

A practical treatise on the gonorrhoea : recommending the use of injection, as the most speedy and efficacious method of cure : to which are added, letters from several gentlemen of the faculty, approving the author's new mode of administering mercury / by P. Clare.

Contributors

Clare, Peter, 1738-1786.
Royal College of Surgeons of England

Publication/Creation

London : Printed for the author, DCCLXXXIV [i.e. 1784]

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/x8xsbest>

Provider

Royal College of Surgeons

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by The Royal College of Surgeons of England. The original may be consulted at The Royal College of Surgeons of England. where the originals may be consulted. This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.

**wellcome
collection**

Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>





T. Bartsch del. et sculp. 1785

M^r CLARE.

7. 1302

A

PRACTICAL TREATISE

ON THE

GONORRHOEA;

RECOMMENDING THE

USE OF INJECTION,

AS THE MOST

Speedy and efficacious METHOD of CURE:

To which are added,

LETTERS

FROM SEVERAL

GENTLEMEN of the FACULTY,

APPROVING

The Author's New Mode of administering Mercury.

By P. CLARE, SURGEON.

“ Non mihi sed rationi.”



THE FOURTH EDITION.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

DCCLXXXIV.

1852

PROBATION DEPARTMENT

JOHN R. H. O'NEILL

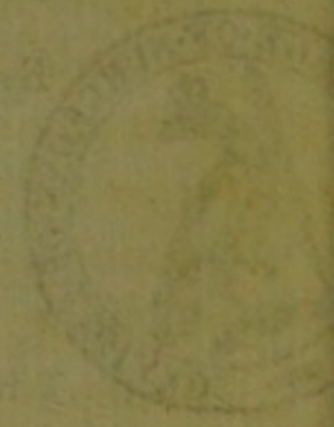
OFFICE OF PROBATION

NEW YORK

OFFICE OF PROBATION

NEW YORK

NEW YORK



NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

P R E F A C E.

AFTER great improvements, and repeated trials by different practitioners this mode of Absorption has happily prevailed, and is established in the good opinion of mankind, notwithstanding it met with great opposition at first, from some leading men in the profession. Considering the direful mischiefs occasioned by the improper use of mercury for several ages, it seemed rather extraordinary that a method, founded on such different principles from those which had prevailed, and withal so favourable to the constitution, should have been coldly received by any Gentlemen of the faculty. I think myself under the highest obligations to those candid Medical Correspondents, who, with an eye to the general welfare, and with a spirit of true philanthropy, voluntarily appeared as advocates in a cause they conceived a good opinion of, and which is now confirmed to them by a series of their own successful experience. The history of all ages, however, shews, that improvements of every kind are commonly slow in their advances, owing to the different views and interests of mankind.

The practice of inoculation for the small pox has been much retarded in its progress, by those
who

(particularly those in a saline form,) for disorders of various kinds, have been applied to the cuticular surfaces of the mouth, and were absorbed with the happiest success.

“ Hoc ore *absorpto* fugiant pallorque situsque,”

“ Membraque luxuriant.” —————

We commonly look up to the Hospita practitioners* and publick Lecturers for the best modes of medical practice; what then must we think of these our Guides, when we see and hear them labour to mislead and impress the tender minds of their pupils, with an Idea of the advantages of the old methods, when it is known and lamented, that many poor unfortunate people perish through the great abuse of mercury in their hospitals.

“ *Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.*”

Dr. KIRKLAND wisely observes, that,—
“ the use of *large quantities* of mercury, in the cure of siphylis, is perfectly unnecessary, always injurious, and I do believe it has killed multitudes, and destroyed the health of millions. I hope to see the horrid practice of daubing with loads of extinguished quicksilver, laid aside, and I mean to assist in expunging a method founded in erroneous principles.”

* Dr. Home, King's Professor at Edinburgh, instituted a thorough enquiry into this mode of practice, in the Infirmary there; and the result of the experiments the Doctor informs me, proved greatly in its favour. They are intended speedily for publication in a work of the Doctor's, which is said to be ready for the press. To the honour of Scotland, it is admitted, that their zeal for improving medical knowledge exceeds that of every other country.

What can be more shocking to the feelings of humanity, than to behold young and old persons of both sexes, rubbing themselves with mercurial ointment, before an intense fire, till they drop with fatigue, the sweat pouring down them in a continued stream! with face and head vehemently swelled, and wringing hands, they solicit relief, but all in vain! Each day brings a repetition of their bitter woe; bitter indeed, when we reflect that it is unnecessary, and not to be justified on any ground or principle.— Nature shrinks with horror at the misery of the flogged offending soldier; yet here necessity is a plea for such rigour. But, to salivate and torture, for a mere scratch, which is too often the Case, whether thro' gross ignorance or wanton cruelty, is a crime of the deepest complexion; and however it may be overlooked here, will surely meet with punishment, in a world of Retribution, at the Throne of never failing justice and mercy.

*Chancery-lane,
May the 1st:*

Explanation of the *PLATE*.

Fig. 1. Is meant to shew the salivary glands, for which purpose the integuments are removed from the head and face.

- a* The parotid gland.
- b* A not uncommon straggling portion of the same gland, with its own little duct, which is seen joining.
- c* The parotid duct; this last opens upon the inside of the mouth, as at *e* in Fig. 3.
- d* The maxillary gland.
- e* The sublingual gland, drawn a little down to bring it into view.
- f* A bristle, supposed to be in the parotid duct, shewing its direction.
- g* A ditto in the duct of the maxillary gland shewing ditto.

Fig. 2. Shews the outside of the lips stripped of its cuticular covering.

- a* The villi, (or packets of elongated blood vessels, absorbents and nerves) here exceedingly long.

Fig. 3. Exhibits so much of the inside of the mouth as is upon the outside of the teeth and alveolar processes.

- a* The cut edge of the cutis, or true skin.
- b* The fat, or adipose membrane.
- c* The villous membrane, or lining of the mouth, stripped of its cuticular covering.
- d* The villi, as at *a* Fig. 2. but shorter.
- e e* Bristles in the ducts of the parotids, at their opening into the mouth.

Fig. 2.

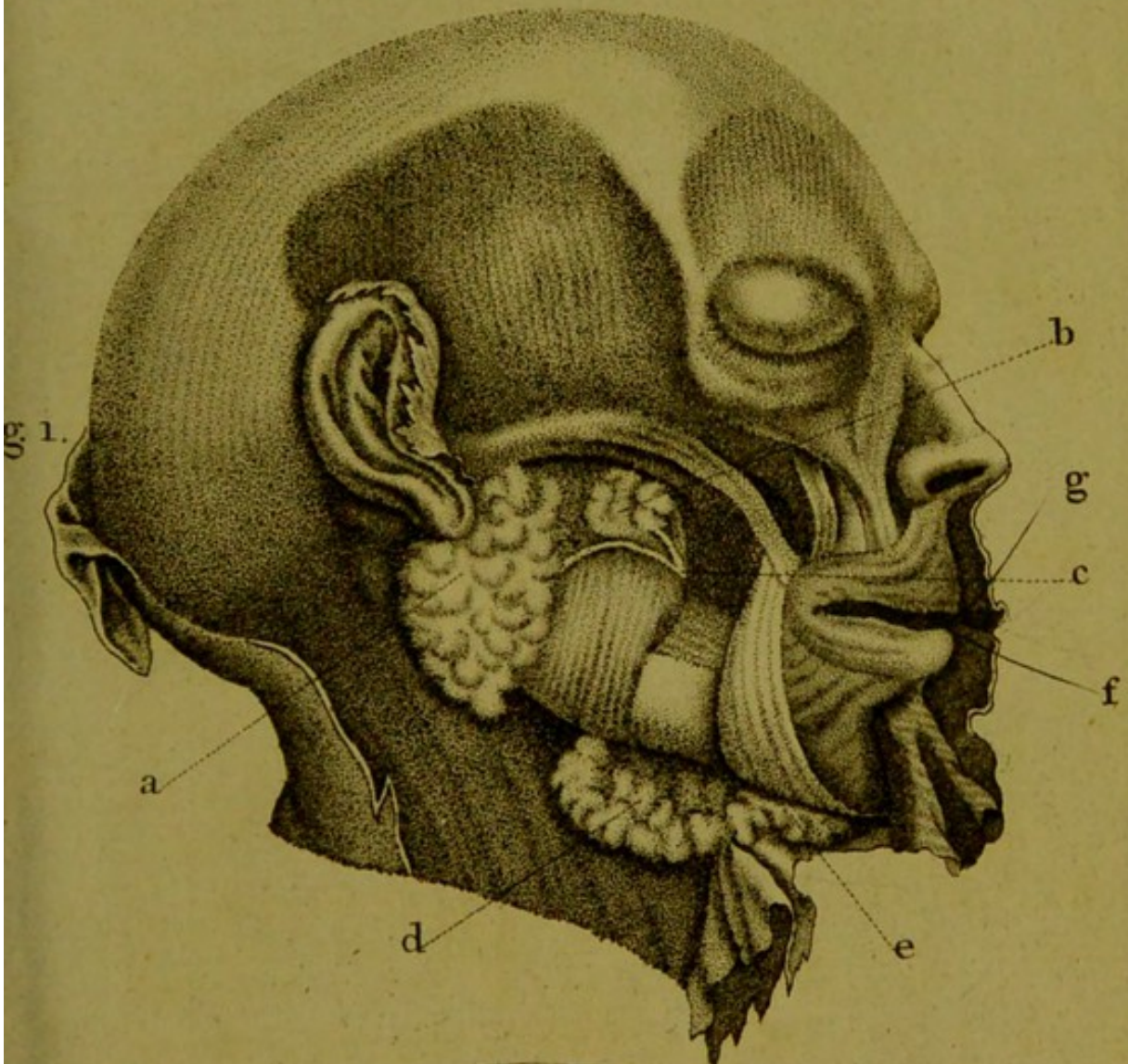
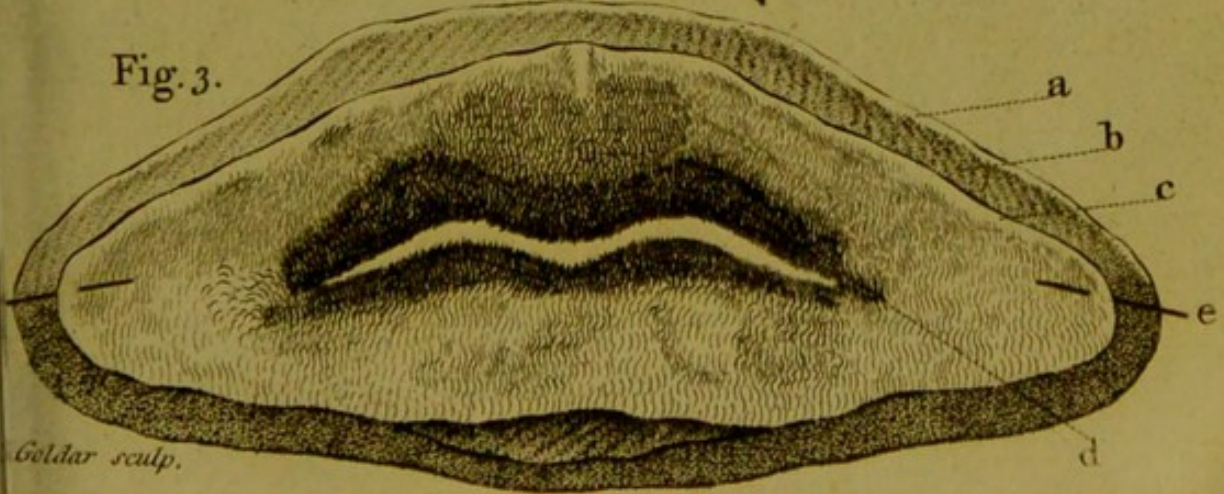
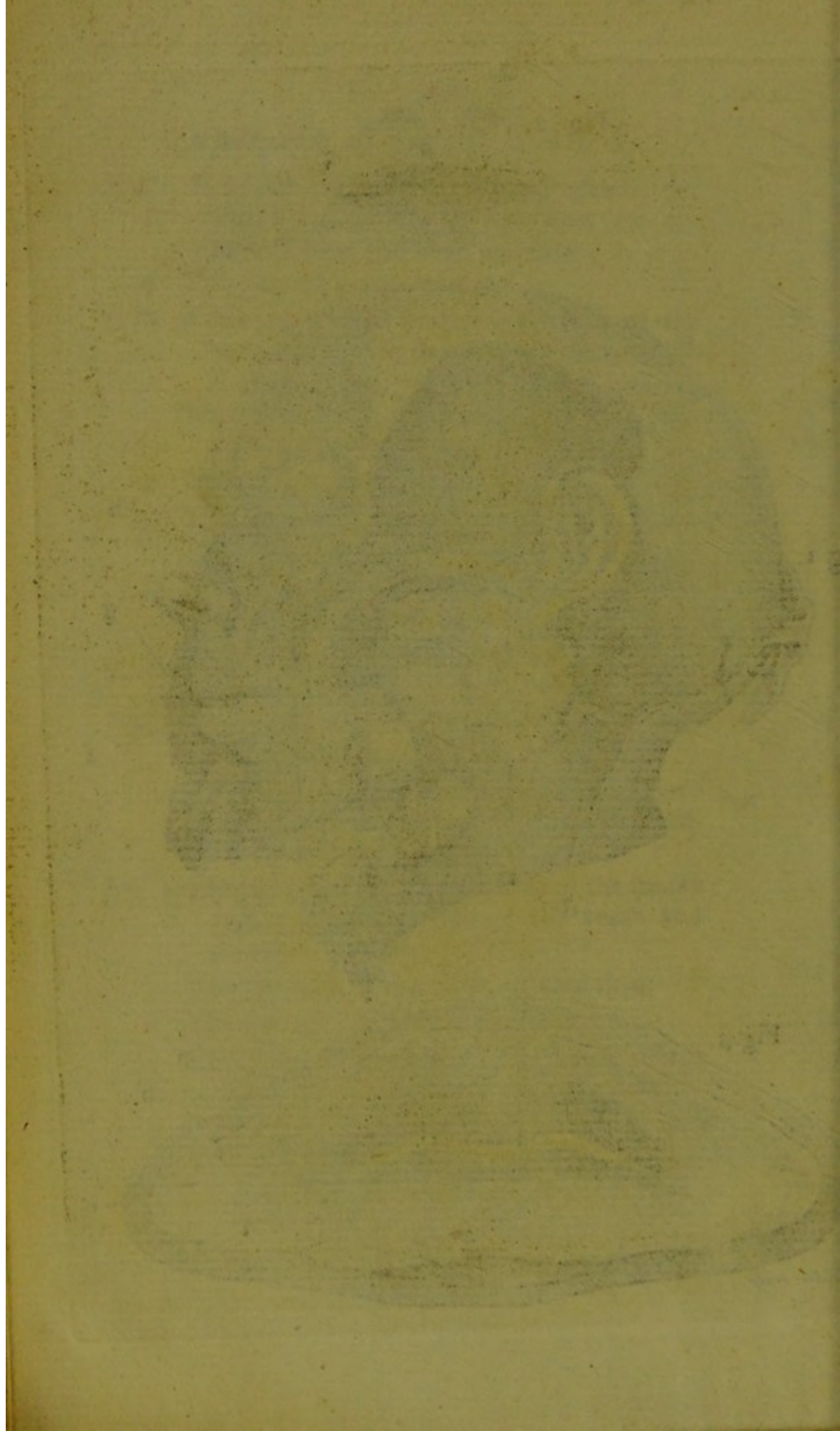
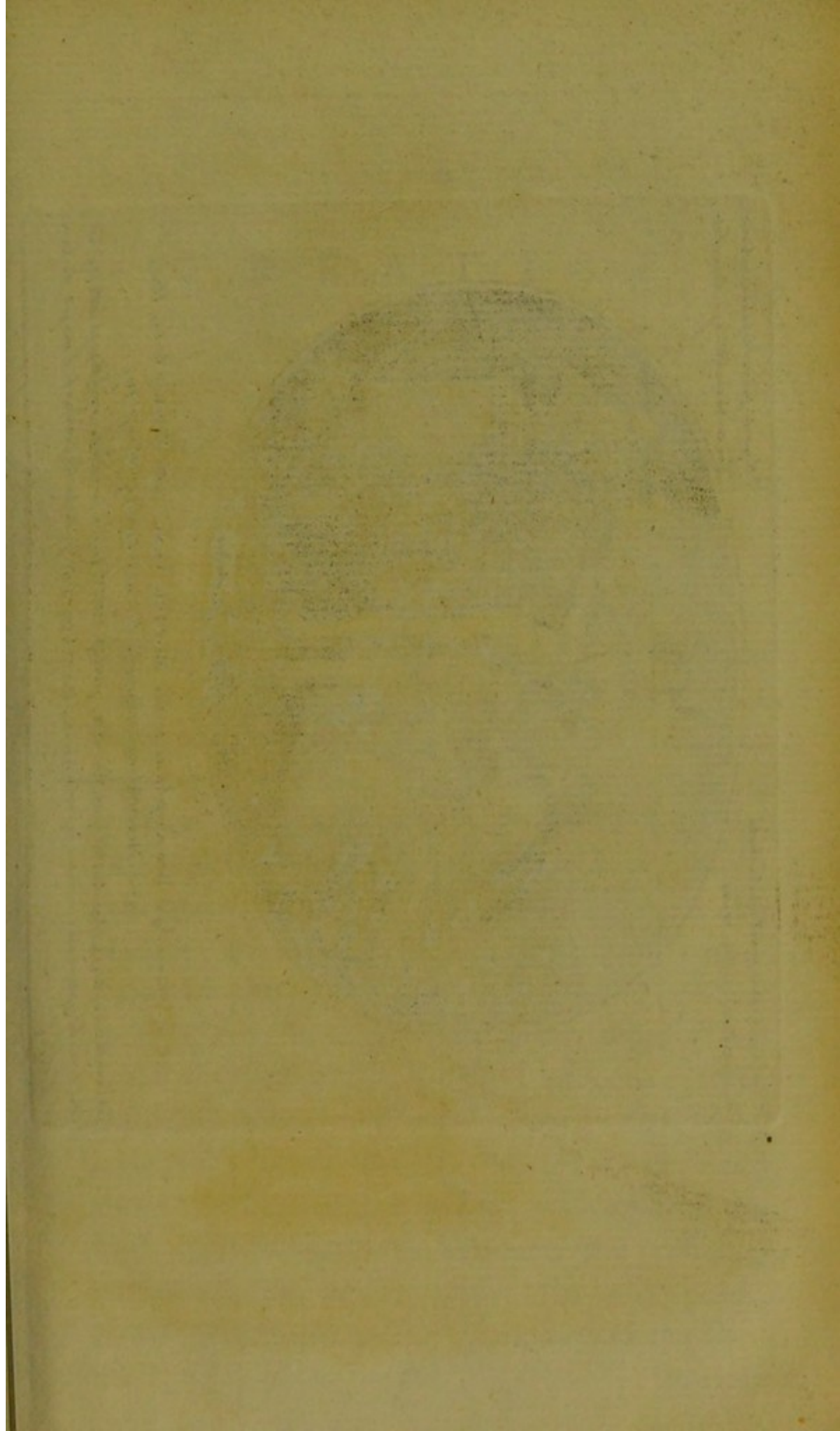


Fig. 3.



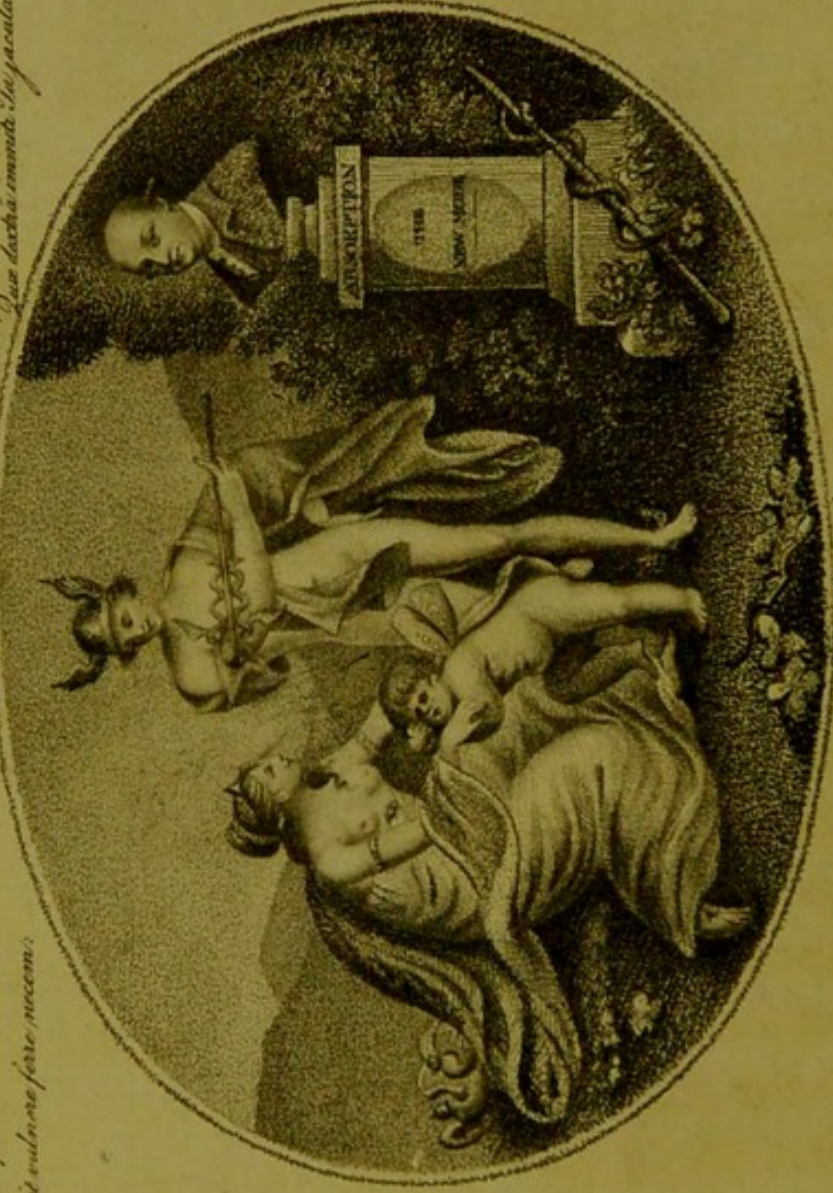
Goldar sculp.





*Alqueantibus spargant libralia spicula mortis,
 'Dux dextra' inmisit. In paralaris, Amor!*

*Dum Deos, si parare tantillus oculous hostis
 'Cuiquo possit vulnere ferre, nocem:*



*Cupid stung by a Bee complains to his MOTHER, VENUS calls Mercury to his Aid,
 (and Mercury recommends the new mode of Absorption.*

*'The small is the sting, yet how dreadful y pain, Οιδωα, μητερ, εεπεν, 'Thou too art a Bee, and though little thy dart,
 'Ah! cease, she replies with a smile, to complain, Οιδωα, καπε ο νηστωδ, 'Get deep is the poison, which stings to the heart.'*

A

T R E A T I S E

O N T H E

G O N O R R H O E A.

THE part principally affected by the Gonorrhœa is the penis, which consists of three parts; two of these are called corpora cavernosa, and lie on each side, and there is a third, situated underneath, named corpus spongiosum urethræ, consisting of the bulb and membranous part, continued on to the bladder, and terminating at the other extremity, in the corona, or glans penis. The urethra has three glands, which were discovered by *Cowper*, and called mucous glands, from the tenacity of the liquor which they separate. There are also two (or rather one) about the size of a nutmeg, which lie at the neck of the bladder, between the vesiculæ feminales and penis, under the ossa pubis, almost within the pelvis of the abdomen; they

A

separate

separate a limpid glutinous humour, which is carried into the urethra by several ducts, which enter near those of the prostatae. The two first of *Cowper's* glands are about the bigness of a French bean, of a depressed oval figure, and a yellowish colour like the prostatae, being on each side the bulb of the urethra, a little above it. Their excretory ducts arise from the internal surface, next the inner membrane of the urethra, into which they open a little lower by two distinct orifices, just below the curvature of the ossa pubis in perinaeo, where they discharge a transparent viscidous liquor. The third mucous gland is small, conglobate, and yellowish, like the former, but somewhat less, situated above the angle of the flexure of the urethra, under the ossa pubis, in the perinaeum, near the anus: it has two excretory ducts, which enter the urethra obliquely, a quarter of an inch below the two former, and discharge a liquor like them both in colour and consistence.

The seat of the Gonorrhœa in women is the vagina, which is affected with a discharge like that of the urethra in men. It lies between the bladder and intestinum rectum, and has rugæ, under which are small glands, whose excretory ducts are called lacunæ.

These

These glands separate a mucilaginous slimy liquor to lubricate the vagina, and are the seat of the Gonorrhœa in this sex, as the glands in the urethra are in the male. The meatus urinaris being a very short passage, the heat and scalding is consequently much less than in the men.

“ A Gonorrhœa from the urethra in a man,
 “ begins with an uneasiness about the parts
 “ of generation, together with an appearance
 “ of a little whitish matter, about the orifice
 “ of the urethra, a little swelling and some-
 “ times redness there, and a slight pungency
 “ upon the evacuation of urine. The whitish
 “ matter soon increases in quantity, the in-
 “ flammation about the end of the urethra
 “ becomes more evident, and for the most
 “ part there is now a tension and hardness
 “ through the whole of it, a swelling of the
 “ lacunæ, and a sensation of stricture in the
 “ penis, particularly on erection. The matter
 “ still increases, flows out, and grows thinner,
 “ loses all its adhesiveness, and is of a yellow,
 “ or greenish colour. There is now always
 “ a redness about the end of the canal; often
 “ a pain from the distention of the urethra,
 “ during the evacuation of urine, and a much
 “ severer towards the orifice, from its stimulus,

“ with an increase of the redness just after it
 “ is evacuated. The inflammation prevents
 “ the extension of the urethra in erection, so
 “ that the penis is at that time curved down-
 “ wards with great pain, which is increased if
 “ it be raised towards the belly, and the sti-
 “ mulus occasions it often to be erected, espe-
 “ cially when warm in bed*.”

It is generally esteemed good practice on this occasion to give Nitre in considerable quantity, a purging electuary, pill, or salts, and to take blood freely from the patient; also to direct large quantities of diluting liquors, and further to recommend a strict regimen and abstinence from particular meats, vegetables, and strong liquors. The question is, are such medicines and restriction necessary? In my humble opinion they are not; and they appear, upon the whole, to do more harm than good, as I shall endeavour to demonstrate from the experience of those who are well qualified to give an opinion in a matter of this kind, and also from my own observation and practice.

Dr. Cullen remarks, “ that purgatives not only inflame the rectum, but also extend their irritation to the urethra.” May not chordee

* Dr. Ferdyce's Elements of Physic,

and priapism then often be attributed to this cause?

Dr. *Fordyce* recommends “increasing the secretion a little, by such gentle purgatives as procure only two or three evacuations a day.”—But who can ensure his patient two or three stools only in a day? The intestines being once put into motion, will not accommodate themselves exactly to our wish or convenience. Happily for the patient, it is certain that even gentle purging may be dispensed with on these occasions.

He adds, “that severe purging often augments the inflammatory symptoms, brings on strangury and exulcerations, gives occasion to inflammation of the testicles, and other neighbouring parts, or it stops the running before the infection is washed off, and the Gonorrhœa either returns in a few days, or exulcerations take place.”

The Doctor further observes, “that long continued purging is apt to weaken the stomach and intestines, to hurt the digestion, to produce obstinate gleans, and hypochondriacal symptoms, particularly in irritable or melancholic habits.”

Many more authorities might be adduced in proof of the bad effects of a course of purgatives

gatives in these cases, which are generally of considerable duration, when treated in this manner. Neither are antiphlogistic remedies to be depended upon, as they sometimes produce the very contrary effect to what was expected from them: amongst the first of these is nitre, in inflammatory disorders. Dr. *Lewis*, a late writer of no small credit, reckons, that *Nitre* often gives relief in stranguries, and heat of urine, proceeding either from a simple or a venereal taint; and indeed the greatest part of practitioners have always given it, and still continue to give it in the venereal *ardor urinae*.

“ This practice, however, says Dr. *Hope* in
 “ his lectures on the *Materia Medica*, I am
 “ apt to believe has taken its rise from the
 “ name of *ardor* having always been given to
 “ the pain in evacuating the urine, during the
 “ time of a venereal inflammation of the
 “ urethra, and the name and virtues of a
 “ cooler, having always been attributed to
 “ this salt. But it is certain that the urine
 “ passed during the time of a venereal in-
 “ flammation is now warmer than at other times,
 “ and therefore to prescribe a cooler to allay
 “ the heat of it, is absurd: and I am per-
 “ suaded, that on a free and candid examina-
 “ tion of this matter, it will be found, that
 “ nitre

“ nitre has not the smallest power of alleviat-
 “ ing the pain which is then felt; for I have
 “ given it in all the different stages of this
 “ disease, in small and in large doses; but
 “ from the sole use of it in a great number of
 “ trials, have never been able to observe that
 “ it afforded the least relief. Nor, when we
 “ consider the cause of that pain, and the
 “ effects of nitre, have we any reason to ex-
 “ pect it; for the pain certainly proceeds from
 “ the acrid salts in the urine, stimulating the
 “ inflamed or excoriated urethra; and a so-
 “ lution of nitre applied to any excoriated
 “ part always gives considerable pain. Ex-
 “ periments assure us, that on taking nitre
 “ into the stomach, the urine becomes im-
 “ pregnated with it. The larger therefore
 “ the doses are, the stronger will this im-
 “ pregnation be, and the greater stimulus
 “ added to the urine; so that we may sensibly
 “ conclude, that this salt will rather augment
 “ than diminish the pain in evacuating it. The
 “ Doctor further remarks, that there are many
 “ weak and delicate stomachs, which cannot
 “ bear the cold it produces, and others, in
 “ whom it always creates sickness and nau-
 “ sea.”

Besides

Besides the disagreeable circumstance of taking great quantities of nauseous medicines, we find there is the greatest uncertainty as to their real effects on the diseases they are intended to remove. A powder, or medicine of any kind, applied to blood in a basin, may visibly affect that fluid, and render it thin or thick; yet being taken into the stomach, and possibly from thence into the circulation, it may have a very different effect on the circulating fluids, or perhaps none, having undergone a material alteration in its course.

A late celebrated Lecturer on the Materia Medica, discoursing with his pupils on the powerful operations of mucilaginous medicines in the alleviation of the pain arising from the stone in the bladder, remarked, that such medicines were extremely useful where the stone was of the mulberry kind, and apt to vellicate the coats of the bladder. He told them the ropy mucilage would envelope the stone, and make a uniformly smooth surface, entirely depriving it of its asperities, and consequently of its power of hurting the bladder.

It is difficult for one conversant with the mechanism of the human body, and the operations of medicine, to conceive, that a mucilage given by the mouth, will arrive at the
bladder

bladder in that state. We are certain that particular remedies will stimulate particular parts: balsam of capivi, for instance, being absorbed, is known to affect the kidneys and bladder, by the strong odour it imparts to the urine; but we do not find this, or any other medicine, except quicksilver, will pass off in the same form in which it is administered by the mouth. This balsam is very much esteemed for its great virtues, particularly in certain stages of the Gonorrhœa, but it is so very disagreeable, on account of its oily and bitter quality, as well as its smell, that some patients are soon disgusted with it, and others will not be prevailed upon to take it; we cannot therefore, think it strange, that many gentlemen should prefer injections to all other means, which do not appear to produce effects in any degree equal to the trouble which attends them. It must be acknowledged that patients often suffer more from the remedy than the disorder; they are often more emaciated, weak, and pallid in their countenance (circumstances which frequently lead to disagreeable discoveries), from the operations of purgatives in the space of one week, than they would have been in a month, if there had

been no attempt made to check the progress of this disorder.

There are many people who have not leisure to pursue the several directions and prescriptions given by practitioners; and if they could find time, they would have but little inclination to undergo so much fatigue and trouble. Such tedious processes are very ill contrived for the multitude, who must be, *and are daily cured by means much more easy, expeditious, and quite as effectual*; and if one class of men are cured in this manner, why should not all enjoy the same benefit?

I have asserted, that a regimen, or particular diet, is not necessary in the cure of the Gonorrhœa, when treated in the manner here recommended. Some have asked, if the disorder is not inflammatory, and if living low is not indispensibly necessary, in every complaint of this kind? It may be said in reply, that this is a local inflammation, which yields at once to a cooling detergent liquid, applied to the part; whilst internal medicines are commonly slow and uncertain in removing it*.

* Dr. Hugh Smith, who is an advocate for vitriolic injections, asserts, "That a Gonorrhœa, if taken in the beginning, may generally be cured in a fortnight, without any injury to the constitution, or any ill effects whatsoever, Formulæ Medicamentorum."

When mercury does not pass into the stomach, there is no occasion to enjoin restrictions with respect to diet, since no disagreement can then happen; patients may live in the same manner as at other times, only avoiding excess.

I have met with the greatest success in the cure of this complaint from vitriolic injections, and find they answer much better than those prepared of mercury, which deposit a considerable sediment, and being conveyed into the urethra, excite irritation and pain in that tender passage.

The injection should be applied cold, rather than warm*, as cold braces, and warmth relaxes. I find it often completes the cure in much less than a fortnight, the time mentioned by Dr. Smith.

The great objection to this sort of practice is raised on the supposition that *Injections* are apt to produce *stricture* in the urinary passage. This idea, I apprehend, is not well founded; having enquired of many different people who have been troubled with *strictures*, if they had used injections for the cure, and

* If the injection causes any more than a slight sensation of smart or pain in the passage, it is evidently too much impregnated with vitriol, and the solution must be made weaker, as the irritation of the liquor would increase the symptoms instead of diminishing them.

was generally answered in the negative.—I am much inclined to think with Dr. *For-
dyce*, “ That when a *gonorrhœa* continues long,
it sometimes produces a *stricture* in the part*.”
Inflammation is naturally disposed to produce
contraction and *stricture* in the different fac-
culi and passages of the body, as well as in the
urethra: therefore we may conclude, that
evils are often attributed to *Injections* †, which
in fact owe their origin to other causes ‡.
It is the general opinion, that small doses of
mercury ought to accompany the *Injection*.
See *Fordyce*, *Saunders*, *Smith*, and others.—
Conformably to this idea, I give a grain of
mercurial powder, and apply it to the cuticu-
lar surfaces of the lips, or the tongue, and at
the same time make use of the *vitriolic*, in
preference to every other *Injection*. Though
I have made repeated trials of several, I know

* The same gentleman justly observes, that omitting the *injection*
once or twice will often make it fail of curing, when it would have
otherwise produced that effect †. He likewise remarks, that patients
treated in this manner, are less liable to inflammation of the testicles,
or of the glands in the groin (or to *chancres*) or *strictures*. These
observations are certainly founded on fact.

† If the *Injection* should not produce the desired effect, it will be
right to enquire if the urine passes freely, and whether it divides into
two streams, or more; or whether it comes out twisted, like a cork-
screw. In these cases, it is not likely the *Injection* should effect its
purpose, being unable to pass: recourse must therefore be had to the
Bougie to restore the passage to its natural state.

‡ If the long duration of this distemper produces strictures and
obstructions, then what removes the disorder quickly, must undoubt-
edly prevent the above evils, instead of causing them.

of no other which would remove the disorder in twice the time which this does; but there are some that will not succeed, and rather aggravate the symptoms.

It is now proved by a repetition of ingenious experiments, and generally admitted, that the discharge in a *Gonorrhœa* proceeding from the *urethra*, is not *pus*, but *mucus*. *Pus* is the matter which proceeds from wounds and ulcers, but *mucus* comes from surfaces not ulcerated, though sometimes inflamed. The late Dr. *Hunter* often dissected the *urethra* of persons who died, having the *Gonorrhœa* at that time, but he never discovered any ulcer in the passage.

Mucus is, in itself, an innocent, mild fluid, but capable of acquiring virulence and acrimony from contagious infection. The *Gonorrhœa* is an increased and virulent discharge from the *mucous* glands of the urinary passage. *Mucus*, when untainted, is transparent like the white of an egg, appears sometimes as a drop at the orifice of the *urethra*, next the glands, is of a mucilaginous viscosity, and its use is to sheath, and defend the passage from the irritating salts conveyed in the urine. It resembles the fluid in the eye, which is secreted in small quantity, but when the lachry-

mal gland is stimulated by grief, dust, or other offending substances, the discharge becomes copious, and sometimes acrid*.

When the mucous membrane of the nose is stimulated by a violent cold, or other cause, we often see an extraordinary quantity of discharge from that organ; yet no one suspects the existence of any ulcers there; and I have often observed, that the discoloured mucus of that part bears so strong a resemblance to the virulent discharge in the gonorrhœa, that it has often perplexed persons conversant in these matters to distinguish two handkerchiefs, or other linen, when stained with the respective mucus. Either of these fluids having acquired acrimony will inflame, and sometimes slightly excoriate irritable nervous membranes. These excoriations generally heal of themselves, and when they do not, no one hesitates to apply repellent and healing medicines to the part,

* *Darwin* observes, in his experiments on pus and mucus, "That whenever the secretion of any fluid is increased, there is, at the same time, an increased heat in the part." The same gentleman observes, that "the catarrhal humour from the nostrils of some who ride in frosty weather, and the tears which run down the cheeks of those who have an obstruction of the puncta lachrymalia, are easily distinguished from others, by their abounding in ammoniacal or muriatic salts, whence they inflame the circumjacent skin: thus in the catarrh, the upper lip becomes red and swelled from the acrimony of the mucus, and patients complain of the saltness of its taste. The eyes and cheeks are red with the corrosive tears, and ichor of some herpetic eruptions erodes far and wide the contiguous parts, and is pungently salt to the taste, as some patients have informed him."

without even the smallest suspicion of any bad consequence. With ulcers the case is very different, there being the greatest reason to apprehend danger from the absorption of matter into the circulation. Writers of good credit assert, that a drop of acrid pus, absorbed into the blood, affects all the fluids, stimulates the vessels, and is capable of producing violent disorders, such as putrid fevers, &c. Impressed with such a belief, no thinking man, in this, or any age, would adopt a practice at once so irrational and dangerous: but as this discharge is merely mucus, and has no concern with the system, or animal œconomy, it may be safely washed away, like any other *sordes*, or filth from the surfaces of the body.

Injection is not only far more expeditious in producing its effects, but also appears, on a due comparison, to possess another advantage, that of being a more cleanly, safe, and agreeable method of cure, than any other.

The candid Dr. Buchan is of opinion, “ that injections made with the white vitriol, are both most safe and efficacious. Although it is now very common to cure the *Gonorrhœa* by astringent injections, there are still many practitioners, who do not approve this mode of practice. I can, however, from much experience
assert,

assert, that it is both the most easy, elegant, and efficacious method of cure; and that any bad consequences arising from it, must be owing to the ignorance or misconduct of the practitioner himself, and not to the remedy.*

“ This disorder, if taken in the beginning, may be cured with ease and safety in a few days, by means of Injection; but Quacks, and ignorant pretenders to physic, make it their business to delay the cure as long as they can, for their own lucrative views. This they give the specious pretence of safety to, and falsely persuade ignorant patients, how dangerous it is to remove the disorder in a short time; while the greater appearance of opulence a man makes to such sort of practitioners, the longer his cure is protracted †.”

I have only to add, in this place, that I am confirmed, more and more, in the use of Injections, from my own experience, and from the testimony of others.

* Vide Domestic Medicine, eighth edition, corrected and enlarged.

† See Dr. Proflly's *easy method*, &c. which I have abridged, and where many weighty arguments may be found in favour of Injection.
— To be had of Mr. Cadell. Also A NEW EDITION of *Observations on the Nature and Cure of Abscesses, and of Wounds in general*.

On the common Methods of using Mercury.

A *Lues* is a venereal infection in the mass of blood; and is to be cured by throwing a sufficient quantity of mercury into the system to expel it.

The usual methods for accomplishing this, are by pills, boluses, and draughts, and also by outward application of mercurial ointment.

The first three are conveyed by the mouth into the stomach, where the mercury is, in part, absorbed by the lymphatic vessels of that organ, and conveyed into the blood; also by the same vessels in the intestines, and frequently the greatest portion of it escapes out of the body by this outlet, having first irritated the animal œconomy throughout the whole of the canal.

Mercury may be prevented from passing downwards by joining *opium* with it, which takes off its stimulus, and generally prevents its purgative effects; but this often creates sickness and reaching, and shakes the whole nervous system.

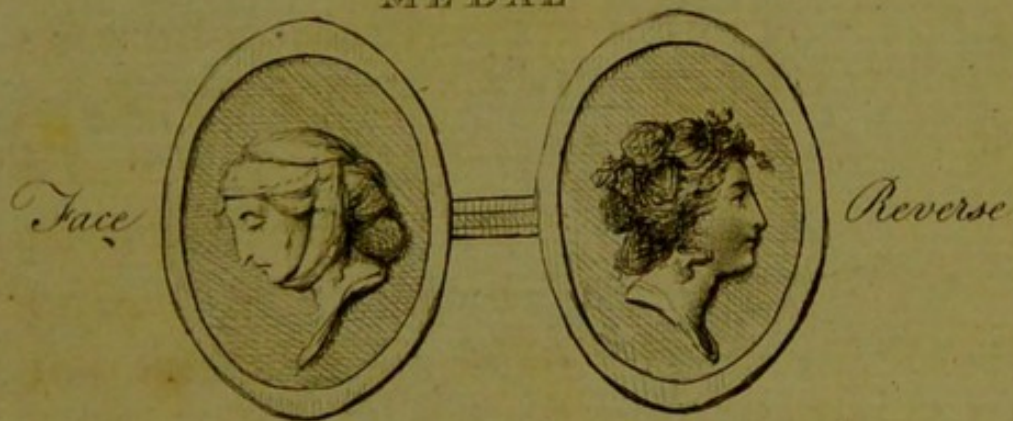
Two grains taken up into the blood by the mouth, will produce as powerful an effect on the system, as twenty thrown into the stomach, on the presumption that eighteen of the twen-

ty make their exit downwards: we reckon only what gets into the system, for what passes through, *is lost*, and certainly better had never been given; the stomach being irritable, and not adapted to retain mercury.

Mercurial ointment cures by being taken up into the blood by the absorbents of the external skin, and when introduced there, by operating on the whole vascular system, and expelling the venereal poison by the different secretions and excretions of the body. It is dirty, disagreeable, commonly slow and tedious: it requires too much labour for persons in a weak state, and if the friction is performed by other hands than their own, one half of the ointment, or more, must be lost to the patient, and may prove very injurious to the party who applies it.

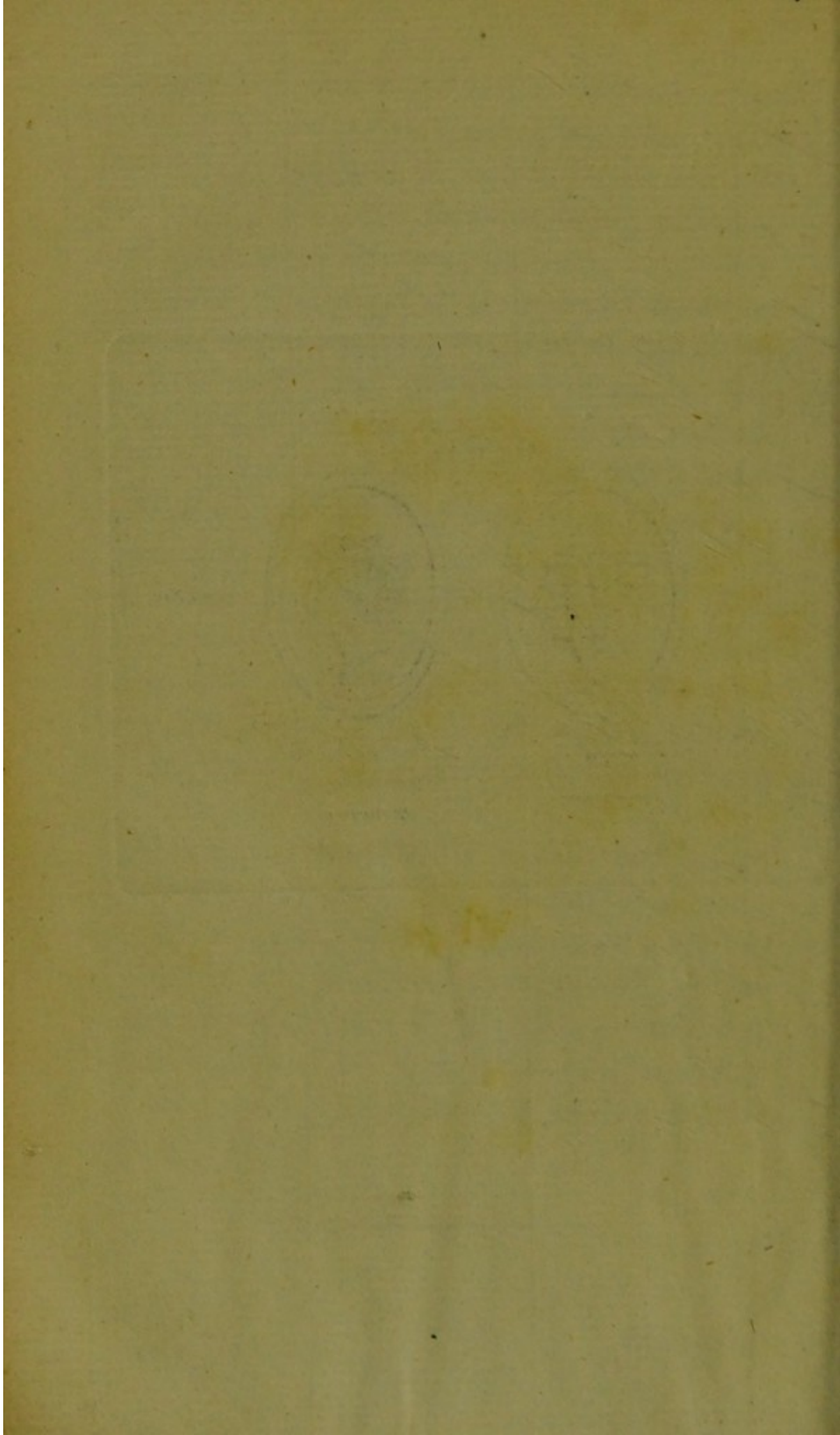
It affects the stomach or bowels, and brings on purging; insomuch that it is not uncommon for patients, both in public and private practice, to die under a course of unction, of violent cholics, accompanied by sanguinary and other fluxes, owing to the great quantity of mercury absorbed and preponderating in the constitution.

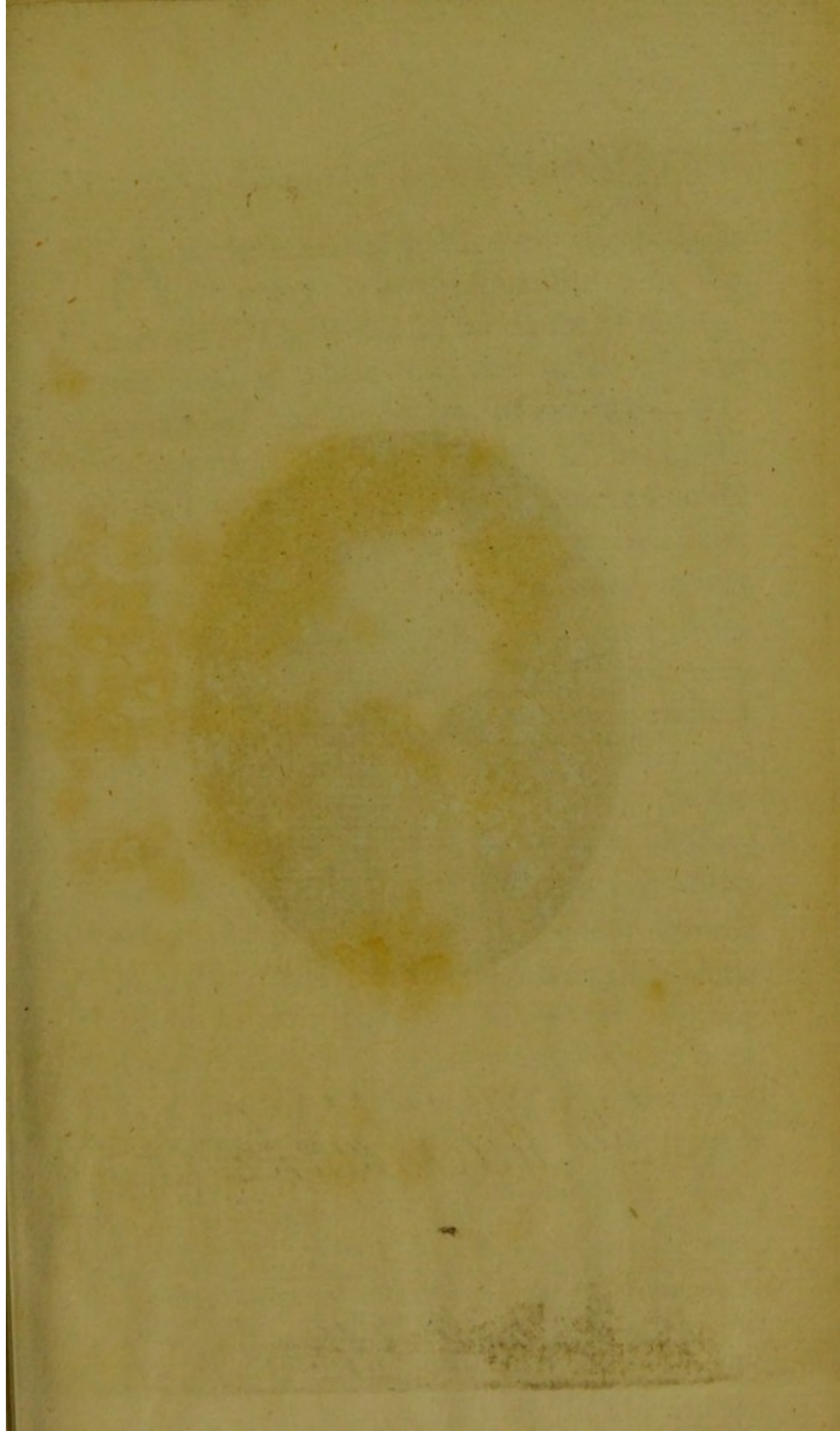
MEDAL



Ruined by
SALIVATION.

Restored by the
New mode of
ABSORPTION.







R. Parry delin. et sculpsit

Dr. Wm. Hunter

*Published according to Act of Parliament
April 25. 1756.*

MEDICAL LETTERS addressed to Mr. *Clare*.

“ **A**S the external surface of the body is
“ every where bibulous, so is the
“ internal. There can be no doubt of absorp-
“ tion taking place on the inside of the
“ mouth, of the *preputium*, of the *labia*, &c.
“ and any fine powder, capable of being ab-
“ sorbed there, will, no doubt, be more readily
“ absorbed when mixed with a watery fluid.
“ When mixed with oil, and applied to wet
“ surfaces, it may be presumed that it will be
“ kept at some distance. It is likewise very
“ probable, that when the calomel is rubbed
“ upon the surfaces of the mouth, what gets
“ into the stomach is carried down so gradu-
“ ally, and diffused over so great a surface,
“ that it will stimulate the *primæ viæ* much
“ less; and people with very tender bowels
“ may therefore bear it much better, than when
“ given in pills, bolusses, &c.—and it is rea-
“ sonable to suppose, that watery fluids will,
“ in general, be more readily absorbed, per-
“ haps, even when applied to the outward
“ surface.”

Wm. Hunter, M. D.

Dr. Hunter first honoured me with his corroborating Testi-
mony and unreserved Approval of my Essay on Abscesses, and new
mode of Absorption; and having, for several years, attended the in-
structive Lectures of this celebrated Anatomist and Physiologist, I
greatly revere his memory.—An Engraving of the Doctor is now
making, (and will soon be presented to my friends) from a waxen
model he saw at my house, and which met with his approbation.

S I R,

YOUR new method of introducing Mercury into the circulation, by means of the Absorption which takes place from the inside of the mouth, recommends itself to me from the following considerations.

The surface, on which you propose the calomel shall be rubbed, is, in its own nature, a better absorbing surface, than perhaps, any other, accessible to friction in the body. It is now generally allowed, that every surface in the body, every cell, absorbs; but it appears also, that the absorbents are by no means equally active, and that, like arteries and veins, they too, from the application of stronger stimuli, may be excited to greater activity. The stimulus of the chyle and lymph on the orifices and coats of the absorbents, is, I presume, the ordinary cause of absorption; but the stimulus of any substance, capable of being absorbed, may be equally a cause of absorption, nay, may be sometimes a more exciting cause than the common one. The cuticle (or scarf-skin) is itself not vascular, inorganic, and insensible. It not only makes an external covering to the body, but it lines some internal cavities, as the mouth, the nose, the œsophagus. It is every where porous, but these pores are probably of various

various diameters; and in some parts, I should also presume, it might be more porous, in others less so. This cuticle is also thicker in some places, and thinner in others. There is a greater secretion on thin cuticular surfaces, and of course they may be supposed more porous. The absorbents lie under it, and must be stimulated through it. Absorption may take place through the thickest cuticular surface, especially if severe and constant friction be employed. A porter, for example, shall be engaged for two or three days in rubbing down quicksilver with hogs-lard in a mortar, and from working the pestle, the upper end of which is now and then smeared with a little of the ointment, he shall have foetid breath and sore gums, (the ordinary effect of mercurial friction), shewing that absorption had taken place from one of the thickest cuticular surfaces, the palms of his hands. Though absorption may take place from such a surface, yet, in general, the thinner the cuticular surface is, the closer will the matter, to be absorbed, be applied to the mouths and coats of the absorbents, and stimulating them more readily, will be sooner absorbed. Thus venereal matter, applied under the prepuce in men, or on the inside of the labium in women, gets sooner into the inguinal glands, sooner into the

habit, than if it had been applied to the outside of either parts. A little child, in her maid's arms, received a kiss from a girl of the town, who accidentally passed by. The cuticular covering is remarkably thin on the edge of the lips, and allowing the blood to appear more readily through it, gives them their greater redness. A chancre, on the projecting part of the under-lip, was the consequence of this salute; which, in a few days, made its appearance, and resisted every application for a fortnight or more. At last it yielded to mercury; and thus shewing itself to be venereal, recalled the circumstance of the kiss, which, but for this, had passed unnoticed. Had the venereal matter been applied to the cheek, externally, it is probable, from what we see daily, that it might have lain some time without producing any effect, and at last have been wiped off; or, at least, that it would not have produced a chancre sooner than a fortnight, or even six weeks. If the poison makes its way more quickly from an inside or thin cuticular surface, why should not its antidote do the same thing?

The absorption of calomel from the inside of the mouth, in your method, appears, from the testimony of many of your patients, undeniable.

niable. For if they rub calomel every day on the inside of the mouth, and it does not gripe or purge; and if the common effect of it taken into the stomach, is, that it certainly gripes and purges; then we must conclude, that the calomel given in your way, has not gone into the stomach, whilst its producing evident effects on the disease for which it was exhibited, shews, that it has certainly got into the habit; or, in other words, that it has been absorbed by the surface to which it was applied.

Calomel absorbed in your way, must be the most eligible method, because it is less apt to irritate the stomach and intestines, and, by purging, to destroy its proper effect, than it would be if its first action was to be immediately on these parts. There are some preparations of mercury which may be taken into the stomach without irritating too much, provided opium is exhibited along with them; but there are many constitutions which will not bear opium, and if mercury cannot be exhibited properly without it, patients possessed of such constitutions must be extremely unfortunate, especially if to the former peculiarity of habit is joined another, viz. an antipathy in the skin

to every thing oily. How many, originally vigorous, deduce their present weak bowels, and debilitated constitutions, from the mischief occasioned by the action of mercury on the *primæ viæ*. Now, whether the calomel is here absorbed from the mouth, or not, supposing it actually goes into the stomach, but that the circumstance of its being given in a liquid form, diffuses its particular stimulus, or that this stimulus is blunted by its ropy vehicle the saliva, and that thus only it becomes milder in its operation; still the fact is, that it really is milder, and of course, as the medicine is allowed to be equally efficacious, this method is to be preferred to any of the modes of exhibiting mercury internally.

With those who believe that the calomel is absorbed from the inside of the mouth, and that it does not pass into the stomach and intestines, there will be still less doubt with respect to the propriety of employing this method rather than the giving calomel, or indeed, any other commonly prescribed preparation of mercury, in form of draught, bolus, or pill; for though these preparations, taken into the stomach and intestines, may sometimes be absorbed from their internal surface, as well as from any other, yet, from the greater irritability

bility of these surfaces, the stimulus of the calomel, or of the other preparations, is more likely to prove too great; to produce sickness, griping and purging, and to occasion their being hurled out of the body, before sufficient time has been allowed for their absorption. In this way the remedy runs a greater risk of being entirely lost, and of producing as little effect on the disease, for which it was exhibited, as the Peruvian bark would do on an intermit- tent, if, instead of staying in the stomach, it was constantly running off by stool. On the contrary, if calomel is rubbed on the inside of the mouth, it is applied to a surface, which happens to be alternately exposed to heat and cold, and to considerable friction in chewing our food, and cleaning our teeth; of course to a less irri- table surface, and capable even of bearing moderate friction. The calomel will here be mixed with the saliva during the friction, will be diffused over the whole mouth, and absorbed from the inside of the lips, surfaces of the tongue, roof of the mouth and fauces, as well as of the cheeks. Thus, its first effects will not be in the way of stimulus on the *primæ viæ*, but it will be gradually and equally applied to the general system.

Your friction of calomel is a less tedious, less laborious process, than the common one of rubbing mercurial ointment. To be obliged to rub, with their own hands, half a dram of mercurial ointment, for half an hour every night, is a labour only to be conceived by those who have experienced it. Nothing is more universally complained of. What must it be when half an ounce, or even a whole ounce, is rubbed? The process, in short, frequently tires the patient so much, that he gives it over before it is half performed; and sometimes omits it, when it ought to have been done. It requires considerable force; and if the patient is very weak, will, to him, be labour in vain. I am persuaded, that patients frequently miss of a cure from these very circumstances. Let us suppose fifteen grains of mercurial ointment equal in effect to one grain of calomel. This calculation, I presume, will not be thought unfair by those who have given both quantities, on different occasions, to venereal patients; and have observed, that they could go on with the calomel, for twelve or fifteen days, sensibly gaining on the disease: whereas, when the ointment was employed, it became necessary, long before the end of this period, to increase the dose, in order to keep up the first effects.

If

If a patient, then, must either rub fifteen grains of common mercurial ointment, or one grain of calomel, and is allowed, after trying both ways, to choose for himself, there will be little doubt with respect to his choice.

Your method also recommends itself, as a neater and more convenient one, than the rubbing mercurial ointment. The friction of mercurial ointment on the thighs or arms, is, to many people, one of the most disagreeable things in the world. Its leaden colour, contrasted with the skin, makes it look dirty. It has a peculiarly offensive smell, independent of that of the turpentine, or balsam of sulphur, which may have been employed in extinguishing the quicksilver. From the difficulty attending the rubbing, the skin is generally left a little smeared with it, after the process is over; as it is oily, it does not evaporate, or dry, readily; and it will easily stick to whatever it touches. Patients are obliged to sleep in flannel drawers, to prevent the ointment from getting through and daubing the bed-clothes. They must be frequently changing their drawers; constantly washing the skin; or, as washing off the ointment would retard the cure, they must remain dirty for

fix weeks, or perhaps, three months together; and if, by accident, any part of the ointment gets upon the linen, from its colour, it is very apt to give the alarm in families, and lead to disagreeable discoveries.

Your's is better, *cæteris paribus*, than the common modes of exhibiting mercury internally, in as much as it employs friction. Thin as the cuticular surface is, to which the calomel is applied, friction seems by no means unnecessary; and I should doubt much if the allowing the powder to lie on the surface, or the mere keeping it in the mouth for ever so long a time, would be attended with the same success. For though I have no idea that friction forces the calomel into the orifices of the absorbents, yet I am convinced that the stimulus of the friction, joined to that of the calomel, makes them take up the mercury more certainly and more quickly.*

I am, Sir,

With sincere regard and esteem,

Your obedient humble Servant,

W. CRUIKSHANK.

* For a more full account of the Absorbent System in general, see Cruikshank's Letter, in the Second edition of Clare's Essay on Abscesses, &c.

Dear

Dear Sir,

I Thank you for the present of your Treatise on the Venereal Disease, and likewise for the honour you have done me in addressing to me your letter, containing “ Observations on the Nature and Treatment of the Variolous Abscess, with remarks on the modern practice of Inoculation.” You are justly entitled to the esteem and thanks of the public, for the pains you have taken to alleviate the sufferings of mankind, in two of the most dreadful disorders incident to human nature. The small pox sweeps off one fifth of the human species in the state of infancy; while the *lues venerea* commits its silent ravages on the flower and vigour of youth. Yet, dreadful as these calamities are, they admit of more relief from the medical art, than any other disorders with which we are acquainted. For the venereal disease we are in possession of a specific remedy, which, if properly applied, will seldom fail to perform a cure; and the small pox, every one knows, may, by inoculation, be rendered so mild, as hardly to deserve the name of a disease. To extend the practice of inoculation, and to point out the most safe and efficacious method of exhibiting mercury, must therefore be considered as two of the greatest benefits

that can be conferred on mankind.—Of all the various modes of exhibiting mercury, that which you recommend seems to me the most safe, and I have no doubt but it will likewise be found the most efficacious. A false opinion has long prevailed, that every medicine ought to be taken into the stomach. This has done much mischief. Many people have such an aversion to medicine of all kinds, that they will suffer any thing rather than swallow a single dose. Others have such a debility of the viscera, that though they can swallow mercury, yet it tears their stomach and bowels to pieces. Of this, every medical practitioner, must have seen many instances. There are few persons who have been so unfortunate as to take large quantities of this mineral, in the usual way, who do not exhibit melancholy proofs of its baneful effects on the stomach and bowels. By your mode of administering mercury, these effects are obviated, while it is much more cleanly and agreeable than the common mode of applying it to the skin.—With regard to your remarks on the modern practice of inoculation, I have only to observe, that they entirely coincide with my own sentiments on that subject. Inoculation can never prove a blessing to mankind till the practice becomes general, and that
will

will never be the case while it remains in the hands of the faculty. Every attempt, therefore, to render this operation easy and familiar, and to shew that it's success does not depend upon medical skill and address, either in preparing the patient, or treating the disease, must be highly laudable. Indeed your whole pamphlet breathes a spirit of liberality and candour, which will not fail to place your name high in the list of those generous benefactors of society, who have assisted in extending the advantages of this important discovery to mankind.—Wishing you all success in your endeavours to lessen the miseries of human life,

I remain,

DEAR SIR,

Your's sincerely,

Norfolk-street, Strand.

W. BUCHAN.

Dear Sir,

ON reading your publication on *Mercury*, to be conveyed into the constitution by absorption, with more advantage and equal success, &c. I was so pleased with the idea, that I determined to try it the first opportunity which should offer itself, strictly following your mode, prescribed.—In the beginning of October last, a particular friend of mine, from the country, came to me, then about a month ill of a virulent *chancre*, to such a degree, that the ulcers of various sizes, deeply seated, had almost destroyed the *frænum*. Desirous of my advice, I prescribed your mercurial liniment, the benefit of which he very soon experienced, by recovering in the space of a fortnight, perceiving not the smallest inconvenience from its use. He, on the contrary, found his bowels perfectly free from any attack on them, the usual attendant on former methods of treatment, which he had frequently experienced previous to this trial. No kind of wash or application whatsoever was used for the ulcers, which, notwithstanding, grew gradually better and healed. I saw him but very lately, when he informed me, that he had not had the smallest return of the complaint in any shape.—It afforded me the more pleasure, as he was obliged

to visit much, and go into companies, where a reservedness in his manner of living among his friends, must inevitably have raised such suspicions as would have proved prejudicial.—Two other cases of the like complaint have since occurred to me, in both sexes; where I was certain of ITS FULL AND GOOD EFFECT; And what is more *surprizing, is*, that *this mode* seems to *agree better* with people who are debauchees, having had a most essential proof of this assertion in the one, a man who drank all kind of strong liquors, was scarcely ever in bed for a week together, and that at the break of day, and much exposed to cold, damp, and moist air.—If these little observations, made by me, in consequence of your disinterested publication, can afford you any satisfaction, I will, in future, do myself the pleasure to communicate what shall fall under my inspection, with the utmost candour; till when, I remain, with much esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

Southampton-street,
Covent-Garden.

HENRY KROHN.

SIR,

I Communicate to you with that degree of pleasure and satisfaction which is easier to be conceived than expressed by generous and liberal-minded men, (whose grand object is philanthropy,) a very obstinate syphilitic case, which occurred to me in my practice; at the time I was surgeon of his *Majesty's ship Heart of Oak*. This case had resisted a thorough mercurial course, as recommended by Sir William Fordyce, and other men of eminence, and yielded at last to the elegant and agreeable mode discovered and recommended by you, in your late ingenious publication, which merits a candid reception from the public. This is due to every individual who communicates his knowledge for the good of mankind.

Mr. *Bird*, at present surgeon to the gallant Lord Hood, was the first who advised me to make trial of your new method of applying mercury, having often tried it himself with the greatest success. I confess that at first thought it staggered me, but having seen and proved its good effects, I am now as much an advocate for it, as I was before doubtful of its efficacy. After I had perused with attention, and maturely considered your Treatise on the subject, I was
struck

struck with the pertinence of your remarks and ingenuity of argument, being consistent with reason and founded on anatomical facts; at the same time I have been often a witness to the fallacy of *the Alterative Plan*, with the disagreeable and dreadful consequences arising from mercurial friction on the extremities. I have known on *ship board*, and on shore likewise, but more particularly in the former, dangerous fevers and fatal diarrhœas supervene from that manner of applying the mercury;—I am now confining myself entirely to sea practice; and you will anticipate me in remarking, that the venereal disease constitutes a great part of it.—My objection to the mercurial unguentous frictions at sea must appear clear and obvious to every practitioner on that element, and is plainly this: the unavoidable exposure to the external air for the space of half an hour, while the process of rubbing in the ointment is performing in the cockpit, the place allotted for the surgeons to examine the sick and wounded. The result of such treatment is, an obstructed perspiration, which too frequently terminates in a dangerous febrile affection, and that of the putrid kind, and we are all sensible how fatally that disease ends on ship board, by perhaps being communicated to half the crew.

Advocates and sticklers for this method of using mercury, have not, or will not attend to the above interesting particulars: they contend, that the mercurial ointment does not affect the alimentary canal, so as to excite them to evacuate their contents, and that it is easier conveyed into the circulation, than when taken into the stomach in form of boluses, mixtures, &c. that it sooner gets into the sanguiferous system, than when taken in by the mouth. Be it so, yet experience assures us, that it often does affect the stomach, and will be as readily absorbed and carried into that useful organ in the animal œconomy, as the application of a *saturnine preparation* to an inflamed leg, which caused violent cholics, and other dyspeptic symptoms. A case of this kind lately occurred to a friend of mine, a very eminent practitioner in surgery in this metropolis; and therefore to reason from analogy and upon the same principle, mercury rubbed on the extremities I have often seen occasion very violent diarrhœas, which greatly reduce the patient.

I have said no more than what is just, and founded on facts, and facts are stubborn things: but men of a certain description, biassed by particular methods or systems, too frequently
 prevent

prevent the advancement, and improvement of medical knowledge, and by establishing the whims, errors, and opinions of their respective teachers, rather than advancing any new opinion to the improvement of their profession, go on in the old beaten track.—I know no character so truly despicable, or that deserves the reproach and indignation of society more, than the man who despises the knowledge of rules of sciences in the practice of a liberal art, when the most invaluable and precious of all human blessings, health, and its attendant comforts, are at stake.—Let us, as men professing a liberal science, shake off prejudice, and conscientiously and judiciously adopt that mode which is consistent with reason, and crowned with success.—I am convinced that the majority of the naval surgeons, candidly speaking, will strengthen these my just assertions, and conclude with me in observing, that your mode of using mercury is the most agreeable, safe, and efficacious of any practised since this direful malady made its appearance in Europe, which is now near three centuries ago. Happy will it be for mankind when generally adopted, and I hope soon to see it rise superior to the mean attacks of illiberal-minds, which can bestow no praise but on themselves. If

in these few and incorrect remarks I contribute in the least degree to make it more extensively embraced, I shall think it one of the happiest periods of my life: for nothing rejoices me more than to see men of merit meet with their desert. I shall select one of several successful cases.

A young gentleman, a midshipman, aged twenty years, came on board the *Heart of Oak* on September the 20th, 1781. His symptoms were as follows, a violent head-ach, nocturnal pains in his bones, a large foul undigested ulcer in his left tonsil, a large chancre on the preputium, a heat in his urethra attended with a great scalding when he made water, but notwithstanding all these terrible appearances, he was able to go about. Upon my requesting to be informed of every thing relative to the rise and progress of the disease; he told me that it was contracted at Portsmouth, about four months previous to his being ordered on board the *Heart of Oak*. It first appeared with a very troublesome irritation in the urinary passage, which seized him about four days after this impure connection, and for some days encreased, notwithstanding his immediate application to the surgeon of the ship he was then on board of, being a guard-
ship

ship at Spithead. He gave him, as he said, almond emulsions, with nitre, salts and manna, and ordered him to dilute freely with barley water, linseed tea, and other such *demulcents*, Venæsection was not omitted. In the course of ten days, mercurial ointment was used very liberally on his thighs, for at least a month, with brisk purges at intervals—The running, he said, was very plentiful for the space of five or six weeks, and at the end of that period, he was thought to be cured; however, a few weeks after, his health was gradually on the decline, with a diminution of appetite, strength, and spirits; his sleep was interrupted by pains in his limbs, and nothing more was administered to him untill he came on board our ship.—I thought the above was a proper case to give your mode a thorough trial, and the result was as follows:

I directed him to rub two grains of calomel on the inside of his mouth twice in the day, and at the expiration of ten days, his mouth became tender and his breath affected: when that event took place, the chancre and ulcer in his tonsil put on a kind and healing appearance, granulated well, and were entirely healed in the space of five weeks after adhering to this treatment.—As for his other symptoms,

toms, the head-ach, nocturnal pains, &c. at the termination of seven weeks they were perfectly cured. I have one remark to make, that during this mercurial course, I kept up a constant foreness in his mouth, but took care to avoid a spitting: this was accomplished by desisting from rubbing when the foreness ran too high. It was surprizing, that from the first fortnight after he had used the calomel, he recovered his appetite and spirits, gathered strength daily, and became fat upon it.—I am afraid, Sir, I have encroached too much on your patience, but believe me I feel a sensible pleasure in the relation of these facts. This one of the many cases in which I have had an opportunity of proving its superior efficacy, alone is a sufficient incitement to prefer it above all other methods. That it may be attended with a constant uniform course of success, is the sincere wish of, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

*Devereux Court,
Strand,*

WM. TURNBULL.

S I R,

S I R,

A Lieutenant in the Navy, in the Month of November, 1781, contracted SYPHYLIS, for which he had been bled freely, taken rough Mercurial purges, and been ordered to abstain from all strong liquors. From this severe treatment, and the disorder together, he was greatly emaciated; in which state he applied to me. By the use of your method, and a free regimen, he soon recovered his health. When I proposed his rubbing a little powder on his lips, he seemed much prejudiced against it, saying, "*What can that do?*" But on my explaining the nature and operation of the process, he consented to make a trial of it; and afterwards thanked me for my great attention and care of him.

I have been assured by several persons, that they have repeatedly cured themselves by the directions in your book; which will, in all probability, cause your method to be brought into general use; a circumstance devoutly to be wished.

To sum up the merits of your practice in few words, I am convinced that many lives, destroyed by consumptions, arising from violent courses of mercury, might have been preserved by the adoption of your mild and salutary process.

I am, Sir, &c.

WM. TURNBULL,

DEAR

DEAR SIR,

ON reading your late publication, with regard to the application of mercury, to the inside of the mouth, &c. with more advantage than from any other mode offered to the public, I was so pleased with the simplicity and neatness of the method, that I was determined to adopt it the first opportunity. I shall not trouble you with a narrative of particular cases, of which you have had many from different correspondents; I can, however, from several instances assure you, that I have seen more speedy and salutary effects from your method, than from any other yet held forth to the public. With regard to the doctrine of absorption, I do not suppose any persons acquainted with the animal system, and the history of physic, will refuse their assent to it. This being taken for granted, wherever the friction can be moderately used *to the thin cuticular inner surfaces* of the body, every person conversant with the subject, must rationally conclude, that *there* it will prove most effectual. Much might be said in support of your hypothesis, but after what those ingenious Men, Doctor Hunter, and Mr. Cruikshank, have advanced in support of the doctrine of absorption, and in commendation of your discovery

covery

covery, it would be superfluous to urge any thing more upon the subject.—Give me leave only to say, that I do not think there has been a greater discovery since SYDENHAM'S time, except the modern treatment of inflammatory fevers, especially that of inoculation, in which improvement the candid Baron Dimsdale claims the greatest merit from the public. No person of liberal sentiments will condemn your's, or any other new method, until they make a fair trial thereof, especially as you have advanced nothing inconsistent with, or contradictory to the present practice, in the treatment of the venereal disease. — The exposing persons to the cold air, and indulging them in the free use of cold water for their drink, even in the natural small-pox, had far greater difficulties to struggle with, than the practice you have recommended.

If any thing that I have said in consequence of your liberal and ingenious publication can afford you any satisfaction, I will occasionally communicate to you in future, whatever may fall under my observation;

And am, DEAR SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

Wellclose-Square, WM. TURNBULL, M. D.

Jan. 25, 1783.

“ DEAR SIR, *Asby, Aug. 18, 1783.*

I AM greatly obliged to you for your Pamphlets, and for the honorable mention you have made of me. I have read them with pleasure, and approve of the practice of using injections in the cure of the gonorrhœa. It is the ready way to work, nor does it deny the assistance of internal medicines, when virulence or neglect has made them necessary. I sincerely wish you success in decrying the use of *large quantities* of mercury in the cure of siphylis; it is perfectly unnecessary, always injurious, and I do believe it has killed multitudes, and destroyed the health of millions. I hope to see the horrid practice of daubing with loads of extinguished quicksilver, laid aside, and I mean to assist in expunging a method founded in erroneous principles.

I am glad also to see you turn your thoughts to medical surgery; and if surgeons in general would look the same way, they would be doing essential service to mankind. Wishing success in your inquiries,

I am, Dear SIR,

Your most humble Servant,

THO. KIRKLAND.”

SIR,

S I R,

SOON after the publication I saw your two little volumes. Your hypothesis I immediately embraced, being irresistibly struck with its rationality. I directly and clearly conceived how much easier calomel and saliva would be absorbed than the viscid substance of an ointment; and how much more eligible such a mode must be, under the ideas of ease and elegance. I moreover admired your manner of applying it—How much more readily the internal surface of the mouth or the lips must absorb, than any external part of the body, where substances capable of being absorbed have both *cuticula* and *cutis* to pass! Besides, I was convinced of it, from the ready entrance this *virus* meets with, and from the speedy and effectual communication of its dire contagion, as in the case of an ulcer in the lip coming into contact with that of a sound person. These, Sir, were my reflections, on reading your book; and I firmly hold them to this hour. I cannot here omit mentioning your sentiments touching my worthy teacher, Dr. Hugh Smith's injections; first, of bland oil, after-

afterwards of a solution of white vitriol. You are the only surgeon that I ever found would even bear the mention of such an injection; but it was because they never gave themselves time to consider the principles on which it was founded; but you have candidly considered, and handsomely defended them. I can only add my warmest wishes, that your truly laudable and disinterested pursuits may be succeeded by growing and lasting fame and opulence; who am, though not so happy as to know you, Sir,

Your obliged humble Servant,

S. SAUNDERS, Surgeon.

*Boreham-wood,
near Barnet, Herts.*

In addition to what is said in my book concerning *Injection*, which I am glad to find has met with the approbation of this Gentleman, I beg leave to observe, that the objections raised by some against this sort of practice, do not hold good with respect to *vitriolic injections*. These, instead of locking up the virulent discharge in the urinary passage, occasion a separation of the *mucus*, and, by their detergent property, immediately dislodge the offending, irritating *virus*.

S I R,

S I R,
 YOUR peculiar and elegant method of administering mercury by absorption, has, it is well known, much expedited the cure of *Lues Venerea*; and appears, in that respect, to have met with the approbation of many gentlemen of the faculty, eminent for their learning and abilities. Indeed, any one, who for a moment considers the direful effects that accompany the introduction of this active mineral into the stomach, or the disagreeable and tedious process of forcing a greasy ointment through the skin, will not hesitate to confer upon you, all the applause that so important a discovery merits.

It appears to me, however, that the benefit of this improvement may be still farther extended. I am the more easily induced to communicate to you my sentiments upon this subject, from a conviction that your philanthropy must render every observation agreeable, that tends to promote the general good of mankind.

Medical writers have always observed, that the *Hydrophobia*, the principal symptom occasioned by the bite of a mad dog, particularly affects the throat and salivary glands. It is well known that mercury has a peculiar tendency, especially

especially when administered in your method, to stimulate, and increase the action of these glands. May we not therefore reasonably suppose that mercury might be used with advantage to obviate, or to cure this shocking malady. This practice has, indeed, been recommended by some medical writers, but it has by no means been pursued with that attention and spirit that it seems to deserve.—From a just fear of hurting their constitutions, many people are deterred from taking mercury in the usual manner as a preventive, when under the apprehension of having contracted this disease. This fear might be greatly obviated, and life in many cases preserved, by using your method, which neither endangers health, nor is productive of any inconvenience.

Even after the *Hydrophobia* has taken place, by suddenly producing a violent salivation, the poison might, perhaps, be expelled, and the patient have some chance to recover. The most expeditious method of impregnating the system with a great quantity of mercury is, no doubt, by absorption from the mouth; as your practice combines the most easy, and, at the same time, the most effectual means of applying this active remedy to the human body.

I am, SIR, Yours, &c.

Sept. 4, 1783.

ALEX^R. P. BUCHAN.

S I R,

THE accelerated progress of your truly ingenious mode of curing a disorder so inimical to both sexes, by absorption from the internal surface of the mouth and lips, defeats the influence of prejudice, in proportion as practitioners become more and more eye-witnesses to its superior advantages over all other methods hitherto practised. Its success has gained it such an extraordinary attention, that, in the records of medical discoveries, there is not, perhaps, an example of such zeal and emulation having been excited by any object; because few, indeed, would be deemed so interesting, were we but acquainted with all the ravages long made by the improper administration of mercury most justly condemned by your intelligent correspondents. For my own part, pleased with the novelty of the idea, I was no less so with its success, which I have fully evinced in a variety of cases.

Your unreserved and open communication of it to the public, through various channels, has brought so many champions into the field, that it is not a few sheets of paper that would serve to relate the successful history of the campaign.

When your useful discovery, and that other important one of Dr. Priestly, the dephlogisticated

cated Air, which, as far as it bids fair to cure, without internal medicines, pulmonic complaints, the too frequent consequences of rough mercurial courses, may be considered as nearly allied to your's of absorption: I say, when both these discoveries, which seem to have been reserved for this period of time, are viewed in their proper light, some may be apt to think, with the learned Abbé Fontana, that we seem approaching one of those great epochas to which nature conducts us, after a lapse of ages, and which she distinguishes by some remarkable discoveries for the benefit of mankind.

I intended, at this time, to have added some observations and experiments on dephlogisticated air, in cases which baffle the art of physic; but these I must defer till another opportunity.

I am, SIR, your's, &c.

No. 196, *Fleet-Street*.

J. DEBRAW.

My ingenious friend and neighbour, Mr. Debraw, whose abilities in chymistry and medicine were well known and respected at the university of Cambridge, during a residence of several years, having promised me the result of his observations, I can only say, I shall be happy to convey them in a future publication. In the mean time see Dr. Fothergill's remarks on Dephlogisticated Air, addressed to Dr. Hawes.

Re-

DEAR SIR,

I AM quite ashamed in not answering your very polite and kind favors sooner, and I return you many thanks for your books.

Ever since you communicated to me your new and ingenious mode of administering mercury by absorption, I have found it very successful both in chronic diseases, and also in surgery, in one very obstinate scirrous and scrophulous tumor of the testis.

It is a very safe and neat way of administering mercury; and, in some habits, I gave it during the hard frost, without catching cold.

It's use must not be confined to the LUNGS alone, as many important discoveries will be found out. It will always succeed in cases both in physic and surgery, where there is not too great a putrescency of the blood and juices.

I am, Dear SIR,

Your most obliged humble servant,

RICHARD TURNER, Surgeon.

Uxbridge.

D I R E C T I O N S

FOR APPLYING THE MERCURY.

RUB half a grain, or a grain, of Calomel, on the body of the tongue, on the mouth or lips, twice or oftener in the day, carefully discharging the saliva by the mouth, for a minute or longer, that it may not purge. The fores may be sprinkled with the same powder, dry, or moistened with a little oil or water.

One dram of Calomel being well mixed with a quarter of an ounce of *Armenian Bole*, and used as a *Dentifrice*, two or three times a day, as circumstances may require, will alone often effect a cure.

Many other preparations of mercury exhibited in this form, discreetly prepared, and under the direction of the faculty, will answer the same good purpose in the most inveterate cases.

MR. TURNER, in his letter observes, that
 “ My method of administering mercury
 will always succeed in cases both in physic and
 surgery, where there is not too great a putre-
 scency of the blood and juices.” In such habits
 I recommend the soft, or hard extract of bark
 powdered, and applied to the surface of the
 mouth, where, mixing with a watery menstruum,
 it dissolves, and will be quickly absorbed.

The best medicines when swallowed, often
 create oppression and sickness in the stomach,
 and are rejected by the mouth, under which cir-
 cumstance little benefit can be derived to the
 patient, and when they do keep down, if we
 are to judge often from their *non* effect on the dis-
 order, we may fairly conclude they are convey-
 ed, like the grosser food, through the body,
 the more fine and subtle parts alone being ab-
 sorbed by the lacteals, and converted into blood.
 Hence probably it is, that the largest doses of
 bark, and other medicines of that class, often fail
 in mortifications of the limbs, for it is not the
 quantity of medicine taken, but so much only as
 happens to gain admission into the system, on
 which dependence can be placed.

It is easy to conceive there may be situations
 where it would prove of the highest importance,
 to make a little bark, or mercury, go as far as
 possible, and with a different management, an

ounce

ounce might, in some hands, produce the good effects of pounds, in others, I mean by absorption from the mouth, instead of the stomach.

I am not singular in my objections to the customary modes of swallowing medicines in the gross, an ingenious and liberal author having expressed his sentiments in the following terms :

“ A false opinion has long prevailed, that every medicine ought to be taken into the stomach. This has done much mischief. Many people have such an aversion to medicine of all kinds, that they will suffer any thing, rather than swallow a single dose.”—I am persuaded that various disorders proceeding from obstructions, and which fall under the province of the physician, might be happily cured by the absorption of calomel, which pervades the most minute vessels, as well as the larger ones, when applied to the surface of the tongue, without subjecting the patient to confinement, or any kind of restraint. Several instances of the surprising efficacy of calomel, in scrophulous and cutaneous diseases in general have lately occurred in my practice. *

* A boy of eight years of age applied to me lately, with a violent inflammation of the left eye, which had deprived him of sight, and had a scrophulous aspect ; I gave him half a grain of calomel to rub on his tongue, twice a day, and directed him not to swallow his spittle for a few minutes after ; and in three weeks the poor boy was restored to his vision. —A girl of seventeen had the good fortune to recover by the same means, of an ulcer upon the integuments of her nose, which complaint had been of long standing, and pronounced cancerous.

A SIPHERAL ODE,
BY JOHN TURNBULL, Esq.

SAYS VENUS to her Son, one Day,
Ah wherefore do you from me stray!

Why fly my tender Arms?
No common Incident, I fear,
Has made you such a stranger here;

Haste, ease my Heart's Alarms!

To Earth, dear Mother, I have been;
To Earth I went; quite choak'd with Spleen!

To see my vot'ries fall
A Prey to fell Disease, and Pain,
To Shame, to Torment, and Disdain;
To Misery and Gall.

A Monster vile! dire Foe to Love!
Detested by the Gods above!

Rag'd with such Force below,
Mankind all from my Altars flew;
Love's Flames turn'd to a livid Blue,
A frightful Sight did show!

At last, when almost spent with Grief,
Since I could find them no Relief
From Horror and Despair!

With Joy extreme, and Wonder too,
ABSORPTION'S LAWS appear'd in View,
Reveal'd at large by CLARE!

He! the foul Fiend quick drove away
From the bright Regions of the Day,
In Stygian Lake to dwell;
While all my Vot'ries now rejoice,
And, with united Heart and Voice,
The blest'd Invention tell!

A CYPRIAN ODE,

By DOCTOR _____

SAYS Venus to Cupid, "It grieves me to think
What Ills my dear Vot'ries befall,
Who, whilst my sweet Nectar they eagerly drink,
Too oft find it mingled with Gall.

What left-handed Demon thus dashes the Bowl,
As grudging poor Mortals the Bliss;
Who sheds the Contagion that darts thro' the Soul,
And kills with a treacherous Kiss?

Bid Mercury straight go and bind the fell Fiend,
In Chains adamantine, I pray,
That Lovers may hence give their Fears to the Wind,
And joyful proclaim Holiday.

From hence let them banish dull Sorrow and Care,
Needless Torture no longer endure;
Lo! I send down APOLLO to personate CLARE,
Who shall teach them a lenient Cure."
