gifted lives. But the importance of being before-hand with consumption, has, for the moment, made me forget the pinch between finger and thumb.

### CHAPTER III.

“ Say, what can equal, with its power divine,  
The pleasing sound of take a pinch of mine !

. . . . .

Hither ye graces, listen to my call,  
Whether from West End or from Leadenhall ;  
Here quickly haste, and all your boxes bring,  
And let me dip my greedy fingers in,  
This is a treat, this is my nose’s heaven,  
This far exceeds old Hardman’s 37.”

EUROPEAN MAGAZINE, 1807

**B**EFORE the discovery of America, the nose was poor indeed. It did not know

“Its own far joys, the sight that mocks.”

It was reserved for Jean Nicot to elevate and cheer our prominent feature, till then more ornamental than useful. The civilized nostrils, hitherto mocked and starved with immaterial aroma, were, by the instinct of the epicurean ambassador, furnished with a new pleasure,



awakened to an added importance, and exalted from the position of a fifth-rate sense, to take precedence of the other four, for, without losing the perception of smell, olfaction affiliated taste and feeling.

The reasons which a snuff-taker may now assign, for his love of the stimulant, are few and rational, compared with those of three centuries ago. For the marvellous reception which was readily accorded throughout Europe to the innervating powder, on its introduction, in spite of the fulminations of kings and censors, popes and priests, was due much more to its reputed virtues, as a valuable remedy, than as an article of luxury; hence, the early names of the plant—southern all-heal, holy herb, holy healing herb, queen's herb, &c.; the latter epithet being given in honor of Catherine de Medici, who was one of the first to sniff the fragrant powder. Her Majesty, in common with Francis II, and other members of her family, suffered much from obstinate cephalalgia. In the year 1560, Jean Nicot—a name which, from its connection with the introduction of granulated tobacco—will ever be celebrated, having relieved headache in his own person, with the powder, presented some, grated with his own ambassadorial hand, to Catherine de Medici, who, at the time, like Xerxes, was longing for a new sensation, and, more than the Persian monarch, a new remedy for her headache. In comminuted tobacco, the strong-minded queen undoubtedly found both desiderata satisfied, and the nation, for fear of headache, accepted the prophylactic; at least, the cephalic virtue of the remedy was solidly established, and the French nose incontinently taken captive.

To such a degree did the habit of snuff-taking speedily obtain in France, that men and women of all ranks were ever to be seen with a piece of tobacco in one hand, and an elegant grater in the other, the leaf being rolled up like a carrot in shape, hence, *carotte* snuff. The face of a friend could only be recognized through a cloud of the more subtle particles, some of the denser atoms having already embrowned the cheeks, and become diffused over the linen and clothes. Ere long the process of grating tobacco as it was required, became too tedious for the cephalic demand, and a fresh impetus was given to the consumption of the stimulant, by the use of machinery in pulverizing the tobacco. In the beginning of the 17th century, Jean Bart smoked the first pipe in the French court; since then, tobacco has gradually been supplanting snuff in Gaulic estimation. In 1783, however, there were still consumed, twelve times more snuff, by weight, than tobacco; and, in the present day, France uses 8,000 tons per annum of snuff, and more than double that weight of tobacco and cigars.

Since tobacco has taken the precedence of snuff, French statistics show that the ratio of increase in population has alarmingly decreased. Stature also is diminishing. These two startling facts have frequently come before Parisian *savans* for explanation. In some measure, the former may be accounted for by the reputed anaphrodisiac properties of the weed, which, if it exists in the least degree, must produce a certain and recognizable effect in a country like France, where the consumption of tobacco and cigars (exclusive of snuff) is equal to about fifty ounces per head of the population.

The dwarfing of the male sex is, also, to some extent, capable of solution, by the early age at which the present generation of French youths are beginning to smoke, and by the extraordinary waste of saliva, suffered by most smokers, which must, more or less, prevent proper assimilation of food. The mucous discharge, which follows the use of snuff, I believe, on the contrary, to be beneficial (see page 12.)

From France, the custom of snuff-taking found its way into England. Physicians of the 16th century, before tobacco and snuff were introduced, reposed noteworthy confidence in the efficacy of errhines and sternutatories, for the elimination of "gross and pituitary humours from the brain," to relieve "headache, toothache, ophthalmia, and some paralytic and soporific complaints." This trust, which must have received substantiation from their own observation of the benefit which patients derived from using that class of remedies, was probably inspired by the writings of the ancients. Upwards of 400 years B.C., Hippocrates used powder of herbs as snuff in disease. Antonius Musa, physician to Augustus Cæsar, who practiced medicine about fifty years before the advent of the christian era, names many disorders of the body, in which he deemed cephalic powders and sialogogues beneficial. Aulus Cornelius Celsus, who lived and wrote in the same age with our Saviour, advises errhines and sternutatories in cephalea and every old pain in the head, in spasms, insanity, lethargy, hysteria, and almost every disorder of the womb. Fifty years later, Aretæus, a celebrated Physician of Rome, prescribed, in the same complaints,

the following remedies in powder, in order to excite sneezing and discharge from the nose—Castor, pepper, soap-wort, Egyptian bacchar, euphorbium, asarabacca, wood-betony, staves-acre, mustard, penny-royal, mint, helebore, hartshorn, &c. The mode of using these powders was in advance even of the Icelanders of the present day. They were directed by Aretæus, to be thrown up the nostrils by a syringe with a double nozzle. Had tobacco been known to the ancients, there can be no doubt but these learned and experienced physicians would have advised its use in the pulverized form, instead of some, if not all, of the sternutants enumerated. At any rate, when powdered tobacco was introduced into England, from the already enslaved French nation, our physicians gratefully accorded it the first place among errhines. They esteemed it an eminently useful and safe remedy, and soon believed it a catholicon for nearly every ill to which flesh is heir, which credence, together with its inherent pleasurable and enthralling influence upon the sensorium, conspired to render snuff-taking current among all classes of society.

It is impossible, at the present day, to say how much public opinion of the 17th and 18th centuries may have been influenced by the bold theory of Des Cartes, who, while snuff was yet esteemed a medicine rather than a luxury, published the fanciful notion that the pineal gland was the seat of the soul. No sooner was the fantastical idea promulged, than the so called gland became an interesting part of the human system. It is a small heart-shaped body, the size of a pea, situated near the centre of the brain, connected with the nerves

of vision, and containing, in the adult, grains like sand. These grains cannot be found at birth, nor do they appear before the seventh year: as age advances they increase in number, and augment in size. The mathematical and talented Des Cartes conceived the mind of man to resemble clockwork or a machine, which could be wound-up, let down, or adjusted at pleasure, by acting, I suppose, on the atoms of sand upon which he imagined the soul to be seated. What could be better adapted to the important office of version, or of poisoning the minute and perhaps oscillating soul, than other grains snuffed up the nostrils? Accordingly, the great philosopher planned a kind of snuff which he hoped would raise man above his former self, &c. Perhaps those manufacturers, who issue silicated snuff, may be disciples of the illustrious Frenchman, and so sincere in their acceptance of his unique doctrine, as to think they deserve credit, rather than opprobrium, for the admixture.

## CHAPTER IV.

“What strange, what wonderous virtue must there be,  
And secret charm, O snuff, concealed in thee?

. . . . .  
There is a witchcraft of the strongest kind,  
A cause too deep for human search to find,  
Makes earth-born weeds imperial man enslave,  
Not little souls, but e'en the wise and brave.”

ARBUCKLE'S POEM ON SNUFF, 1719.

IN the year 1494, Roman Pane, who accompanied Columbus, in his second voyage to America, records that the natives drew powdered tobacco into their nostrils, through long tubes, and that it had a powerful effect upon them. The earliest publication upon tobacco, that I know of, is that of Dr. Monardes, dated 1577, and entitled, *Joyful news out of the new found World*. Henry Butler, M.A., in 1599, says of tobacco, “the nose soonest taketh it in snuff; use, it cureth any grief, dolour, opilation, impostume, or obstruction, proceeding

of cold or wind, especially in the head or breast." In 1604, James I, on his own responsibility, raised duty on tobacco and snuff from twopence to six shillings and tenpence per pound, assigning as his reason "tobacco is a drug of late years, found out and brought from foreign parts, and **used only as a physic to preserve health.**" Six years later, Dr. Edmund Gardiner wrote a quarto volume, entitled, *The Trial of Tobacco*, in which he lauded the medical virtues of the plant, gave full directions for prescribing it, and the temperaments it would suit best. He names eight affections of the head and body, for which he recommended the use of snuffs. *The Tatler*, in a pseudo advertisement, says that Charles Lillie, of the Strand, will teach "the ceremony of the snuff-box, or rules for offering snuff to strangers, a friend or a mistress, according to the degree of familiarity or distance; with an explanation of the careless, the scornful, the politic, and the surly pinch, and the gestures proper to each of them." *The Spectator*, No. 509, says, Belles Lettres are typified among other signs "by a pinch of the right and fine Barcelona between finger and thumb, a due quantity of the same upon the upper lip, and a noddle-case loaded with the pulvil." This observation is very pregnant, as it is remarkable that the classic period of England's history was connate with the reign of snuff. Addison, Pope, Bolingbroke, Swift, Dryden, Sterne, Lord Chesterfield, Congreve, Gibbon, Johnson, and Boswell took snuff, so did Frederick the Great, Prince Eugene, Napoleon and Wellington; also, a host of later intellects, including Pitt, Burns, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Turner, and Sir Walter Scott. An anonymous writer, in addressing his snuff-box, says,

“Parsons staunch, and great physicians,  
 Here have dipped the ‘immortal thumb,’  
 Painters, sculptors, sweet musicians,  
 Round it still, like phantoms, come.  
 Gentle poets, legal railors,  
 Play-wrights, actors, merchants, squires,  
 Lords and ladies, soldiers, sailors,  
 Here had all the nose desires.”

*The Guardian* tells us that Charles Lillie prepares snuffs and perfumes which refresh the brain in those who have too much for their quiet, and gladden it in those who have too little to know the want of it. In 1621, Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, has this sentence, “Tobacco, divine, rare, super-excellent tobacco, which goes far beyond all their panaceas, portable gold, and philosopher’s stone; a sovereign remedy to all diseases; a virtuous herb, if it be well qualified, opportunely taken, and medicinally used.” Dr. Raphael Thorius, in 1625, said,

“Physicians, peradventure, curse it sore,  
 For making autumn’s healthful, and them poor.”

And concludes his heroic poem in favour of tobacco, by the following challenge:—

“If any lover of the truth shall now,  
 What is by me here written, disallow,  
 ’Gainst my *opinion* let his reasons fight;  
 His *arguments* let him commit to *white*.”

A poem in *Reed’s Journal*, in 1761, gives six good reasons for snuff-taking. One verse and reason is as follows:—



“When vapours swim before the eyes,  
 And cloud the dizzy brain,  
 Snuff, to dispel the mist, applies  
 Its quick enlivening grain.”

The *Connoisseur* thought snuff had become a “national plague and a nuisance,” and spoke of it as “a distemper which had taken hold of our noses, disturbing, with the music of the nose, the worshipers in church\*, and the actors in the theatre.”

“The Church more sacred once, is what we mean,  
 Where now they flock to see and to be seen;  
 The box is used, the book laid by as dead,  
 With snuff, not scripture, there the soul is fed;  
 For when to heaven the hands of one of those  
 Are lifted, twenty have them at the nose.”

Lord Chesterfield, who thought himself “a very good quack,” in his last letter to his son, says he has “sent, in four successive letters, as much of the Duchess of

\* In one of our Newcastle Chapels, a friend happening to look round while sermon was being delivered, observed a snuff-box in the act of circulating. Curiosity overcame sanctity—attention was arrested by an irresistable solicitude to see how far the circular would go. My friend could not say how long the reviving medium had been current ere observation commenced, but remarked it *passant* through five pews. Dr. Clarke complained of this practice, in 1797, in his *Dissertation on the use and abuse of Tobacco*. It surpasses Scottish usage. In some northern and very widely spread Highland parishes, the afternoon sermon is preached soon after the morning one, in order to let the congregation home early—the interval being only about fifteen minutes, the whole time is economized and assiduously devoted to the friendly interchange of mulls, the etiquette being to tap your own box, take a pinch, and then hand it round.

Somerset's snuff as a letter could well convey." He asks if Mr. Stanhope had received them, and if "it had done him any good," [for his dropsy.] James Boswell contributes the following, in his *Shrubs of Parnassus* :—

"One pinch of snuff relieved the vapoured head,  
Removed the spleen, removed the quamish fit,  
And gave a brisker turn to female wit."

Southey eulogizes snuff in the following lines :—

"Most rare Columbus! Thou shalt be for this,  
The only Christopher in my kalendar.  
Why, but for thee the uses of the nose  
Were half unknown, and its capacity  
Of joy."

In a little pamphlet, published in 1833, by J. Meander I find the following :—"How many are the moments in a man's life, when the mind refuses to fix itself? There are times when neither an arm-chair, with a fender for a footstool—nor a gossip, with a pair of glancing eyes—nor a stroll by moonlight—nor a song—nor a bottle, though ever so old—nor a book though ever so new—can administer the particular balm, which our fancies or faculties require. No. There are certain periods of time, certain points of existence, when nothing in nature can enliven our drooping senses, restore tone and tranquility to the mind, and perfectly satisfy all the wandering and undefined desires of the moment, but a pinch—a full, fresh, fervent pinch of snuff—pungent and unadulterated." Pope, Goldsmith, Lord Byron, and many others, refer to the practice. But I must desist from further quotation, lest I should seem to falsify the first line in my second chapter.

The politician at the club could exhaust an ounce at a sitting; and young ladies finishing their education, were pronounced accomplished only when they were equal to the exercise of the fan and the use of the pouncet-box, hence the satire—

“She that, with pure tobacco, will not prime  
Her nose, can be no lady of the time.”

If a modicum of Scotch or Spanish were permitted to linger on the lip of beauty, it is on record that the youth of the period were quite as eager for the love-salute. Ladies, at that time, carried curious boxes. I have seen some of them with sundry compartments, for the purpose of holding divers snuffs, with a looking-glass inside the lid; and fine gentlemen carried a diamond, china, paper, wooden, or horn box, one in each pocket, with dry or moist snuffs suitable to each kind, in order that they might be enabled to offer their friends the stimulant most relished.

## CHAPTER V.

“Still thou art welcome,  
As June’s blooming rose,  
Joy of the palate,  
Delight of the nose.”

H. J. MELLER.

THE reigns of the four Georges may be entitled the snuff-taking period of English history. The practice had become an appenage of fashion before 1714, as it has continued after 1830, to be the comfort of priests, literary men, highlanders, tailors, factory hands, and old people of both sexes. George IV was a nasute judge of snuffs, and so enamoured of the delectation, that in each of his palaces he kept a jar chamber, containing a choice assortment of tobacco powder, presided over by a critical superintendent. His favourite stimulant in the morning was violet Strasburgh, the same which had previously helped Queen Charlotte to “kill the day”; after dinner, Carrotte, named from his *penchant* for it, Kings Carrotte, Martinique,

Etrenne, Old Paris, Bureau, Cologne, Bordeaux, Havre, Princeza, Rouen, and Rappee, were placed on the table, in as many rich and curious boxes. The aggregate value of the stock left at his death must have been near £3000. The king's love of his nasal food was singularly exhibited at his decease, which took place in the arms of Mr. Bachelor, one of the inspectors of the royal store of snuffs. About the time of the last George's demise, the duty raised upon the odorifous powder had nearly reached £3,000,000 sterling per annum. It soon, thereafter, began to lose its wonted *prestige*, and ever since has steadily declined in popular favour, until in 1870, it is not possible to say how little is used, the revenue accruing from its not being thought worth estimating separately. I believe, however, five figures would now cover the impost upon the total home consumption. This is not altogether in consequence of caprice of mode, nor the groundless assertions repeatedly made by opponents of the titillating acquisition to the pleasures of sense, that it is injurious to health, produces fatuity, apoplexy, and paralysis, or the equally erroneous and more absurd belief, accepted in some districts, that snuff accumulates somewhere about the anterior brain, or rolls itself into a tennis-ball in the stomach or other internal organ, nor yet from our becoming, as a nation, more lethargic, but, in a great measure from the snuff supplied to consumers, being of inferior quality, and less seductive than formerly. If our manufacturers were to supply their customers with a pure and full flavoured snuff, instead of only ground tobacco stalks, or those and refuse tobacco dust, technically called "perish smalls;" if they were to "put down" the best leaf, as in

France, the consumer would return again and again to his tabatiere, and the practice might regain its former fascination. In too many cases, however, the microscope, a glass of water, friction between two silver coins, or a chemical re-agent, discovers in the well watered, artificially flavored, and ammoniacal preparation—pepper, barley-flour, oatmeal, peameal, beanmeal, tonquin beanmeal, oxide of iron, alum, chiccory, armenian bole, fine sand, powdered flint or glass, red oxide of lead, yellow chromate of lead, powder of different kinds of wood, starch, and an excess of lime, &c. But Donald likes a sensation, and sometimes, when I have given him a pinch made from the pure leaf, I have seen him immediately pull out his own box, and bring tears to his eyes with some more acrimonious mixture, so well have the manufacturers succeeded in educating the popular taste. John Bull has a similar predilection in favour of strong tobacco, for he smokes the strongest in the world. This fact is greatly attributable to the high duty on tobacco. It also, in part, explains his craving for strong drink, which many writers upon the subject erroneously assert, is produced by smoking; *per se*, if we, as a nation, were content with milder tobacco, like Latakia, Maryland, Havanna, or Bird's-Eye, the necessity for liquid stimuli would not be felt so imperiously as to compel us to swallow beer and spirits, to the annual value of £11 per head of the present population in England, and we might, even like the Turks and Asiatics, be satisfied with coffee, to drink with the milder sedative, and experience no craving for acute narcotism. This, however, would derange the beautiful zone and race theory of the natural selection of soothing agents.

In 1863, Government allowed a remittance of duty upon snuff for exportation, varying in amount according to the per-centage of tobacco, but averaging about two shillings and sixpence per pound. Previous to that time, in consequence of the extraordinary development of the tobacco trade, it had become a serious consideration with the manufacturers, what they must do with their surplus stalks and "offal"; the duty (except in the case of strips) being already paid upon the whole leaf, and the consumption of snuff, probably, in a great measure, from the inferiority of the material of which it was made, not being sufficient to use up the "perish smalls" and stalks.

To remedy this state of things, the propriety of burning the refuse was suggested, and only not acceded to, by Sir Thomas Freemantle, because Government had not kilns convenient for the purpose; hence, the "draw-back" was granted, and the manufacturers have since been reimbursed something like £60,000 per annum, representing 480,000 pounds yearly sent out of the country, much of which is consigned to—the sea. Therefore, no reason now exists, except that of making an extra profit, why we should charge our noses with an inferior errhine. I consequently hope the old practice may be revived, of placing down for snuff, sweet Virginian tobacco entire. In France, the best American and home-grown tobacco is carefully selected for snuff, (the grower being compelled to destroy the stalks and refuse, for which he has not, of course, paid duty) and the consumption of snuff there has not been supplanted, but only distanced by that of tobacco.

If Government could find a way to charge duty upon tobacco, when manufactured, instead of when it is taken out of bond, it would be an immense boon to all lovers of the weed, but especially to snuff-takers. The Customs, levied upon tobacco, are about six times more than the original value of good, sound, Virginian leaf. At the present low price of the prepared commodity, it is impossible for manufacturers to keep tobacco in stock—it would be simply ruinous. Return upon capital invested, requires expedition in sending the precious product into an early market—600 per cent. impost, upon the raw material, cannot but be prejudicial to the quality of our English snuff. It has put a premium upon the refuse from the manufacture of tobacco, and causes even that to be hurried through the different processes in a few months, instead of two, three, four, or even more years, as on the Continent, where a trifling duty admits of the fabricants rejecting inferior material, and taking their own time to bring to perfection a mellowed and ripened treasure, redolent of fine natural aroma. But even if the price of snuff admitted of the best leaf being selected, the pith is crushed out of the snuff-work, by the ponderous grindstones used in Britain, for its trituration. The Brazilian Indians, long ere they were troubled by Eastern civilization, rubbed down their tobacco with a pestle and mortar made of rosewood, and snuffed it while warm and pregnant with its own and the added fragrance of the wood. In the Highlands, Sandy used to grind down the leaf in a little wooden apparatus, called the “mill;” hence, the name “mull,” given to the snuff-box in Scotland, while foreign fabricators either cut their



tobacco into Bureau, or rasp it into Rappee, &c.\*

Snuff improves when long kept in bulk. It is said that Sir Henry Cooke "was so choice in his snuffs, so determined that they should be old, to his own knowledge, that after making a judicious selection, he had the jars put into a dry vault, and the entrance bricked up. He then let his house for 7 years. When the time expired, he had the vault re-opened, and certainly his patience was re-paid, for finer snuff never could be produced." In the last generation, many connoisseurs prided themselves in their stock of rare, rich, ripe snuffs. Lord Petersham kept about £3,000 worth stored in his house. The Earl of Harrington, almost as much, the Dukes of Buccleuch, Devonshire, the Marquis of Ely, Earls of Airlie, Powis; Lords Abercrombie, Arbuthnot, Coleraine, Lauderdale, St. Helen's, and Panmure, followed suit at a distance. A pinch, from such as the Earl of Harrington's store, was not enough. You would wish to return to it again and again, and revel in its inspiring excellence, but such a treat is not for mortals in the present day. Let us hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will one day be moved to reconsider the mode of levying the tax which presses so heavily upon this pleasure of sense.

\* I have in my possession a rosewood mull, similar to the mills the Highlanders of the 17th century used to grind their "snush" in. Some manufacturers having kindly sent me samples of the different leaves, it has been brought into frequent operation in making my experiments, and the result of this primitive mode of making snuff is really very enjoyable.

## CHAPTER VI.

“What ills the noble weed will cure, is now  
Thy task my muse. Rub my contracted brow.  
. . . . .  
So sovereign, if diffused, is the smell,  
It doth contagion from bad airs expell.  
The heavy head it hath a power to rear,  
And with smart sneezings makes the nostrils clear.  
Then gives supplies to the exhausted brain,  
And makes the drowsy minds grow quick again.”

DR. RAPHAEL THORIUS, 1625.

THE last plague, in 1665, called, from its fatality, “the Great Plague,” caused a large proportion of those who had not already acquired the habit, to commence snuff-taking, from a popular belief that the aromatic dust was, in some way, a preventative of that loathsome and fell disease. It might be too much to say that the pestilence did not recur, in consequence of the increased extension of the practice, but the credence still remains, it being an opinion generally believed that the use of snuff reduces risk when exposed to infectious diseases,

*e. g.*, fevers, small-pox, and influenza; to these, I may add diphtheria and consumption (the latter disease being deemed contagious by many.) I am inclined to favour that belief, from the antiseptic and anti-contagious virtue resident in snuff itself, from its stimulating and diaphoretic properties, and the trust which the idea inspires. There is more in the popular belief than we have yet dreamed of. The experiments of Professor Mantegazza, as reported in *The Imparziale*, of May 16th last, prove that the sweet smelling essences of plants: *e. g.*, cherry-laurel, cloves, lavender, mint, lemon, fennel, bergamotte, anise, nutmeg, thyme, &c., are capable of developing ozone in sunlight. The same property resides largely in levigated tobacco. Prior, De Luca had found that the gas given off by day from the leaves of plants, is ozonic. Upon these hints from De Luca and M. Mantegazza, I instituted an extended series of experiments, and find that the aroma of powdered tobacco, develops ozone, with much power, producing as deep a color on the test paper, as any of our ordinary scented flowers. The iodine coloration was evinced even when the test-paper was placed across a vessel from which dry snuff had been well shaken out; also, in the dull light of rainy weather. Snuff is even more valuable, as an ozone producer, than floral perfume, for, in the dark, a tint was elicited equal to No. 2 of the ozone-scale.

Those who have forgotten the properties of ozone, I may remind, that it is oxygen in a superactive state, in which it is a powerful oxidizer and disinfectant. There are excellent grounds then, for the common belief that snuff is instrumental in preventing

contagion, from its capability of forming ozone (an agent probably, the most powerful that is found free in nature,) for destroying organic germs, sporules, and disinfecting motes, transformed into disease-freighted rafts, carrying zymotic disorders from plants, animals, and man, to beget, in suitable recipients, fever, scarlet-fever, measles, small-pox, hooping-cough, diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera, diphtheria, rheumatism, erysipelas, influenza, ague, and, I will add, consumption. Where ozone is abundant, the dust is disinfected—where absent or deficient, one or more of the above diseases is certain to prevail, providing an originating cause, or case, be in the neighbourhood. Wind and changes of temperature, assist the thunder-laden cloud to purify the atmosphere, by means of the ozone developed during lightning. Rain, also, is useful in laying disease-bearing dust, and renewing the ozonizing power of odoriferous plants. Kind nature is, therefore, always doing her best to preserve our country cousins from blood poisoning, but, in the central parts of Newcastle, and likewise in all large towns, ozone is absent, being entirely used up in oxidizing disease-producing emanations. Every lightning-flash, every perfumed flower, every tobacconist's shop and tobacco manufactory, contributes to render air more active and life-preserving, and each time a snuff-taker opens his box, he surrounds himself with a modicum of ozone.  $O_3$ , or ozone, is said to be deficient along the East Coast, and abundant on the West, but this may be more apparent than real. It may be owing to an excess of reducing acids, in the air along the eastern board.

My experiments were extended to tobacco, but I have

failed to find any ozone in its smoke. *Tobacco camphor*, which is, doubtless, the ozonizing principle, is quite consumed in the burning process, and the *empyreumatic vapour*, which takes its place, is inert, as an ozone producer, but I will return to this, when treating of tobacco, at a future time. I may, however, give the hint "to all whom it may concern," that delicate ozone test-paper is probably the best criterion of the quality of tobacco and snuff. I have tested with it 30 different snuffs, and although puzzled a little, at first, with the scented kinds, after the artificial fragrance had passed off, none gave such a high colour to the test-paper, as snuff with the fullest natural flavour of tobacco-camphor.

The author of *A Pinch of Snuff* says, "a surgeon, visiting a fever-ward, does well to encase his olfactory nerves in snuff." Snuff is frequently taken for deafness arising from cold, chronic headache, cold in the head, neuralgia of head and face, toothache, to render the nasal mucous more rare, and for weak and sore eyes. Mr. Lund, of Manchester, in a paper read before the Medical Society of that town, on the 2nd of March last, stated his belief that a flow of tears is useful in relieving congestion or tension of the brain. Snuff, besides causing a flow of nasal mucous, often occasions a copious secretion of tears, in consequence of the intimate nervous connection between the two organs; hence, its usefulness for the eyes and head. Its use is also occasionally advantageous to ladies. A Liverpool captain lately repeated to me the following remarkable instance of the curative power of snuff, in *tic-douloureux*. His vessel had been disabled in a storm, and could only

run before the wind ; eventually he succeeded in making port. Anxiety, fatigue, and exposure, completely knocked him down, his sufferings culminating in tic-douloureux. His first act on landing was to go in quest of a surgeon. On his way, a tobacconist's window arrested him ; intuitively, he entered the shop, and purchased a penny-worth of snuff. He then hurried to the nearest resting place, where, being seated, he snuffed and snuffed again, until he had got through the whole ; after which feat, he was quite relieved, and leisurely returned to his ship. He has been in many gales since. We were in a three-quarter one, from the N.N.E., at the time of his relating this episode, but, to him, tic has, ever since, given plenty of sea-room. I well remember another, amongst the many anecdotes which have been related to me, when asking for opinions regarding my theory. During the old coaching days, an intelligent gentleman, travelling along the East Coast, on his way to Scotland, felt like "the man who could not get warm." At each stage the innkeeper—no less sharp in that generation, than his railway successors in this—had the relay of horses harnessed and the horn blowing, just as the scalding punch was ready, so that our traveller never could get more than a single mouthful. Arrived at Kelso, not his marrow only, but his very heart was frozen. He had a stiff night-cap or two, ordered a blazing fire, and all the blankets the inn had at command, but neither sleep nor warmth would come. Next morning he felt "aloverish," and expected nothing but 14 or 21 days enforced rest, but, managing to crawl down to the commercial room, his nervous eye espied a snuff-box on the table, *pro bono publico*. Instinct

seemed his guide. He snatched the mull, and took one, two, three copious pinches in quick succession. None but those who have been very ill, in whom a critical sleep has restored a shrouded mind, and given elasticity to leaden limbs, could be impressed with the happy result. That day saw him at his duties, and no day since has found him without his snuff-box. I may add that his digestion is better now than it was in these coaching days. The intense longing I felt for a cigar, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March, 1851, is more prominent in my memory than any occurrence of yesterday. I was, at the time, shivering and sickening, with what proved a severe attack of double pneumonia. No snuff was near, and five hours elapsed ere I was relieved from uninterrupted dispensing duties. When done, the proper time was past; I was too breathless to smoke. Ten more years elapsed before I tried my first cigar. The vehement desire, remembered every day for 20 years, I look upon now, as the unerring prompting of instinct, which, had it been immediately satisfied, might have prevented a long and serious illness. I have been told, by some who have taken snuff for their head, that it also serves to agitate their liver, and relieve them of bile. Snuff is made into an ointment with butter, for certain forms of skin disease, as itch and tinea captis. It has been prescribed, sprinkled on poultices, for colic, rheumatism, &c., and Drs. Trousseau and Pidoux, of Paris, have lately recommended, as a preventative of gout, a footbath of infusion of snuff, to be used every night for one week in each month, and, instead of drying the feet, to wrap them warmly up in a blanket impregnated with tobacco smoke. During the time cholera was creating

considerable uneasiness in 1865, I remember of reading that Dr. Ponwoski, of St. Petersburg, strongly advised a powerful snuff to be tried, which, he thought, would aid re-action. If the patient sneezed 8 or 10 times he would recover, if not the case was hopeless. The doctor's snuff does not seem to have been tried out of the Russian capital, although it has the merit of being a powerful stimulant, of not interfering with other treatment, and could not possibly do harm. Tailors probably snuff more than any other class of men; they take it to keep them from becoming drowsy over their sedentary and monotonous occupation, and to protect them from the smell of their work. From the cramped posture, the fœtid and exhausted atmosphere, scant space often allotted to each man, long hours, excess in drinking, in proportion to air and exercise taken, we would expect tailoring to be one of the most unhealthy trades, yet we find that tailors live to the average expectation of life, and that, in the 40 years, from 20 till 60 years of age, they are disabled from indisposition only about 48 against 57 weeks, the average sickness of English workmen. Almost every circumstance which could tend to bring about disease is piled up against the industrious tailor; he seems, therefore, indebted to frequent repetition of the slight, diffusible, and, to him, exigent and delectable stimulant, for 9 weeks extra health, during the most active period of life. Professor Seé, of Paris, considers that small quantities of nicotine aid respiration, and do not injuriously affect the heart. As snuffing is the mode in which the smallest quantities of nicotine are absorbed by the system, compared with smoking and chewing, I conclude that the



learned Professor's opinion is favourable to snuff-taking. Dr. Griesinger says, "a snuff good-humouredly offered to an insane person often prevents him breaking out into a storm of invectives, brings him to himself, and calms him"; also, that "the predilection of many, especially chronic patients, for snuff, is well-known." Snuff invigorates the body, and gives fixity to the mind, stimulating it when weary and unproductive of ideas\*; of the truth of this, a whole volume of evidence could be produced. It also, in a slight but probably sufficient, degree, prevents excessive waste of tissue, under mental or corporeal toil. What Baron Liebig, Dr. Harvey Goodwin, Lord Bishop of Carlisle, Drs. R. Thorius, Willis, Pereira, Knapp, Chapman, Thornton, Walsh, Cullen, Bates, Boyle, Fowler, Fuller, Strother, Barrat, Rush; Ben Johnson, Bacon, Locke, Charles Lamb, J. H. Browne, the late Charles Dickens, Rev. H. Stowell Brown, Messrs. H. J. Meller, P. B. St. John, — Johnston, A. Steinmetz, W. A. Chatto, C. Beckington, Mons. Joubert, and a host of others, have said in favour of tobacco, is applicable sometimes, even more emphatically, to the taking of snuff.

\* I have heard of studious snuff-takers, in our grandfather's time, evolving new ideas so successfully and uninterruptedly, that their learned noses have become quite obstructed, the surgeon's aid being required to free the oppressed organ. The most active-minded men seem to take to snuffing, while profound thinkers best solve a problem, or give to the world a new-born thought, when encompassed and canopied by wreaths of tobacco smoke. Had Napoleon III taken a pinch at the battle of Sedan, he might have become inspired with a "victorious idea," like his uncle at Jena, and believed, with General Duerot, that 84,000 men could cut through the Prussian lines.

## CHAPTER VII.

“The lawyer so grave, when he opens his case,  
In obscurity finds it is hid,  
Till the bright gloss of knowledge illumines his face,  
As he gives the three taps on the lid.”

POEM ON SNUFF, 1827.

“Till man had all he could enjoy,  
He had not joys enough ;  
Nor fully could each sense employ,  
'Till fortune gave him snuff.”

A SNUFF SONG, 1840.

**M**R. Steinmetz, in treating of the effects of tobacco upon the nervous system, attributes a great deal of the influence communicated, to the “art or method of smoking.” He says, “The smoker does not drive the poisoned fume backwards, nor does he retain it in contact with the oral organs. Instinctively, he no sooner imbibes the vapour than he pours it forth again, in a stream, athwart his nostrils, where together with oxygen, it stimulates the *olfactory* nerve, which, in my opinion, produces the beneficial effects of tobacco, ascribed to it by all its votaries. This nerve—the olfactory—rests

against the under surface of the anterior lobe of the brain, being lodged in the narrow interval between two convolutions, and retained in its place by the arachnoid membrane; its branches are transmitted through numerous foramina in the cribriform plate, to be distributed to the mucous membrane of the nose. The stimulus is thus immediately communicated to that portion of the brain which requires the invigorating action of oxygen for its intellectual manifestations. The larger the surface of the mucous membrane of the nose the greater the activity of the intellect or the anterior lobe of the brain; and without a well-developed nasal organ there *never* was a well-developed intellect. The nose of genius, in every age, has been conspicuous—in every sphere of its numerous manifestations. Perhaps I should rather say that its size and adaptation to expose a large internal surface to the action of oxygen, indicates the amount of intellectual activity of which the individual is capable. Nay, so striking is the provision of nature (and comparative anatomy will bear me out), that in the case of celebrities, whose forelobe of the brain exhibits no marked development or expansion, nature has planted, between and below their eyes a nose of remarkable dimensions in length and depth and inferior expansion. For proof of this position I appeal to the portraits of all manner of intellectual celebrities, in every profession, in every department of art or science. It is, therefore, apparently in the cerebrum proper, through the olfactory, that the fumes of tobacco perform these remarkable function in the human economy.”

I have taken the long quotation preceding from the

learned Mr. Steinmetz, because I think it an excellent argument, but—in favour of snuff rather than smoke. It is also a change to the reader, as it will render unnecessary my writing a paragraph upon the nose, its internal arrangement of nerves, its importance and connection with genius. The empyreumatic aroma of good tobacco is truly delightful, but if it be only to its shadowy influence upon the olfactory nerve, after being expelled from the mouth, that the “beneficial effects of tobacco” are due, it is not surprising that—as Mr. Johnston has stated in his *Chemistry of Common Life*—so few can say what they feel when smoking, define the satisfaction it affords, or even know, if their eyes were closed, that they are smoking. If the foregoing theory of the way in which tobacco influences the system were correct, we ought at once to return to the practice of three hundred years ago, and “nose the smoke,” by expelling the fumes through our nostrils. We would then be sooner sated, and be enabled to give expression to our sensations, when “burning our idol.” I have tried each mode of using tobacco (except the plug) and “do hereby certify that”—so far as a taste, not altogether untutored, can decide—a copious, comfortable, cheering, and charming pinch of the right sort of snuff, conveys about as much benefit and gratification as tobacco, in any form, can give. Shut your eyes, be generous to your nostrils, and feel whether that sentient organ be tantalized by impalpable and unrecognizable vapour. No! It will be able to appraise the offering, its amount and kind. Learned men of 1719, were apparently of the same opinion: bear witness, the following quartette:—

“Next pay a visit to the Temple, where  
 The lawyers live, who gold to heaven prefer ;  
 You’ll find them stupified to that degree,  
 They’ll take a pinch before they’ll take their fee.”

To those who have an abundance of time at their command, which must be disposed of in some way, to escape ennui, it is decidedly pleasant and efficacious to toy with a cigar. To such as have no time to play with enjoyment, whose mentality is subordinate to their animality, as generally is the case with sailors, a quid of pigtail or negro-head, may be essential, but to put the mind and body on their mettle, nothing can surpass the “pungent grains of titillating dust.” For some time I had a book-keeper, who, for six or seven weeks each Christmas, would write from twelve o’clock on Sunday night until twelve on Saturday night, taking not more than twenty-seven hours sleep during the week, but, as he said, “one ounce of Kendal Brown, daily, did not excuse him.”

It has often been urged that the habitual use of snuff injures the voice, the power of smell, and produces dyspepsia, apoplexy, paralysis, loss of memory, and fatuity. Some of its opponents even believe that it reaches the lungs, when vigourously snuffed, and irritates them. I well remember an old gentleman, who strongly advised his son to snuff, for the very purpose of clearing his voice. This son was a pattern of filial obedience, and when I last saw him, whatever his utterance might have been, like the contents of his box, it was then delightful. The eminent tragedian, John Kemble, once said advisingly, to a young actor, “Now

I have used plain Rappee for more than twenty years, and, as you must perceive, it has had no effect upon my voice." Injures the smell! Why an old taker would say it bestows the greatest charm that can be experienced by that sense; besides, it does not injure it. A cleanly man should wash out his nose every morning, the same as he does his ears. If he repeats the operation before dinner, the first pinch afterwards will afford him a real and most exquisite enjoyment, and he will not have even a suspicion of weakness in that direction. Two of my friends, whose fineness of scent is important to them in business, feed one nostril only, and their nasute taste has never been questioned. I am inclined to think that any loss of appetite is rather attributable to indulgence in another direction than that of snuff. Also, the activity of mind, which induces a man to prefer snuff to smoke, is obnoxious to good digestion. Respecting apoplexy, paralysis, and fatuity, they are each, according to the Registral General's Reports, very much more frequently fatal now, than when snuff-taking was in vogue, as the following table will show:—

	Number of deaths to 1,000,000 living, average for 1837-8-9 & 40.	Average of recent years.
APOPLEXY . . . .	368	493
PARALYSIS . . . .	325	580

Epilepsy, and other diseases of the brain, which would produce fatuity have also increased in like proportions, since 1837. To defend snuff, against the charge of causing loss of memory, would be nothing less than an outrageous insult to memory's truest friend.

With regard to the gratuitous assumption that snuff enters the lungs, I may mention that in France, "horses were made to trot a considerable distance in the clouds of dust thrown up by the wheels of carriages driven before them; they were killed directly afterwards, and not a particle of dust appeared, on the closest scrutiny to have passed beyond their nasal fossæ." Besides, snuff is, or ought to be, a vegetable powder, which is not so irritating as mineral dust.

I may be told that few persons indulge in snuff till they are past the age most prone to consumption, until they have seen 35 or 45 years. Such is often the case in the present day, but, although it renders it more difficult to prove that snuff-taking is useful in consumption, it is rather favourable to the practice itself, for a man at 40 is admitted "to be either a physician or a fool". Having seen the world for the longest portion of "his little day," and observed that snuff-taking and longevity are synonymous, like all our race, when they begin to lose their wisdom teeth, he cherishes his remnant of life more and more, as signs of decay accumulate, the mind being then at its most forcible epoch, and being in a position to please the majority, by pleasing himself, he feels at liberty to adopt a habit which he has observed has served others to make the most of what future remained to them.

In many parts, the manner of using the diffusive pleasure seems to us unique: *e.g.* an eye-witness informed me that the ladies of the South Western States of America and the West Indies, dip, *i. e.* they put the snuff into their mouths with a piece of hickory bark, previously prepared by soaking in water until it has swollen. A lady correspondent of the *New York World*, speaking of the ladies of the South and Western States, says, "from 10 years old to the close of life there is no cessation of the pleasing practice of dipping, and no attempt at concealment." Many of the common people in Norway prefer it in the same way. Highlanders, Kaffirs, and some other peoples, who like an appreciable quantity of the stimulant, feed their noses with horn or ivory spoons, as our forefathers did when the following lines were written:—

"Nor can the fingers for the task suffice,  
Their nose too greedy, not their hands too nice.  
To such a height with those has fashion grown,  
They feed their very nostrils with a spoon."

Or the ladies of 1738—

"From agate-box, the newest mode,  
Her snuff Miss Bid takes in a shell:  
A thousand times to me sh' has vow'd,  
'Tis faint, 'tis languid, has no smell."

The North American Indians, long ere the luxury was known to the Western World, took their powdered tobacco leaves from two ladles joined together, one for each nostril. Art in that direction is, however, more than thrown away on most of the lovers of the pulver-



ized weed, for the hand has its share of enjoyment in the taking of snuff; it delights to revel in the velvety feel of the rasped leaf, in the granulated particles of the whole herb, or the silken dust of the fibres, "the spirituous part of the plant." In Iceland, a country, (according to the testimony of Drs. Leared, Hjaltelin, and Schleisner) free, or nearly so, from consumption, Madame Pfeiffer tells us that, when two natives meet, courtesy requires an exchange of flasks, which they gravely use in a way to indicate keen enjoyment of the cordial. They throw back their head, insert the small end of the powder-horn used for snuff, into each nostril in succession, and pour in a couple of doses. Icelandic usage was, however, improved upon by a Devonshire gentleman, a worthy scholar of Aretæus, who, probably impressed with Earl Stanhope's extraordinary calculation that a veteran consumer of snuff, by the time he attains his sixties, will have sacrificed four years of his life to the mettlesome indulgence. To prevent, as far as possible, so much waste of valuable time, he invented a double barrelled pistol, calculated to shoot into the nostrils sufficient snuff to keep the nose in condition the whole day. After the Devonshire gentleman's expedient, we need feel little surprise at another mode of using the exotic, viz.,

#### THE PLUG.

Our strong-nerved ancestors nosed or, as it was termed, drunk their tobacco, or they snuffed it in ladlefulls, but this way of disposing of the leaf was above and beyond

either, and is more nearly allied to chewing. When in vogue, nose-hunger must have been a stern reality, requiring nothing less than cramming for its satiation. Those who so nasalized their tobacco must have been excessively eager for a sentient change, and it would seem that they sometimes were favored with more than they wished. It is recorded that the apothecary had often to be rung up, to bring a lady's maid out of hysterics, said to be brought on by stuffing her nostrils with pigtail, and lying with her head over the bed, in order to save the pillow, and allow the rheum to escape. Perhaps the idea that snuff-taking injures the sense of smell, may be a legend handed down from the time when the nose was taken such entire possession of by tobacco in substance.

Before me are numerous letters (12 of which are appended) lately received from ministers, medical men, school-masters, snuff-manufacturers, tobacconists, and old snuff-takers; also, unappropriated notes, a few of which are likewise added, sufficiently copious to extend this essay to a large volume. Prudence, however, advises me to relinquish the pen, lest an extenuated and labored achievement should remind a nervous reader of Schiller's long-drawn lullaby.

## A FEW OF THE APPOSITE NOTES SPOKEN OF.

1. Every veteran snuff-taker occasionally says witty things.
2. Among the snuff consuming races of Africa, consumption is said to be unknown.
3. It is possible that the minute and repeated stimulation of snuff may serve to sustain a weak system at par, and thus ward off consumption.
4. One ounce of snuff contains about 8 grains of nicotine, the 24th part of which may be absorbed into the system.
5. When snuff-taking was in vogue, you could judge of character by the way of taking it.
6. It has been said that Scotchmen acquire French pronunciation easily, because they snuff.
7. Snuff-taking became common in the Highlands, in consequence of the example of the chiefs, who acquired the habit at the court of France.
8. A snuff-box is invaluable to diplomats, story-tellers, commercial travellers, assurance agents. When the weather is exhausted, it is "convenient, eloquent, and conversational."
9. Every Pope has snuffed since Clement XI. Priests are said to snuff, to aid them in keeping their vows; by supplying a harmless stimulant it diverts from less creditable excitement. Let not then a garnish to the mind be despised.
10. The 50 tons of prize snuff, taken in 1702 at Cadiz and elsewhere, and sold in England for 4d. per pound, made snuff-taking common among the lower classes, as we read, they found it easy to take.
11. Drs. Thorius, Willis, Hovey, Fowler, and Messrs. Diemberbrock, Kemp, Baird, Harvey, Arcet, Duchalet, &c., testify that manufacturers, tobacconists, and their workmen escaped the Plague and Cholera.
12. Wm. A. Chatto said, "The nose is the true seat of the memory, to stimulate which, some rub it with their finger, others with soap, a few tweak it with the same view, while physicians, before snuff was "invented," rubbed up their medical experience and their noses successfully with the head of their cane.
13. Old snuff-takers—Henry Jenkins, native of Scorton, said to have lived to 169 years of age; Old Parr; Margery Scott, of Drinkfield, 120 years; Mrs. Pigg, 114; also, the four centenarians on pages 56-7; Signor Corvello, or "nosy," 100; Mr. Robson, Professor of languages, 98; Mrs. Hilliard, grandmother of correspondent, J.B., 97; Earl Powis, 92; M. Corvello, 90; of octogenerian snuff-takers, the name is legion.

## PRESCRIPTIONS.

SNUFF USEFUL FOR PREVENTING CONTAGIOUS DISEASES, COLDS,  
AND CONSUMPTION.

	Ounces.
<i>Take of Fine sweet dark Virginian leaf stemmed</i> ..	10
<i>Ohio leaf, fullest flavor, stemmed</i> .. ..	3
<i>Best Havanna</i> .. .. .	2
<i>Bells of Lily of the Valley</i> .. .. .	$\frac{1}{2}$
<i>Flowers of Mignonnette</i> .. .. .	$\frac{1}{2}$

Triturate together, by degrees, in a rosewood mortar, with a pestle of sassafrass wood, and pass the mixture through a pinhole sieve. The tobacco should be well-mellowed by years of keeping, in mass, and the flowers plucked before they have run to seed, carefully dried, and not too long kept. When the flowers of the Lily of the Valley cannot be had, 20 or 30 drops of Oil of Lavender might be used instead.

*Directions*—To be carried in a box, the hinges of which “shun the sharpest sight,” and taken at discretion.

Any manufacturer who would be at the pains to prepare this snuff would deserve a fancy price for it, as it would be valuable.

ERRHINE FOR TORPID LIVER, HEADACHE, SUDDEN LOSS OF  
HEARING FROM COLD, STUFFING OF NOSE, CERTAIN EYE  
AFFECTIONS, AND SPASM OF THE AIR-PASSAGES.

	Ounces.	Drms.
<i>Yellow Maryland Tobacco</i> .. .. .	12	0
<i>Pellitory root</i> .. .. .	2	6
<i>Euphorbium, in powder</i> .. .. .	0	2

Crush the Pellitory root in a mortar, then grind it and the tobacco in a fine coffee-mill, screen it through a coarse hair-sieve, and add the Euphorbium. One pinch, night and morning.

STERNUTATORY FOR INFLUENZA; CHOLERA; TO EXCITE RES-  
PIRATION IN THE NEARLY DROWNED, IN FAINTING PATIENTS;  
OR, TO EXPEL FOREIGN BODIES FROM THE NOSE OR WINDPIPE.

	Ounces.	Drms.
<i>Virginian or Connecticut Tobacco, largest leaf</i> ..	1	2
<i>Bells of Lily of the Valley</i> .. .. .	0	4

Grind in a mortar of camphor-wood, and add a quarter of an ounce of powdered White Helibore. This snuff is too strong for ordinary use, not even a Kendal Brown nose could enjoy it.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

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June 3rd, 1870.

Dear Sir,

Since you drew my attention, in 1869, to the immunity from consumption, enjoyed by snuff-takers, I have carefully considered the subject, and do not remember in all my practice of thirty-two years, of one snuff-taker being on my list of cases of phthisis, nor have I heard of a case from any other practitioner. I have recalled to mind a great number of old snuffers, whom I have entered on a list as they occurred to me. The number has now reached 105. There are, I have no doubt, many more, had I time to devote to recapturing them, but these will suffice for present illustration. I cannot give the precise ages of all the 105, but can with confidence assert that I have not given one a place on my list who has not reached the three-score years and ten. Three were upwards of 100, their respective ages being 102, 104, and 107, the major portion were between 70 and 80.

In conclusion, I may observe that instead of being dull and clogged-up in the head-piece, I consider, on the contrary, that snuff-takers are rather intelligent as a class.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

J. B.

Rothesay, June 10th, 1870.

Dear Doctor,

When, between one and two years ago, I first heard you make the averment that snuff-takers were not liable to consumption, I felt very much relieved. I had been myself, and some

of my friends were suspicious that I was consumptive. May it not be true that I was so, but that the great quantity of snuff consumed by me, during a period of 18 or 20 years, kept the tendency in abeyance. Notwithstanding that I was so fond of the practice, I never before had heard a word in its commendation; so I set myself to judge of the habit by its consequences, as illustrated in scores of my acquaintances. I will tell you what I know, and you shall see how far the facts support your theory. I have known very many snuffers in the counties of Dumbarton, Perth, Argyle, and Kirkcudbright, and with the exception of one young man who could take a hearty pinch of snuff, but did not carry a box, and who died at the age of 22 or 23, all are still alive or died at a great age, many of them upwards of 80. My wife's grandfather still enjoys his mixture of Taddy and Kendal Brown, in his 101st year. Whether the fact of so many of my friends being snuffers, and, also, long livers, be merely a coincidence, or whether there be any virtue in snuff, to ward off disease and prolong life, I cannot say, but, for one expected to see old age, commend to me a confirmed taker of snuff.

Such being my experience, I, of course, am a firm believer in all I have had the pleasure of hearing you say on the subject, and reading in your tersely written paper, the proof-sheets of which you have so kindly sent for my perusal.

I remain, dear doctor,

Yours most sincerely,

DUNCAN ROBERTSON.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne,

13th June, 1870.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter and proof-sheet upon snuff-taking, I beg to state my experience to you regarding your theory that snuff-takers possess an immunity from consumption. I have snuffed for the last thirty years, and during that time I have never had a headache.

In my youth I was frequently troubled with severe sore throat in the summer season, but since I took snuff have never had an attack.

I never knew any snuff-taker die of consumption, on the contrary as a general rule they were all long livers.

Being a native of Inverness-shire I can bear testimony to the above, as the population are nearly all snuffers.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours truly,

J. SUTHERLAND.

To J. C. Murray, Esq., M.D.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne,

June 18th, 1870.

Dear Sir,

With reference to the book you are publishing on snuff-taking, &c., I beg to state that I have been in the trade a great number of years, and found the most habitual snuff-takers, men that have used snuff for thirty, forty, or fifty years, live to be hale and hearty old men. A great many of my customers using from three to six ounces per week, work in the large engineering factories in this town from twelve to fourteen hours per day, are at the present time enjoying perfect health, and possessed of ruddy complexions.

I have many customers between seventy and eighty years of age who have taken snuff from their youth, they enjoy it freely, and preserve good health. I may add that they generally prefer the strongest kind, Kendal Brown, the most pungent of all snuffs.

I have remarked for many years that those who take snuff are not so liable to catch cold as those who do not take it.

I am, faithfully yours,

J. TELFER.

Liverpool, June, 24th, 1870.

To J. C. Murray, Esq., M.D.,

Dear Sir,

Since you kindly privileged me with a proof-sheet on "Snuff-taking : its utility in preventing bronchitis and consumption,"

I have devoted no little time and attention to a careful consideration of the subject, in order to be satisfied, in my own mind, with regard to its merits, before committing my opinion to paper. It is even now premature for me to give you my unalterable judgement upon your theory, as that would require prolonged observation and experience, but, so far, I think that your idea is well worth our attention, instead of, as is too apt to be the case, setting it aside as Utopian, as I felt inclined to do at first. I have named and read over your *brochure* to some medical brethren, and not a few snuff-takers, in our neighbourhood. Everyone I speak of it to, gives me more confidence and interest in the question, for they either support you with very appropriate evidence, or are unable to say more than that snuff cannot be of any service in disease of the lungs, or, if it had, it would have been found out long ere this. I know a great many aged snuff-takers, one of whom assured me that Old Parr was partial to his snuff, but you probably have a goodly list of old hands, in the indulgence, already.

The recent discovery by M. Mantegazza, that the odoriferous essences of plants has the property of ozonizing atmospheric air is, I think, very material to your case, inasmuch as the aromatic principle of tobacco must be, in a greater or less degree, possessed of the same property, and in the same proportion as it is so, will aid in preventing a snuff-taking husband contracting phthisis from his consumptive wife. This opens up the question which I see you have touched upon, that of preventing contagion from other diseases, such as fevers.

I will be glad to see the whole of your interesting article, when finished.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours truly,

S., M.D.

St. Helens, Lancashire,

July 7th, 1870.

To Dr. J. C. Murray,

Respected Sir,

Thanks for your paper on snuff-taking, which I have read over very carefully. Since I had your letter in January,



accompanying pamphlet on "The Temperaments," I have made a great many enquiries regarding the effects of snuff-taking, and have not, as yet, been able to find an instance of an accustomed snuffer dying of consumption.

The novelty of your idea concerning the curative properties of snuff, caused me, in my travels, to introduce the subject by presenting my own box, and, as you are aware, the habit of snuff-taking is anything but the exception in this county. Surely if you are in error I must have fallen in with some one who could quote a case, but I have not been able to find one where an habitual snuff-taker died a victim to the dread disease.

You might have instanced my case as one in favor of snuff-taking, as I have become confirmed in health, since I commenced to carry a snuff box.

Wishing you every success in your search after truth,

I am, dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

W. J. HALL.

A Snuff-taking County,

July 8th, 1870.

Dear Sir,

For many years I have been afraid of my chest, but dare not relieve its anxiety yet, being too young; so I have sat me down to write to you instead. I suspect it will come about some day, as I belong to a snuff-taking family. Father and mother enjoyed their snuff, as do each of my brothers, it seems beneficial to them. For my ancestors, as far back as I know anything of them, have tarried on this *mundane* scene for 80 and 90 years, and upwards. I have often heard my parents say that when they had any writing or thinking to do, nothing aided them so much as a snuff, it seemed to revive them, to brighten their ideas, and refresh their memory, and when the thread of their discourse snapt, or would not run, a pinch used to make it fast and fluent.

I should not tell tales, but you won't know who they are. In our little chapel, three or four ladies divide their attention between the sermon and snuff box. I know one lady who takes snuff for her

headache, and another for her hearing, which she nearly loses when ill of cold.

It must be a stimulating practise, for I verily believe that I could never have finished this note but for a tiny pinch furtively taken from my brother's box.

I am, &c.,

MARY.

Yorkshire,

July 11th, 1870.

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged for your paper on snuff-taking as a means of preventing consumption. It has directed my thoughts into a very novel and ingenious study. I have noted the effects of snuffing on a large number of men, and herewith furnish you with my crude ideas, which you are at liberty to add to your paper, when you bring it out for the general public, if you should deem it worthy to appear.

At first sight it appears to be trivial, but, on more mature consideration, I am inclined to grant considerable prophylactic power to the habit of snuff-taking, so far as regards phthisical persons.

I have been looking about me since reading your paper, and have noted the fact that almost all snuff-takers, both men and women, are of a healthy robust constitution.

In my district there is a large woollen manufactory, where all the processes are carried on, from the "sorting" of the raw material to the making up into cloth ready for the market, and particularly amongst the "sorters" snuff-taking is the rule. The only one amongst this class who has been consumptive was not a snuff-taker.

My observations only refer to the previous seven years, but in that period there would be on an average fifty men employed as sorters, and it is a rather singular fact that only one should have been phthisical, in a locality where consumption is very general amongst the population.

Sorting is the process of separating the fine from the course parts of the fleece, and very often is particularly dirty, large clouds of fine dust and fibrous particles floating in the atmosphere around the men.

I think (although I have not put the matter to the test of systematic observations) that snuff may be beneficial from stimulating the hair follicles, causing stronger hair to grow in the nostrils, and also thickening the mucous membrane lining the nasal passages. These effects would produce a more efficient respiration by preventing noxious particles from entering the lungs, and drying the air passing into the chest, great desiderata in dusty and humid states of the weather.

Very sincerely yours,  
W. M.

Lancashire,  
July 12th, 1870.

Dear Doctor,

I have often thought about a question you asked me some four years ago (when having a friendly pinch with you), if ever I knew a snuffer die of consumption. I have tried all I could to bring one to my mind, or find out one, and have failed to think or hear of one.

Some 17 years ago, when travelling in Preston, when cholera, small-pox, and fever were raging there, on my rounds I met with one of the ablest of the faculty that Preston could boast of, and he strongly advised me, being so much exposed by frequent calls, to get a box and snuff, as the best preventative, he knew of, against infection. I followed his advice, and have kept a box ever since, and now am a crack hand at *Kendal Brown*.

I was astonished at the great number of old women that take snuff in Bolton, Preston, Blackburn, Rochdale, and Wigan, in Lancashire, and have asked many of them why they used it. The answer, in most cases, was, it was by order of their doctor, to preserve their sight. Some of them even went as far as to say, if it had not been for the snuff, they would have been blind many years ago. One old woman, between 80 and 90, when I asked could she not give the bad habit over (to try what she would say), in real broad Lancashire she replied, "Eh fellow! I'd as leif be bout meat as bout snuff."

I must, before I close, give you my opinion about snuff, but first a pinch of the virtue-bearing "sneeshen." If all were to use

tobacco in my way, that is, by the olfactory organ, there would be fewer wan visages, and a great falling off of the nervous complaints we daily hear of.

Yours ever sincerely,

J. MITCHELL.

To J. C. Murray, Esq., M.D.

Dumfriesshire, July 18th, 1870.

Dr. Murray,

Sir,

In accordance with your request, in January last, I have been looking around me, and taking notes upon Snuff, and those who use it. I now forward you the same.

[Here follow two pages of excellent and satisfactory notes, which include the names of a few local celebrities in the West of Dumfriesshire, who enjoy the diffusive pleasure, the sum of which is that, in the district indicated, snuff-takers are healthy and long lived.]

When in the Queen of the South, I asked your question of some of the leading medical men there, taken by surprise, they could not say, but they each agreed that a snuffer was not a likely subject for consumption, and that they had not seen any die of that disease, who did snuff.

In conclusion, I beg to add (although I do not know whether it be material) that the many names now given to the malady seem to indicate that it is more frequent, in the present day, than when snuff-taking was the rule instead of the exception.

I am, yours, &c.,

J.

Plymouth, July 20th, 1870.

My dear Sir,

Since the time you first spoke to me, some 18 months ago, of snuff-taking as being prophylactic of consumption, &c., I

have directed my attention to discover, if possible, how far your theory can be borne out. In the first place, I may mention, however, that it has excited some discussion among the profession here, for I find that medical men, who have thought it over, since seeing the notice of it in *The British Medical Journal*, are inclined to admit, from past personal experience or otherwise, that there must be some truth in it. So far as I am myself concerned, I have every reason to believe (from cases I can remember) that, if it does not act as a curative agent, it certainly does act or appears to have acted, as a prophylactic. If further experience should prove that your conclusions are correct, you will well deserve the hearty thanks of the public for taking the first step in changing medicine from an unpleasant and repulsive *necessity* to be an enjoyable *luxury*.

I am, yours, &c.,

MEDICUS.

N.B.—A patient of mine, who has been cured of chronic ophthalmia, by the agency of snuff, intends writing you in a few days.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, July 28th, 1870.

Dear Doctor,

I am glad that your work on "Snuff-Taking, &c." is likely to be appreciated, especially amongst those who have tried the novel remedy. I have, on several occasions, had a fair opportunity of experimenting on myself, and, however, sceptical I may have been at first, I can now bear witness to the beneficial effects of snuff—for instance, in preventing or dispelling catarrh, &c. When traveling, I have often caught severe colds, but a good, strong pinch soon restored warmth and circulation. I have also reason to believe the practice is useful in chest and bronchial affections.

Having known you intimately for many years, I have had opportunities of seeing your valuable experiments in the development of ozone by the aroma of tobacco powder, a clever extension of the theory of M. Mantegazza, and for which you deserve the thanks of all who may peruse your ably written book. I am acquainted with a number of cases (including some of your patients) where snuff has been useful.

Yours sincerely,

R. J.

To J. C. Murray, Esq., M.D.

36, Hamilton Terrace,  
St. John's Wood, London.

Dear Sir,

I have purchased and read, with much interest and pleasure, your pamphlet, on "Snuff-Taking, its utility in preventing Bronchitis and Consumption." Inviting, as you do, the expression of opinion and the communication of individual experience, I take, therefore, the liberty of writing to you, and giving you mine, as I think the results I have to mention are strongly confirmatory of your theory.

I have been a regular though moderate smoker for upwards of 30 years, that is always having my pipe or cigar the last thing at night, and (when my busy life will allow me) a short smoke after dinner; but it was not till 12 years ago that I also acquired the habit of carrying a snuff-box on all occasions. The origin of my doing so was as follows. The only malady I have ever been subject to has been neuralgia in the head, of which, in former years, I used to have most severe attacks. In 1858, in consequence of a series of domestic bereavements, I had a fearful attack of that agonizing complaint. A Brahmin pupil of mine, Mr. G. M. Tagore, then Professor of Hindoo Law at University College, London, hearing of my illness called on me, and begged me to try the effects of a marvellous Indian snuff, the secret of which had been in the possession of the Tagore family for generations. He left me the box and the effects were truly marvellous, as my Brahmin friend assured me would be the case. Before the day was over every trace of the neuralgia had vanished, and from that time to the present I have never had a return of the pain from which I used to suffer so intensely. This Indian snuff is a very peculiar one, a delicate brown in colour, so fine in grain as to be almost an impalpable powder, and exhaling a very strong perfume of camphor. I am occasionally dipping my finger into it while writing this letter. If you like I will enclose you a small quantity (in an envelope) that you may see what you can make of it.

As regards snuff-taking securing an immunity against consumption, &c., I never heard of the theory being broached till I read your little work; but though exposed to constant changes of temperature, passing from crowded rooms, where I have been lecturing or reading, into the cold night-air, and never wrapping up either throat

or chest, yet I never know what it is to suffer from the slightest symptom of cough, cold, sore throat, or hoarseness. And as for the allegation of snuff injuring the voice, I quite agree with you it has had no injurious effect on mine.

In a medical point of view, it may be interesting to you for me to mention that, in the last 12 years, I have had the affliction of losing two most dear wives, from that scourge of our age and country—consumption. Throughout their long and wasting illnesses, I was in constant attendance upon them, and even slept with them up to the last, but, as I said before, I have never had the smallest symptom of chest or throat disease, though prior to being introduced to snuff by my Indian friend, I was very liable in the winter to colds in the head and hoarseness. I now possess robust health, energy, and vigour.

With many apologies for intruding so long upon your time and attention,

I am, dear Sir,  
Yours faithfully,

September 14th, 1870.

CHARLES J. PLUMPTRE.

Mosley Street, Newcastle, 17th Sept., 1870.

Sir,

I have been requested by a friend to state the following case in regard to snuff-taking. When a child, through the negligence of a nurse, I fell out of a cart, injuring my back and nearly bled to death. The bleeding continued, more or less, until manhood, when it came on regularly every month, gushing out in a stream. Advice was taken, and many things tried without effect. At last, I was advised to consult Dr. Watt, of Newdeer, Aberdeenshire, who told me that he knew a case identical to mine, when last at Paris, which was cured by taking snuff. This I have practiced for 30 years, and have not since had a return of bleeding at the nose.

Many consider all narcotics injurious to health, but I do not think that snuff will shorten life, as both my grandfathers lived and enjoyed good health up to the ages of 91 and 99 years, and both were moderate snuff-takers.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,  
ANGUS McLEOD.