

**Historical researches on exutories : Albespeyres's blisters and blister paper / by Fumouze.**

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HISTORICAL  
RESEARCHES  
ON EXUTORIES



HISTORICAL

RESEARCHES

# IN EXOTIC

LIBRARY'S BLISTERS

BLISTER PAPER

There is a great deal of interest in the history of the library, and it is therefore not at all surprising that we should have taken an interest in it.

As the pupil, son-in-law, and successor of the

Alchemist, who was the first to make the

basic paper, and thereby brought about a complete

revolution in the history of the library, it is

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As the pupil, son-in-law, and successor of M. Albespeyres, who was the first to make epispastic paper, and thereby brought about a complete revolution in the dressing of artificial sores, we have been, from our very position, under the necessity of manipulating considerable masses of epispastic compositions, and it is therefore not at all surprising that we should have taken an interest in tracing out all the facts connected with the history of vesicants.

In the course of our reading on medicine and therapeutics, we have met with many curious facts



Fernel, Ambrose Paré, Dupuytren proved them very effective. Rivière sometimes applied as many as five blisters in malignant fevers with complete success. Sydenham held them in great esteem, especially for affections of the brain and of the chest.

At the very outset of our undertaking we experienced great embarrassment. Should we divide exutories into several series, and devote our attention equally to all? That would have diverted us from the end we had in view, which was far less ambitious and altogether special. We consequently preferred limiting our investigations to blisters properly so called, but of course considering them in connection with the other agents of the same order whenever we could do so without unduly generalizing the question. Having once decided on this principle, our path lay straight and plain before us.

For the sake of greater assurance and authority, we shall give numerous quotations from authors of high repute, instead of stating the facts in our own language.

“ During last century, the use of topics (blisters), was still limited to a narrow circle of complaints, and was considered by a great many physicians as an extreme resource. It is only since the beginning of the present century that they have come into such general use as to be no longer regarded with apprehension, that physicians prescribe them for a multitude of slight affections; and that, in fine, many persons apply them, without the intervention of a physician, to obtain relief from head-ache, sore eyes, colds, etc. ”

(Extract from GERDY'S *Traité des Pansements*.)

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“ Vesicatories constitute the collection, the whole body, the treasury of all the means which the medical art employs externally, with a view to extract, or draw to the surface of the body, or turn from one part to another, whatever may endanger health



or prevent its restoration. It is in this sense that the word *vesicatory* ought to be understood.

“ This term comprises not only blisters, which are commonly applied in the form of a plaster, but extends also to all the acrid, irritant, stimulant, exciting, and caustic substances, which, when applied to the surface of the body, or even in some cavity regarded as a continuation of that surface, produce more or less promptly redness, tumours, slight inflammations, blisters, irritation, eschars, etc.

“ Thus generalized, the system, of vesicatories has supplied physicians with the most extensive resources and the most striking successes. ”

(Dr. M. H. FOUQUET, in the *Encyclopédie générale*.)

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“ He who first conceived the idea of drawing towards the outside of the body an inflammation which was raging within; of displacing or generalizing, in some sort, the centre of morbid irritation, by dispersing its elements and distributing them over a greater number of organs, discovered one of the most important dogmas of our art. That idea first presented itself to Hippocrates, and it supplied most extensive resources to therapeutics in the palmiest days of the Greek school of medicine. ”

(ALIBERT'S *Nouveaux éléments de thérapeutique*.)

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“ The theory founded on the hydraulic law has always been at fault when it was adduced to explain how a blister applied on the left arm promptly dissipated a congestion, an inflammation, or a violent irritation caused by a repelled herpetic humour. As it was thought that the humour could only be drawn to the outside or to its primitive seat by means of the circulation, the success of the remedy excited wonder, but was never understood; the mystery has now been fully explained!

“ There are a great many chronic affections in which the utility of epispastics is fully recognized : it is always advisable to draw outwards whatever threatens or affects any parts essential to life. ”

RETZ.

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“Blisters draw out the putridity which causes the disease. As to the pain they cause, it is greatly exaggerated; and, besides, the remedy rather calms than irritates a patient, by the benefit resulting from revulsion.”

MERCURIALIS.

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“When any noxious humour has entered or been produced in the body, we ought to correct the bad qualities, or expel them through the skin or the natural evacuations, and if those natural issues will not effect the purpose, we must open artificial ones to supply the deficiencies of nature.

“The ancients, who, with little theory and few scientific pretensions, were nevertheless great observers and successful practitioners, frequently employed issues and blisters, because they had witnessed their curative and preservative effects.”

RAYMOND.

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“The name of revulsives is given to the different means employed in medicine to turn aside the principle of a disease, or a *humour*, towards a more or less distant part.”

NYSTEN.

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“It is indispensable that revulsive stimulants should be more powerful than those to which they are opposed.”

BROUSSAIS.

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“In men who have a venomous skin, the simplest lesions suppurate on the slightest occasion; an exutory kept constantly active may remove that tendency.”

BRETONNEAU.

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“Vesicating substances acting on the skin augment its secretions and rouse its energies; they revive the diminished power of the organism; they produce, if extensive, a signal reaction, a kind of fever well known to practitioners, the action of which, spreading and generalizing, in some sort, the seat of the disease, may aid the development of the local affections for which they are most frequently prescribed, and work a cure.



“ Blisters are especially prescribed in affections, whether acute or chronic, for which it is necessary to arouse the natural powers and produce derivation ; and then their use is temporary or continuous. They are more particularly employed in complaints caused by repercussion or metastasis; in flying or changing diseases, rheumatic and neuralgic pains; cutaneous eruptions, which do not come out freely or have been repelled ; inflammations of every kind, etc. ”

(*Dictionn. de Matière médicale*, by MÉRAT and DE LEUS).

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“ Blistering is a non-mechanical irritation which determines the formation of a sero-albuminous vesicle on the surface of the skin.

“ There is no part of the body to which blisters have not been used; if there be no danger of aggravating the disease, the remedy may be unhesitatingly applied as near as possible to its seat; if there be any danger of irritating the diseased organ, it is advisable to operate at some distance, and then the parts most commonly selected are the back of the neck, the inner side of the arm, the inner and middle surface of the legs and thighs. ”

GERDY.

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“ Vesicants form a section of external irritants, and act as stimulants and revulsives. They differ from issues, setons, cupping, electricity, galvanism, which are also external irritants and revulsives, but their action is of quite another kind, since they do not produce a blister nor any sort of evacuation, like vesicants. ”

MÉRAT and DE LEUS.

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“ As a *spoliator*, the exutory, from the slowness and continuity of its action, and the facility of measuring and graduating its effects, will always hold the first rank among the agents of *spoliative* medication. ”

(*Traité de Thérapeutique*, by TROUSSEAU and PIDOUX.)

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## II

### HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF

## VESICATING SUBSTANCES

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The number of vesicants is considerable, and it will not be without interest to give a brief notice of them here, were it only to aid those who, like ourselves, wish to form an accurate opinion on the value of the different bodies, which have been in turns vaunted as epispastics, then neglected, and again resumed with a character of factitious novelty by persons who perhaps knew no better.

They are found in the three kingdoms of nature: most numerous in the vegetable kingdom; most violent in the mineral kingdom; most complete and defined in the animal kingdom.

Among the mineral vesicants are certain salts, especially the emetic—most of the acids, the caustic alkalis, boiling water, etc. Acids and ammonia require extreme precaution, and can only be used with safety by medical men; nor ought they to be used, except in rare cases when an instantaneous effect is necessary: and even then vesi-



cation by means of the actual cautery, or of a hammer held in boiling water till the head is thoroughly heated, is generally preferred. This last process, which was long in common use throughout the United States, is now nearly always replaced by cantharidized collodion or blister plaster.

Entire classes of plants supply vesicants, or might supply them : such as the alliaceæ, the aroideæ, the euphorbiaceæ, the ranunculaceæ, the piperiteæ, the urticeæ, several thymelææ, and especially the garou (*daphne gnidium*) ; a certain number of crucifera, as mustard-seed, horse-radish, cochlearia leaves, also ginger, tobacco, the wild cucumber, Spanish pellitory, etc.

It is to be remarked that the most active of these substances known to the ancients, were also simultaneously administered internally, as purgatives or emetics, and externally as irritants, excitants, and vesicants, which led the humoralists to call exutories external purgatives. For instance : the concrete, resinous, or oily juices of the euphorbiaceæ, employed in a thousand ways, in as many different cases, from the days of Melampus, who, 1530 years before Christ, cured the insanity of the daughters of Prætus, king of Argos, with either white or black hellebore ; the *thapsia* ( the *sylphion*, of Dioscorides, the *laser* of the Greeks and Romans), thus named by the ancients from the isle of Thapsos, whence it was procured : this substance was employed by Hippocrates as an evacuant (Sprengel), and by the Arabs as an epispastic, against herpes and other skin diseases ( see POIRET'S *Voyage en Barbarie* ) ; the *rhus toxicodendron*, which we get from North America, appears to have been used by the Indians for the same purpose : in 1788, Dr Du Fresnoy, physician to the army, made known the properties of this plant, which were accidentally discovered in France by a gardener, who was cured of a herpetic affection after an eruption caused by this species of sumach.



All these and many other substances, of the vegetable kingdom, are now but little employed, owing to their feeble action as compared with cantharides.

§ In the animal kingdom many substances have been tried, vaunted for awhile, and then rejected. Ancient writers mention as epispastics, ants, certain excrements, as the droppings of the wood-pigeon, ox-gall, the flesh of snails, etc. The cantharis, or blister-fly, appears to have been first employed as a vesicant by Aretæus: "We use," says Archigenes, his imitator, "cataplasms containing cantharides, because they produce great effects, provided the little ulcers remain open and keep on running." Ætius informs us that Galen also used cantharides with great success.

Cantharides have been employed down to the present day, and science had not yet discovered to what principle their virtues must be attributed. The ingenuity of modern chemists has drawn from them a greenish oil, which was at first supposed to contain their active principle; but Robiquet subjected them to a more complete analysis: he separated from this oil a new substance, to which he gave the name of cantharidine, and he proved this to be the real epipastic agent of these coleoptera. Many chemists have since corroborated this discovery, among whom we may mention Messrs. L. Gmelin, Thierry, Henri and Plisson, Regnault, Beaupoil, and Hatchett. Cantharidine has thus been thoroughly examined and defined: the least particle of this substance will raise blisters on the skin; its vapour is very dangerous for the eyes, the nose, and respiratory organs; taken internally, its ravages equal those of the most violent poisons.

Here the question naturally arises: what cantharides contain the greatest proportion of the active principle? And by what tokens are they to be distinguished?

The labours of our chemists have taught us nothing po-



sitive on this point, and yet it is a matter of some importance, even in a commercial point of view, to be able to judge of the value of the article, by sight and touch, since they are always bought [at first hand in open market, especially at the Leipsic fairs, where the purchaser has to judge of their quality on the spot. Long experience is evidently the best guide. The following is the result of our own observations : in the trade, cantharides are divided into three sorts — small, middling, and large. All are caught in the same localities; they are, more or less, of a yellowish-green tint, with a bright metallic lustre. When the yellow predominates, and the insect is very dry and but little broken, you may buy boldly, whether large or small; if the green is in excess, hesitate; if the flies, when pressed in the hand, feel rather greasy, have nothing to do with them; for it is certain that they have been dipped in oil, to increase their weight and give them a more showy appearance, but they will prove deficient in quality, as part of the cantharidine may have been extracted by the oil. This deceptive kind has long been sold under the designation of *northern cantharides*. We have been cheated by them, to our great annoyance, and it was then we discovered the fraud and resolved to expose it. (*Journal de Chimie, Pharmacie, et Toxicologie*, 1851, p. 653.)

We have also had to reject large quantities of cantharides spoiled by sea-water. Cantharidine being insoluble in sea-water, it might be inferred that we here acted with excessive precaution; but it must be observed that these cantharides had acquired a peculiar appearance, which rendered it difficult to judge of their quality, and they had certainly gained additional weight: hence the impossibility of dosing them accurately; lastly, this damage by sea-water might perhaps conceal certain tricks of trade well-known to fraudulent dealers.



Setting aside all fraudulent practices, it may be asserted that the cantharides caught in France, Sicily, certain provinces of Spain, and in the Ukraine, are the best <sup>1</sup>.

In general, cantharides lose from 10 to 15 per cent. of their weight during the first year after they are collected, and from 4 to 7 per cent. in each following year, a fact which must never be overlooked by those who wish to have their preparations always of the same strength.

The ancients made their blisters with inert plasters, or any salve-like substance, which they powdered with pulverized cantharides; this was then applied to the skin and the blister was raised in about twenty-four hours. Very frequently some portion of the powder would become detached, and, spreading to the adjacent parts, would produce small blisters where they were not wanted.

The plaster itself was also liable to shift about and make a blister much too large. The protracted application was also apt to produce great irritation in the bladder.

At a later period, blisters were prepared by incorpo-

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\* Cantharides are very abundant in France, where clouds of them may be seen in May and June to settle on ash, lilac, and other trees, which they soon strip of every leaf. It is then time to catch them, for they live only eight or ten days. Men with masks on their faces shake the boughs early in the morning, *while the flies are still benumbed by the chilly night air*, and they fall on sheets spread on purpose to receive them. They are then thrown into diluted vinegar, dried in the sun or over a stove, and are ready for market. For some years past, collecting these flies has been too much neglected in France, although considerable sums might be gained without any hinderance to other work. It is highly desirable that the inhabitants of the regions visited by these insects should catch all they possibly can.



rating the powder, an insufficient amelioration, as the plaster would still shift about, whatever precautions were taken, and only operated slowly.

The discovery of cantharidine induced many practitioners to prepare blistering silk with a more or less perfect solution of that substance in alcohol or ether; but this was not adhesive, and in a few days lost part of its strength, which, added to the danger of handling so powerful a substance as cantharidine, soon led to the relinquishment of that expedient.

M. Albespeyres, who had devoted himself to a profound study of all the epispastic substances, then introduced his adhesive blister plasters, submitted them to the medical profession, for experiments in private practice and in hospitals, and gradually attained the most perfect result, which we now request the practitioners of all countries to submit to any trial they may deem conclusive.

A good remedy carries its own recommendation, and has nothing to fear from the severest tests.



### III

## ALBESPEYRES'S

### BLISTERS

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Blisters are the epispastics in most frequent use.

ALIBERT.

Albespeyres's blisters constitute a real vesicating sparadrap. To apply them, nothing more is necessary than to cut a piece of the tissue in the form required and lay the black side next the skin, the green side, bearing the name "Albespeyres," being quite inert; a compress and a bandage to maintain the whole in its place complete the operation. In cold weather, the tissue must be held a moment near the fire before laying on, and at all times it is indispensable to press firmly with the hand over the whole surface, so as to make it adhere well in every part. Should there be any hair on the place where the blister is to be applied, it must be shaved off.

In six or eight hours, the vesication will be complete, and a vesicle full of serous fluid will be formed; some



times, however, it will happen that the place is only very red, and the skin will not rise till after the first dressing, which should be made either with fresh butter or hog's lard.

When the blister has risen, cut the loose skin all round, but do not remove it till twenty-four hours afterwards, in order that the natural irritation of the wound may not be over-excited by the immediate contact of the air. After one or two sedative dressings, all the subsequent ones may be made with Albespeyres's paper, as will be explained hereafter.

In certain circumstances, the skin absolutely resists the action of the most powerful vesicants, as we have had the misfortune to experience on our own person.

#### FLYING BLISTERS

If it is wished to apply a flying blister or to produce a slight irritation, the blister must be left on the skin half an hour, an hour, or two hours, according to the end in view. It will act at first as a mustard plaster, and will gradually become more irritating until the vesication is complete. In certain rheumatic pains, which are to be followed up wherever felt, we have seen the same blister shifted to all the painful parts, and constantly producing the same effect. This persisting activity of Albespeyres's blisters is explained by the homogeneousness of the whole adhesive emplastick mass, and to the great quantity of the vesicating principle contained in it.

Albespeyres's Blisters are not liable to spoil.

Country practitioners may carry them in their case of instruments; inclosed in metallic envelopes, these blisters retain all their virtues during the longest voyages by sea, and will keep any length of time in all climates. This invaluable quality has been often proved, and was fully



established during the late war in the East ; for they were then constantly employed in all the hospitals of the allied armies ; and when peace was concluded, the stock remaining on hand was transferred to the military hospitals of the Ottoman Empire. Lastly, and this will suffice to characterize their superiority, Albespeyres's Blisters have their place in the hospitals of our active armies <sup>1</sup>.

We will conclude this chapter with quoting the opinions of the Medical Press, the vigilant sentinel of the

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<sup>1</sup> " Ministry of War—Department of Hospitals and Invalids.

" 28th May 1859.

" To M. Fumouze-Albespeyres, Paris.

" By your letter of the 14th instant, which I have had the honour of receiving, you were pleased to place at my disposal, to be employed in the hospitals of the army of Italy, 500 metres (537 yards) of the Epispastic Tissue, of which you are the inventor.

" The Board of Health, to which I submitted your offer, having expressed a favourable opinion on the use of your preparation in our active armies, I accept your offer, and thank you for the generous sentiments which induced you to make it. You will please to inform the Pharmacia-in-chief at the Central Military Pharmacy, No. 460, Rue de l'Université, when it will suit your convenience for him to send and fetch the article.

" Accept, sir, the assurance of my profound respect.

" For the minister and by his order,

" DARRICAU,

" Councillor of State, Director of the Administration. "

" 8th June 1859.

" To M. Fumouze-Albespeyres.

" I have the honour to acknowledge the reception of the 500 metres of Vesicating Tissue.

" ANDRÉ,

" Pharmacia-in-chief. "



public health, and by the specimen of our label which has been adopted to prevent counterfeits.

“ TO M. ALBESPEYRES.

“ Sir, it is for me at once a duty and a pleasure to inform you that your epispastics satisfy all requirements. The action of your blisters is more prompt, and at the same time more gentle, than that of the ordinary plasters; and for dressing blisters, your Paper is everything that can be desired.

“ I may add, to show how highly I appreciate your valuable preparation, that I have purchased a sheet of the tissue and a box of the paper, for use in my own family if necessary.

“ GUILLAUMS,

“ Physician at Chambéry.”

“ We beg to call the attention of our professional brethren to *Albespeyres's Adhesive Blisters*. They adhere to the skin like sparadrap, and raise a blister in a few hours, without causing the least irritation. This is one of the few inventions of which the physician should take note. We may also mention here that Albespeyres's Paper is the best preparation for keeping blisters open, and promoting an abundant discharge without smell or pain.”

(*Institut médical.*)

“ We have published a paper by M. Fumouze-Albespeyres, containing interesting information on cantharides. That document naturally led us to examine the various epispastics employed to raise blisters and keep them open.

“ The old-fashioned plasters sprinkled with powdered cantharides were attended with numerous and sometimes serious inconveniences. They have been very generally neglected since the invention of Albespeyres's blistering tissue, which produces vesication in a few hours.

“ Among the salves, prepared silk, and other epispastics for dressing blisters, *Albespeyres's Paper* stands so preeminently superior, that we are really astonished to see any practitioners persist in the old routine.”

(*Abeille médicale.*)



## ON DRESSING AND KEEPING OPEN BLISTERS

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### ALBESPEYRES'S EPISPASTIC PAPER

Till the beginning of the present century, blisters were always dressed with epispastic ointment, spread on vegetable leaves. According to the quantity of the ointment applied, the blister was more or less excited, and the secretion more or less abundant; but as it is impossible for the most practised hand always to spread precisely the same quantity of the ointment on a given surface, the result was sometimes an over-excitement of the exutory, at others its complete inertia. Besides, the vegetable leaves being liable to decomposition, blisters dressed with them often smelt offensively, and sometimes became intolerable. Such inconveniences rendered this exutory a very disagreeable remedy, which could be applied only in extreme cases, and the healing art was thus deprived of an important resource against many affections.

In 1817, however, two men began to devote themselves with great perseverance to the discovery of sure, simple, constant, easy, and convenient means for the dressing of these artificial sores. M. Mauvage made the first epispastic silk at the very time when M. Albespeyres was preparing his first epispastic paper.

These two preparations were received as most useful inventions, were patronized and recommended by the most eminent members of the profession (Vauquelin, Richerand, Dupuytren, Lallemand, Marjolin, Récamier,





# VÉSICATOIRES D'ALBESPEYRES.

Ces Vésicatoires, disposés en forme de sparadrap sur un taffetas ciré *vert*, sont d'une extrême commodité pour les médecins, les pharmaciens et les malades. Ils adhèrent à la peau et produisent la vésication en quelques heures (six heures

suffisent ordinairement). Ces précieuses qualités ont valu aux Vésicatoires d'Albespeyres l'approbation des principaux médecins de France et de l'étranger. Les pharmaciens trouvent une économie réelle à les employer de préférence à tous les autres.

**Nota** La griffe *Albespeyres* ayant été apposée sur le côté vert des vésicatoires, il ne sera plus possible de les confondre avec les imitations et contrefaçons plus ou moins défectueuses. Chaque signature forme un *carré de 5 centimètres*.

FABRIQUE

A L'ILE SAINT-DENIS

PRÈS PARIS.

*Albespeyres*

VENTE ET EXPÉDITION

FAUB. SAINT-DENIS, 78 ET 80

A PARIS.



Rostan, Elisée, Pinel, Esquirol, etc.). One of these epispastics was even admitted into the pharmacy of King Louis XVIII., and allowed to be sold in envelopes bearing the royal arms.

But this *silk tissue* had serious drawbacks, which well nigh over-balanced all its good qualities : being impermeable, it allowed the suppuration to escape from beneath, and soil the patient's linen; being hard and dry, it irritated and inflamed the sore, sometimes even making it bleed, and producing pimples, fleshy excrescences, etc.

Albespeyres's Paper, on the contrary, being made from the best lint, soft and porous, coated and impregnated with fatty epispastic substances, always in the same proportion, gives up its active principle to the exutory gradually and without irritation : the suppuration is produced naturally and passes through to the compress, which completely absorbs it. M. Mauvage saw this, and ceded to us the entire property of his processes and invention; so that Albespeyres's Paper thus came to combine all the best qualities of both inventions, now sanctioned by more than forty years of successful use, under the eyes of physicians of all countries, who are the persons best qualified to judge of the efficacy of remedies.

Albespeyres's Paper is made of four degrees of strength, respectively marked No. 1 weak, No. 1, 2, and 3.

The No. 1 weak, having scarcely any ointment on it, is the weakest of all, and adapted for children and persons easily irritated;

No. 1, with rather more ointment, is for persons whose blisters discharge freely;

No. 2 is employed for those whose blisters are sluggish and discharge but little;

No. 3, the most active, is only used when the blister shows a tendency to heal.



#### PROPERTIES OF ALBESPEYRES'S PAPER.

This paper, preferable to all other epispastics, is the *only* article of the kind recommended for nearly fifty years past by the head-physicians and surgeons of hospitals in France and foreign countries, by members of learned societies, and professors in the schools of medicine and pharmacy. Its most remarkable properties are; 1. without any addition, it keeps up an abundant and uniform suppuration, unattended with pain, redness, or inflammation of the skin or denuded parts; 2. it prevents the formation of false membranes and white pellicles which often prevent suppuration; the denuded surfaces are constantly of a fine red tint, smooth, and without fleshy excrescences; 3. it produces no irritation in the urinary passages, and is therefore very suitable for nervous and irritable persons; 4. it exhales no unpleasant smell and presents the advantage of extreme cleanliness; 5. this paper, very fine, supple, transparent, and extremely soft, adheres to the edges of the blister, never shrinks or shifts from its place, and retains its softness while remaining on the suppurating surface. It is the only preparation with which a person can dress his own blister easily, *even while in bed, or travelling, etc.*

#### MANNER OF DRESSING A BLISTER

Cut a sheet of the paper to the size of the blister, and apply to the sore its most glossy side, which is always laid uppermost in the box. If the blister is larger than the sheet of paper, lay two of them side by side; then put a compress on them and over that a bandage to keep every thing in its place. For the first dressing after removing the blister, a little butter is usually applied, for



all the following ones, the paper alone. Care must be taken not to tie the bandage too tight, as that would be apt to impede the free circulation of the blood, and might cause inflammation, fleshy excrescences, etc.

It will sometimes happen that the blister becomes angry without any evident cause and even gets covered with a kind of false skin : this is most frequently caused by derangements of the natural functions, change of season, etc.; it is then necessary to apply softening poultices (linseed meal, crum of bread, etc.), and dress with a weaker number; if the weakest was the one already used, it must be continued with the other side of the paper downwards. When, on the other hand, there is atony of the part, a higher number must be employed; sometimes it is advisable to alternate with two numbers of different strength. All the moisture must be carefully taken off the blister with a soft linen rag, and the edges wiped, but washing must be avoided as far as possible.

THE MOISTURE MUST NEVER BE SUFFERED TO DRY IN THE COMPRESS : it is therefore necessary to have two dressings daily (morning and evening). If the discharge is copious, put on several compresses at once, and dress three times a day. Dressings too long delayed cause irritation, make the humours acrid, and may close the exutory.

*Blisters thus managed will remain quite fresh and continue their discharge imperceptibly.*

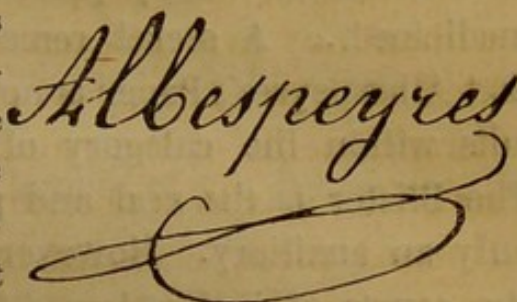
#### MOST IMPORTANT OBSERVATION

Wishing that his Paper should leave nothing to be desired, M. Albespeyres consents to change all boxes deteriorated by carriage or otherwise.—Be careful to avoid spurious and dangerous counterfeits. As his blisters ought always to produce their effect without pain, should the contrary happen, or doubts be entertained as to the genuineness of the article, the parties concerned



are requested to write to M. Albespeyres, to learn whether the paper really comes from Paris, from the manufactory of the inventor, whose name is water-marked in each sheet.

Albespeyres's Paper may be obtained of all Chemists and Venders of Patent Medicines in France and foreign countries, in boxes accompanied by instructions, deposited in conformity with the law, and is never sold otherwise than by the box. By an imperial ukase, it has been admitted inot all the Russias <sup>1</sup>.

A large, elegant handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Albespeyres', with a long, flowing underline that loops back under the main text.

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<sup>1</sup> We must say a few words on *dressing issues*, which hold the second rank as exutories, and ought never to be made except by a professional man.

We have already stated that, in order to combine the manufacture of the most renowned epispastics, M. Albespeyres purchased the invention of M. Mauvage. With the elements of that invention and those peculiar to his own, he has composed a *dulcifying paper*. This paper was all the more necessary, as for a long time past nearly all the paper for issues had been made by speculators who knew little or nothing of medicine, and used resinous substances for the purpose.

The choice of issue peas is not of much importance, as their function, *altogether mechanical*, is simply to keep the edges of the opening apart. All peas thoroughly dry are equally good, *provided they are perfectly inert*; but the elastic peas cannot be too scrupulously avoided, as their swelling may cause great suffering. To prevent the enlargement or diminution of the hole, care should be taken to select peas always of exactly the same size, just touching the edges of the opening without pressing against them.

To keep an issue in good order, it must be dressed twice a day; put the pea in the hole, cover it with half a sheet of *dulcifying paper* or an *ivy-leaf*, then add a compress of linen or spongy paper, and fasten the whole with a bandage of any kind, but not so tight as to impede the blood by indenting the muscles.



Notwithstanding the patronage of eminent physicians, Albespeyres's Paper, like all inventions, trifling or important, met with great opposition from the partisans of the old routine, who could not endure to see their practices set aside. They protested against it as a quack medicine!... A secret remedy! And yet it is evident that Albespeyres's Paper is not a medicine in any way : it falls within the category of sparadraps and dressings. The Blister is the real and powerful remedy, the Paper only an auxiliary. However, after science had spoken, the courts of justice issued their fiat, and Albespeyres's Paper has long since taken legal rank, without soliciting it, in the therapeutic codex published by order of the govern.

#### JUDGMENTS.

The following are the dates of the principal judgments which prove that Albespeyres's Paper, far from being a secret nostrum or quack medicine, is a valuable addition to the pharmacopœia :

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In certain cases, it is necessary to have recourse to special means. For instance, when the epidermis tends to reappear at the bottom of the issue, or when the suppuration is not sufficient, the pea must be covered with a little epispastic ointment before it is put in ; the fatty substance of the ointment will mitigate the exciting principle, and the suppuration will increase without causing any pain, an advantage not to be obtained with the so-called suppurating peas.

If a blow or another cause should happen to render the issue painful, the flesh must be brought back to its natural softness by the application of an emollient poultice, before the compress. In this case again, the patient must be careful not to change his usual peas; for it is not the hole only which is inflamed, but all the parts around on which the poultice acts.



1. July 7th, 1838, judgment of the Royal Court of Orleans;
2. April 27th, 1841, judgment of the Royal Court of Montpellier;
3. June 30th, 1841, judgment of the Royal Court of Rennes;
4. January 22nd, 1842, judgment of the Court of Cassation;
5. March 27th, 1844, judgment of the Royal Court of Douai.

#### COUNTERFEITS.

These repeated judgments, preceded by the chemical analyses which the tribunals always require in cases affecting the public health, constitute a judicial title which has given Albespeyres's Paper a special rank among the most esteemed medicinal preparations. But success is ever attended with certain drawbacks; it generally excites jealousy and heartburnings, which, in trade, often lead to dishonest acts. We have had to prosecute unprincipled persons, who, finding that their own names did not suffice to attract the notice of practitioners, impudently used the name of Albespeyres, as a lure to cheat the public into purchasing their spurious and worthless preparations.

“ There is no property more sacred,” said Count  
“ Chaptal in the Chamber of Peers (Report on the law  
“ of 28th July 1824) than the name of a manufacturer,  
“ who, by persevering application, straightforward  
“ honesty, and useful discoveries, has obtained an  
“ honourable position among the benefactors of his  
“ country and the founders of his industry. Preparations  
“ bearing such names are everywhere received with con-  
“ fidence, and that confidence is such that in general  
“ they are received without examination. ”



These words alone would justify our claims to respect for the name of Albespeyres.

In its sitting of the 17th June 1840, the tribunal of Péronne condemned M. C\*\*\*<sup>1</sup>, a counterfeiting chemist, to heavy damages, a fine, and the insertion of the judgment in several journals, at our choice and at his expense. (See *Gazette des Tribunaux*, 10th July, 1840.)

At Brussels, a still more audacious piracy was conducted on a large scale, and inundated Belgium and the adjacent countries with a spurious paper bearing the name of Albespeyres and sold at a very low price. Numerous complaints from parties who had been deceived by it soon enabled us to discover the maker, who was a person we should hardly have suspected, being no other than *our own principal agent!* The inquiry set on foot soon proved the co-operation of a pharmacian of Paris, who had already been prosecuted for a similar offence. It was ascertained that he only performed the first part of the manufacture, which was completed in Brussels.

“ M. Fumouze-Albespeyres,” says the judgment of 21st July 1854, “ *manufactures by a peculiar process known only to himself*, an epispastic paper sold to the public under the name of Albespeyres’s Paper. This paper, which enjoys a great reputation, has the same appearance as the epispastic papers made by several chemists according to the prescription in the Pharmacopœia, *though their effect may not be the same*, etc.

And further on :

“ M. B. L..., chemist, of Brussels, wishing to take advantage of the name of Albespeyres’s Paper, has counterfeited it.”

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<sup>1</sup> We only put the initials, as we are willing to let by-gones be by-gones ; but we might give the name in full, if we pleased.



Under these circumstances our course was clear : we appealed to Belgian justice and obtained complete satisfaction. We cannot do better, in order to give a complete account of a matter which so essentially interests the public health, than to quote the language of one of the most influential organs of the judicial press, the *Droit*, of the 15th June, 1855.

“ *Royal Court of Brussels, 30th May 1855.*

“ We have reported several decisions of foreign tribunals which have enforced the just appeals made to them by Frenchmen. We remarked that these examples would no doubt find imitators, and that there was reason to hope that the rights guaranteed to our countrymen, either by foreign laws or special treaties of commerce, would be faithfully observed by both parties, and that the shameful frauds practised to the loss of respectable tradesmen, and to the injury of consumers, would soon be brought to a close.

“ The Royal Court of Brussels has just resolutely entered on this course, by condemning to a year’s imprisonment a tradesman of Brussels who had counterfeited the products of one of our principal chemists.

“ The following are the facts of the case :

“ M. Fumouze-Albespeyres is the proprietor of *Albespeyres’s Paper*, which has an extensive sale in France and foreign countries.”

“ M. B. L<sup>\*\*\*</sup>, chemist, of Brussels, thought proper to manufacture and sell an epispastic paper, which he offered to the public as Albespeyres’s. The paper not having produced the usual effect, several purchasers denounced the fraud to the public prosecutor at Brussels.

“ Four hundred and ninety boxes of the counterfeit paper were seized, and after a strict investigation, the cause was tried by the Tribunal of First Instance ; and then, on appeal, by the Royal Court, presided by M. Corbisier de Meaultsar ; M. Kaieman, drew up the report of the inquiry ; M. Vleminkx was counsel for the plaintiff, and M. X<sup>\*\*\*</sup>, for the defendant.



After hearing the Advocate-general Heyndrick, the Court gave judgment as follows :

“ Whereas it is proved, by the evidence and documents produced that the defendant, after having caused to be printed counterfeits of the prospectuses, instructions, labels, marks and signatures, which envelope a medicament favourably known to the medical profession under the name of *Albespeyres's Epispastic Paper for dressing blisters*, did, for the sake of gain, sell to many persons an epispastic medicament which he had prepared or got prepared, and did fraudulently wrap it in the printed papers above-mentioned, in boxes likewise counterfeited, and offered and sold it under the name of *Albespeyres's Epispastic Paper* ;

“ Whereas the paper employed by Albespeyres, and expressly made by him, is of a soft texture, adapted to the sensitiveness of the skin ; and the paper sold by the defendant does not possess that advantage, but is, on the contrary, far inferior to the genuine paper, etc.

“ Whereas it is just, in fixing the punishment, not to lose sight of the fact that *the counterfeit may prove injurious to the public health*, and as the defendant has already been condemned, etc.”

And with regard to the plaintiff :

Whereas the conduct of the defendant as above shown, has necessarily thrown injurious discredit on the property of the plaintiff, on the one hand owing to the defendant's extensive business, and on the other to the plaintiff's numerous connection ; and as it is natural to think that the public attributed to the latter all the defects and inconveniences caused by the defendant's counterfeit ;

“ Whereas the injury is material and the plaintiff is entitled to claim compensation, in conformity with Art. 1382 of the Civil Code, and Art. 1. of the Code of Criminal Procedure :

“ Jean-Népomucène Adolphe B. L\*\*\* is declared guilty of the offence punished by Art. 423 of the Penal Code, etc.

“ And, in conformity with Arts. 423, and 42, of the Penal Code and Art. 194 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, *the said Jean-Népomucène-Adolphe B. L\*\*\* is condemned to one year's imprisonment*, and to pay a fine of 200 fr. ;



“ He is also condemned to pay the plaintiff the sum of 4,000 fr. as damages, with all costs of suit.

“ Fumouze-Albespeyres is authorized to insert the present judgment, at the defendant's expense, in one Paris journal and one Brussels journal, to be selected by the plaintiff.”

M. B. L<sup>\*\*\*</sup> appealed to the Court of Cassation against this judgment, but when the cause was called in court he withdrew his appeal, so that the sentence became definitive and was carried into execution.

#### DOCUMENTS PRODUCED IN COURT.

1. Specimens of the paper made on purpose to receive the epispastic ointments, by means of M. Albespeyres's machines.

2. Certificate of the deposit of M. Albespeyres's products at the Prud'hommes' secretary's office.

3. Copies of all the judgments mentioned in the preceding pages.

#### 4. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE.

##### *Hospital of St. Antoine.*

“ We the under-signed, physicians of the Hospital of St. Antoine, hereby certify that *Albespeyres's Blisters* have always given us great satisfaction both for the rapidity of their application and the certainty of the effect produced, and that it would be advantageous to employ them in the hospitals instead of the ordinary blisters.

“ BOURDON, ARAN, HÉRARD, RICHARD, *Physicians and Surgeon in chief.*”

“ *Albespeyres's Blisters*, prepared by M. Fumouze, are an excellent pharmaceutical preparation, of rapid and certain effect, which is not always the case with the ordinary blisters.

“ TORDOS, *pharmacian in chief;*

“ PAILLARD, *directeur.*”



5. THE MAYOR OF ST. DENIS, to *M. Fumouze-Albespeyres*.

"The administrative committee of the Civil and Military Hospital of St. Denis has been informed by Dr. Leroy des Barres and M. Meuridefroy, the dispensing chemist of that establishment, that for some time past you have gratuitously supplied our dispensary with your vesicating tissue for the use of the hospital.

"The committee received this communication with a feeling of just gratitude towards yourself, and have authorized me to inform you of the extreme satisfaction which this act of generosity on your part has caused them.

"Accept, etc.

"Got, mayor."

6. Professor Chevallier, when requested to give his opinion on the right of property in the name of Albespeyres, replied as follows:—

"In my opinion, no one can justly use the name of any man, living or dead, for the purpose of deceiving the public; no one, as I think, can abuse the name of a pharmacist, living or dead, by substituting gross preparations for efficacious products, and offering them for sale under the name of the genuine article; so doing is to rob the inventor and the public at the same time.

"I do not think that it can be morally right for any one to disgrace the names of *Pelletier* or *Albespeyres* by offering to the public, under the names of those inventors, imperfect preparations, which are not the same as those sold by those pharmacutists, who owe their fame to their science and probity.

"A. CHEVALLIER,

"Professor of the Superior School of Pharmacy,  
member of the Academy of Medicine, etc."

7. A certificate in the following terms:

"We the undersigned hereby certify that *Albespeyres's Epispastic Paper*, of which great quantities are sold, is exclusively



manufactured by M. Fumouze Albespeyres, sole proprietor of that preparation, as the pupil, son-in-law, and successor of the inventor, M. Albespeyres.

“ The name of *Albespeyres*, which *M. Fumouze* alone has the right to use and apply to his epispastics, is considered by the trade a guarantee of superiority.

SIGNED : “ *Truelle frères*, druggists, Paris ; — *Pégahaire et Perret*, do. ; — *Ph. Lefebvre*, do. ; — *Ch. Garnier*, do. ; — *L. Faure*, do. ; — *Ménier et C<sup>ie</sup>*, do. ; — *Provost frères*, do. ; — *Dorvault*, director of the Central Pharmacy ; — *Dr L. Ducom*, professor at the School of Pharmacy ; — *Fordos*, pharmacist-in-chief of the Hospital St. Antoine ; *Dr Foy*, do., of the Hospital St. Louis ; — *Pelouze*, member of the Institute ; — *Gélis*, assistant professor of chemistry at the College of France ; — *J.-B. Caventou*, prof. at the School of Pharmacy, member of the Imperial Academy of Medicine : — *J. Personne*, pharmacist-in-chief of the Hospital du Midi ; — *Acar*, first pharmacist to the Emperor.”

The judgment of the Brussels Tribunal was hailed as a boon by all the medical and pharmaceutic press, as the following extracts will suffice to prove.

*Union médicale*, of 20th June, 1855.—“ The Royal Court of Brussels has just delivered an important judgment, a knowledge of which may interest a certain number of our readers. This decision, indeed, seems to us destined to protect, in an efficient manner, a species of property held by many pharmacians in France, and which, in accordance with the principles we have always developed in this journal, and contrary to opinions which appear to us far too rigid, we are not at all disposed to exclude from the benefit of the laws which secure other possessions. We think it quite fair and perfectly moral, that a chemist who invents any really useful preparation, and obtains for it the sanction of competent scientific authorities, should be permitted to find in the sale of the said product some compensation for the sacrifices he made in effecting the discovery.



We are happy to see the judgment of the Royal Court of Brussels put an end to the shameless piracies of which French inventors have been the victims, especially in pharmaceutical products.

“ LATOUR.”

The *France médicale et pharmaceutique*, after publishing the judgment, adds :

“ The judgment we have published above will certainly open the eyes of all counterfeiters of pharmaceutical preparations. The courts of law, indeed, can hardly be too severe upon them, since the only means of preventing these commercial frauds is to prosecute all dealers who deceive their customers as to the nature or origin of their merchandize.

“ DR. ROUBAUD.”

The *Gazette des Hôpitaux*, the *Abeille médicale*, the *Journal de Chimie, Pharmacologie et Toxicologie*, etc., all expressed themselves to the same effect, and in equally positive language.

#### USURPATION OF THE NAME OF ALBESPEYRES.

Another description of offence, well calculated to impose upon the public, soon made its appearance, but was at once punished by the tribunals.

MM. H. and C., pharmacians of Paris, had founded an establishment where they pretended to make improved pharmaceutical products. So far as we were concerned, the improvement consisted in selling ordinary epispastic paper with labels and handbills, in some cases bearing the words *according to the process of Albespeyres*, in others *S. L. F. d'Albespeyres* only.

We immediately brought the affair before the Tribunal of Commerce, in Paris, and the pretended improvers



were enjoined to cease their manœuvres to pay us damages and all costs of suit, including the insertion of the judgment in five journals to be chosen by ourselves.

Messrs. H. and C. appealed, but the judgment was confirmed by the Imperial Court of Paris, on the 12th January 1857.

We thus see that dishonest competition assumes all forms, hides itself under any mask, and thinks no trickery to be despised that will draw money out of the pockets of the public. But if counterfeiting and such proceedings are contemptible in all kinds of trade, they become dangerous in pharmaceutic products. Good medicine cures; bad only aggravates the disease.

All countries are equally interested in the adoption of severe measures against pharmaceutical pirates, as the talented editor of the *Union médicale* very properly designates them. Is not public health the sovereign good of nations?



## IV

# CASES

## PROVING THE VALUE OF EXUTORIES

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**Epidemics.** — Many persons have been preserved from epidemic diseases by the use of exutories, and such means have been recommended by a great number of physicians. As no author, so far as we know, has treated the subject with greater sagacity than Dr *Carrère*, we here insert the more important passages of the paper he read before the Royal Medical Society, of Paris, on the 28th of March, 1783.

“ Epidemic diseases often make extensive ravages : they depopulate towns and villages; they carry off great numbers of citizens whose lives are valuable to the community ; they spread consternation wherever they prevail. The terrified inhabitants neglect their business to think only of the danger which threatens them. Some flee from the place of their birth and seek in distant regions a purer air exempt from contagion ; others, frightened at the condition of their neighbours, dare not approach them ; they are afraid of sharing their fate , and abandon them in their need ; the sufferers cannot obtain the necessary attendance ; and their situation becomes worse and worse. The ministers of health, more exposed to contagion by coming into close contact with their patients , run the



greatest risks; often, in their efforts to restore others to health, they perish themselves.

“ The means of preventing such complaints are therefore quite as important as those of curing them; I might even say that they are more important, and ought to be especially studied...

“ One of the means most commonly employed by practitioners, whenever they suspect the presence of a heterogeneous humour in the mass of the blood, consists in preparing a vent for it to escape. For this purpose they successfully apply blisters, setons, and issues. If this expedient suffices when the mass of the blood is already infected, there is reason to believe that it will be still more efficacious in preventing infection; it may at least hinder any impure miasms which enter the body from being assimilated with our fluids, impairing our constitution, communicating the virus they carry, or even depositing it in the viscera. In proportion as these deleterious miasms penetrate into the mass of our fluids, they will much more easily escape by these artificial emunctories: the infection of the fluids will become more difficult; consequently the body will be less exposed to receive contagion.

“ These reasons have been long familiar to many practitioners; they have sufficed to convince them of the necessity of providing a way of escape for the morbid matter which might gain admission to the body: medical men have therefore advised blisters, issues, and setons; they have recommended the most vigilant care in keeping up the runnings and other evacuations which existed in the body when an epidemic made its appearance; they have regarded these means as calculated to prevent contagion.”

Then he proceeds to say that this method is already ancient, and has been long practised in different nations:

“ It was used among the ancient Egyptians, according to *Prosper Alpin*; it was adopted by the Chinese, as stated by *Kempfer*; and we know from *Linnæus* that it was familiar to the people of the North.

“ Reason and authority are supported by observation; a great number of practitioners have recorded the good effect of these means, and their testimony is founded on experience...”



Having thus introduced the subject, *Carrère* quotes the opinions of numerous authorities, some few of which we will here transcribe.

“Such are,” says he, “*Alexander Massaria*, who advises, during the plague, the application of blisters, as a preservative against that fell disease; *Roderic Vega*, who, at the same time and with the same views, recommends the keeping open of all abscesses and ulcers already existing...; *Vicq-d’Azyr*, who considers the opening of an artificial drain as the most effective preventive ever employed against that disease; *Sennert* and *Zacutus Lusitanus*, who declare that during the prevalence of violent plagues, several persons were preserved from contagion by means of issues; *Diemberbroek* found the same means successful during the plague at Nimeguen, where he also saw several persons who escaped owing to inveterate ulcers on the thighs, which served the purpose of issues.

“*Galen* had already recorded the same fact; he noticed that all those who had ulcers on different parts of the body, escaped the pestilential infection.

“*Duchesne* and *Liddell* state that, to their knowledge, many physicians and surgeons who attended the plague-stricken found issues to be the best preservatives, and had braved all the worst chances of infection without any other precaution.

“*Le Paulmier* declares that he saw many persons who, when long exposed to pestilential contagion, escaped uninjured by means of artificial ulcers produced on their lower extremities.

“*Fabricius de Hilden*, who devoted himself to the treatment of the sufferers by the plague which raged at Lausanne in 1613, had two issues made on his own person, and to them he attributes his escape from the disease. He further declares that of all the persons who had issues, he knew only one or two die of the plague, and they were suffering from vitiated humours.

“*Forestus* saw many people preserved from contagion by the same means, and particularly the men employed in burying the victims of the plague. He also mentions instances of a monk, a surgeon, and a servant maid employed in a pest-house during the plague at Delft in 1557, who never took the infec-



tion, which he attributes to the running sores they had on different parts of the body.

“ *Mercurialis*, in his account of the destructive plague at Venice and Padua in 1575 and 1576, asserts that he never knew any one who had an issue to be attacked, nor did any of his medical friends. *George Garnerus* made the same observation during the plague at Venice; *Massaria* likewise attests the same fact.

“ The experience of *Van der Linden* fully supports that of *Mercurialis*, *Garnerus*, and *Massaria*; he relates that one of his uncles, who happened to be in Morocco, when the plague carried off 85,000 persons in five weeks, owed his preservation to an issue; that he recommended the same means to a Jewish physician, who attended the plague-stricken, and he was also preserved, as were all the other persons to whom they applied the same remedy. *Van der Linden* further states that he himself experienced its efficacy.

“ We learn from *Bonet*, that a doctor employed in attending persons sick of the plague preserved himself and many others by means of a seton in each groin; the same expedient was equally successful with *Prenestus*, a Hungarian physician, a fact recorded by *Walter Harris*. *John Baptiste Alprun* had recourse to similar means with the like result: having to attend patients during the plague which ravaged Germany in 1679, he made a slight incision in each groin with a lancet and inserted a pledget to keep the wound open; these wounds kept up a continuous and abundant discharge, to which he ascribes his escape from infection, although he ventured upon the dangerous experiment of analyzing the pus taken from a bubo on a patient who had the plague. He applied the same remedy to two of his friends, and both were saved.

“ I will also mention here the case of that consul of Aix, who, when the plague was raging in Provence at the beginning of the eighteenth century, exposed his life continually and without any precaution to the contact of the pestilential virus, and nevertheless escaped; he had long been suffering from an ulcer in the nose, the suppuration of which most probably saved him.

“ *M. Delpech*, surgeon-major of a regiment in the Polish



service, related to me a fact which confirms what I have already said. He was with his regiment at Kiminieck, in Podolia, where the plague was raging; he noticed that none of the soldiers who had runnings or suppurations took the disease, although it was most destructive."

Carrère concludes this long enumeration with full particulars of a case observed by himself.

"On the return of the French troops from Portugal in 1763, a malignant fever of the worst type invaded the military hospital at Perpignan; no fewer than 3200 persons had it. The disease attacked all who approached the patients or breathed the same air; two young physicians who attended the hospital and all the officials, chaplains, surgeons, apothecaries, and wardsmen caught it, and the majority died. The ward for the wounded adjoined the principal fever ward. Nearly all the wounded were assailed by the same disease; none escaped, but those whose wounds were suppurating favourably. It was even noticed that if the suppuration happened to cease, they soon had the fever; it therefore became indispensable to remove them to another place when their wounds showed a tendency to heal and the suppuration began to diminish; from that moment they all escaped the contagion.

"This observation is very important; the suppuration of the wounds appears to have been a real preservative for those patients in whom it existed: its suppression, on the contrary, was soon followed by an attack of the fever; consequently this case appears to demonstrate the efficacy of any discharge in preserving from contagious epidemic diseases."

These facts led Carrère to the following conclusions:

"It results from all these observations that an evacuation provoked and maintained by the application of blisters, issues, setons, or by any other means, is an excellent preservative against epidemic diseases; but this same means is also well adapted to prevent the progress of the said diseases, when it has been employed from their first appearance."



*Carrère*, in conclusion, supports this last inference by the opinion of *Galen*, *Simon Jacoz*, *Jacobus Lind*, and relates remarkable instances of the preventive and curative action of blisters during the plague which ravaged France in 1628 and 1629.

**Epizooties.** — After showing the efficacy of blisters on the human species as a preservative and curative in epidemic diseases, *Carrère* asks whether the same means might not have equal success in contagious diseases among animals.

“ Might we not,” says he, “ apply to epizootic diseases what I have just remarked with regard to epidemics? Their effects are often most destructive; they frustrate the hopes of the farmer and deprive us of an essential part of our daily food. Their course seems to be the same as that of epidemics. Why should we not employ the same means to preserve animals? Issues, setons, rowels, blisters applied on certain parts of the animal, as the neck for instance, the ears, the shoulders, the corners of the eyes; boring holes in the horns, proposed by *Fantasti*, and other similar means, might protect them from contagion.

“ This means has long been known: *Columella*, *Vegetius*, *Gesner* recommended it; *M. de Secondat* asserted its efficacy; *Lancin* extolled it as being often the surest of all remedies; *M. de Montigny* and *M. Vicq-d'Azyr* advised it as the most efficacious, and we learn from *M. Bertin* that it was successfully applied by a planter at Guadaloupe to preserve cattle during a murrain which ravaged that island. By what fatality has it been nearly always neglected? Its benefits were generally recognized during the epizootic disease which raged all over France in 1774 and 1775. Drs. *Vicq-d'Azyr*, *Herment*, *Drouin*, *La Coste*, *Dufau*, *Prat*, *Larse*, and *Blechet* advised issues, blisters, setons, acupuncture, scarification, and piercing of the horns; but these remedies were only prescribed and employed for cattle already attacked by the disease. It should be the very first means employed when an infectious cattle disease makes its appearance in any given locality; it might result in the saving



of an immense number of animals by preserving them from contagion.

“ My sole object in this paper has been to collect all the reasons and cases calculated to prove the efficacy of the means in question; I attach to it no farther importance than that of inducing practitioners to try it and make known the results. I should think my labours amply rewarded if I should thereby contribute to diminish the number of persons whom epidemics snatch from their families and the state.”

To the facts cited by Carrère, we will add the observation of Raymond, who, when the plague was at Marseilles, experienced sudden and very copious perspiration in the arm-holes, kept it up with great care, notwithstanding its fetid odour, and attributed to it his good fortune in escaping the contagion, although living in the midst of the plague-stricken, to whom he devoted his whole care.

Do not all these examples seem to indicate, how dangerous it would be during an epidemic to diminish or suppress suppurations or natural secretions? Would it not be wise, on the contrary, to create them by artificial sores, blisters, issues, setons, etc.? Blisters are now preferred on account of their more speedy action and the facility of applying them.

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**Cholera.**—If we observe the course followed by cholera within the last half century, and follow it in its terrible visitations, from nation to nation, from town to town, from province to province, everywhere striking the people with terror, it will be impossible not to recognize, in its irregular, capricious, intermitting course, the characteristics of all the great epidemics, whose gloomy visitations are recorded in history.



Perhaps we might escape the cholera, as others have escaped the plague, by promptly having recourse to exu-tories and keeping them in a state of active suppuration.

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“ In malignant and pestilential fevers, it is necessary to apply as many as five blisters at once on different parts of the body.”

RIVIÈRE.

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“ In adynamic, ataxic, and other fevers, blisters must be employed with the utmost promptitude at the very commencement of the attack. How many patients die through delay! It is true that the physician is often misled by the gastric symptoms which accompany the onset of adynamic fever, but then it is advisable to follow up the emetic with a blister more promptly than is usual. Far from doing this however, many practitioners fatigue their patients by purging. It is chiefly in the contagious typhus that I have had occasion to see the disastrous results of this practice. Hence the degenerescences, gangrenous eschars, etc., which supervene when blisters are applied too late.”

(ALIBERT'S *Thérapeutique*.)

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“ King Charles V., surnamed the Wise, had been poisoned by an infamous conspiracy; the poison brought him to death's door, and from that time his health remained extremely delicate. What chiefly contributed to keep him alive was a suppuration which a skilful physician from Germany, sent by the Emperor, had produced in his arm; telling him that if it should ever happen to dry up, he would not have long to live.”

DE BARANTE.

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“ Napoleon, when commanding the artillery at the siege of Toulon, caught a very malignant itch, in one of the batteries. After a short treatment, it disappeared; but the virus had only



gone inwards <sup>1</sup>; it long affected his health, and well-nigh cost him his life. It was not till long afterwards, at the Tuileries, that Corvisart completely restored him to health by means of numerous blisters on the chest."

(*Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène.*)

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"Blisters, as evacuants and stimulants, are the best remedies that can be employed in hydrocephalus; they are attended with no inconvenience, and I have, in a manner, almost covered a patient with them. I have kept them open as long as possible, and never found any reason to suppose that they had any bad effect."

ODIER.

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"When the humour forming the callus in fractures is too copious, it is advisable to apply a blister on the opposite limb to attract a part of the humour to that side."

CELSUS.

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"Blisters are employed with benefit for diseases of the chest, head-aches, ophthalmia, inflammation of the face or ears; epilepsy, catalepsy, inflammation of the brain; small-pox when the eruption is difficult; purple fevers, rheumatic pains, sciatica, the gout, pestilential and malignant fevers, etc."

PROSPER ALPIN.

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"In pleurisies, it often appears, whether there is loss of blood or not, that a difficulty of breathing and expectorating intervenes, which places the patient in peril of losing his life. This danger is to be avoided by applying blisters on the legs and thighs."

BAGLIVI.

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“The resorption of the serous collections which are formed under the influence of meningitis, pleurisy, peritonitis, gout, etc.;

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<sup>1</sup> In the course of this work we have sometimes allowed ourselves to quote opinions which have since been exploded, as we did not like to mutilate the text.



the resolution of these phlegmasies and that of the lungs, *is singularly accelerated by the action of blisters.*

“ They are perhaps still more beneficially applied against rheumatic pains unattended with inflammation or fever, against certain neuralgic pains, and especially against sciatica.”

GERDY.

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“ At the beginning of an inflammation, when it is not positively declared, and is, as it were, in a state of doubt and hesitation, a blister applied on some distant part may prevent it, by operating a revulsion. If, on the contrary, it has attained its second stage and is fully declared, the impetuosity of the *ruptus humorum* may be diminished by applying irritants near the inflamed organ.”

GUILLLOT.

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“ I have been troubled with a most persisting and violent cough which I could not relieve till I applied blisters.”

Dr. WILLIS.

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“ Dr. *Velpeau* dissipates diffused flegmons in the abdominal region by covering it almost entirely with a blister.

“ In all the stages of pleurisy and local inflammations, Dr. *Gendrin* covers the chest with an immense blister, which soon dispels the inflammation.”

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“ In a suffocating bronchial catarrh, a small blister is sometimes applied on the leg or the breast, and if the symptoms are not removed, the remedy is condemned as worthless, when the ignorance of the prescriber is alone in fault. How, indeed, can it be naturally expected, that a bronchial inflammation which occupies probably a surface of several square yards, should be dispelled by a blister of only a few square inches, any more than a serious inflammation of the chest would be, by taking away an ounce or two of blood?

“ The only means is that which *Velpeau* applied so successfully. He saw that the remedy must be proportioned to the



intensity and extent of the inflammation, and we have known him, by means of blisters which covered the whole surface of a limb, dissipate deep phlegmons which threatened to produce the most disastrous results. To the same cause also must be ascribed the success of M. Gendrin, who, at the first appearance and at the crises of a pleurisy and a pneumonia never hesitates to cover all one side of the chest with a continuous blister."

TROUSSEAU and PIDOUX.

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"A woman, aged 24, of a sanguine and robust constitution, whom an ignorant doctor had most improperly treated, was brought to the Hospital St. Louis on the nineteenth day of a confluent small-pox. She was in a desperate state : her whole body presented the aspect of a crust irregularly cracked and sunk, exhaling an intolerable stench ; her breathing was hurried and laborious, her voice gone, her eyes hollow, etc. I immediately applied two large blisters on the patient's thighs. The next day, to our great astonishment, she was not quite so ill. We redoubled our cares and attentions. I prescribed two more blisters on the legs, and from that time she kept gradually mending, and at last quite recovered, after a very long and painful convalescence."

ALIBERT.

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"Drs. *Bermond* and *Nonat* have found no mode of treatment so effective as flying blisters in phlebitis, after bloodletting, and in spontaneous phlebitis of the limbs."

(*Gazette de Méd. et de Chim.*)

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"A pork-butcher, aged 40, received a hurt over the left hypochondrium from a violent kick by a horse, which knocked him backwards and left him insensible on the ground. Acute and persisting pain inside immediately above the part struck ; small and intermitting pulse ; comatous state, on reviving from which the patient began to complain of the severe pain he felt. There was reason to fear the formation of a gathering or an extravasation in the abdomen. Several cupping-glasses were



applied and blood drawn, then two blisters on the legs and two more on the hypochondria. On the seventh day, the patient voided with his urine a quantity of blackish bilious matter : he recovered."

BROUSSONET.

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"A clergyman had a heavy fall in the street, owing to his foot slipping, and was picked up by the passengers in a state of hemiplegia, or paralysis of one side. He recovered feeling and movement only by the use of flying blisters, applied alternately on the paralysed arm, side, and thigh."

ALIBERT.

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"In intercostal neuralgia, Valleix obtained beneficial results only from flying blisters; but if the pain persists, salt of morphia must be applied to the part, beginning with one-fifth of a grain. The blister must be laid on the most painful point. Sometimes one blister will remove or relieve the suffering on the two other points : however, when the latter persist, as most frequently happens, each of them must have its blister. The treatment is the same in lumbo-abdominal neuralgia."

(Extracted from GRISOLLE's *Traité de Pathologie*.)

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"If sciatica persists, it will be necessary to attack it at once by the mode of treatment which, as Cotugno has proved, is most certain against that kind of affection — I mean blisters.

"The blister must be laid on the most painful part : if the pain is felt next day in other parts, it must be followed up with the same remedy. For intense sciatica it may thus be necessary to apply simultaneously, or at short intervals, a blister on the top of the thigh close to the abdomen, others at the head of the fibula, on the inside of the calf, on the ankle, and on the top of the foot, all of which places were equally approved by Cotugno. The subsequent treatment must depend on the effects produced."

GRISOLLE.

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“ In Raymond's opinion, the only means of curing retrocedent or displaced gout, besides the appropriate internal medication, consists in the application of drawing topics, on the joints previously attacked, beginning by the weakest and gradually advancing to blisters. If these means produce redness, humour, or pain in the part, it may be inferred that the gout is tending towards them, and will soon quit its internal seat and relieve the patient.”

GIRAUDY.

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“ A soldier, aged 24, had been attacked with an eruptive affection which extended to all the thoracic and abdominal region, to the neck and the face. Bleeding and the use of an ointment caused the pimples to disappear; but soon after, his lungs became affected; he was troubled with a short dry cough, extreme weakness, obstinate diarrhœa, and became quite emaciated. At the Hospital St. Louis, this man was wonderfully relieved by blisters, which were successively applied on the different parts where the eruption had appeared.”

ALIBERT.

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“ *Dupuytren* spoke highly of blisters as a means of arresting and curing flying erysipelas; and some physicians have entirely surrounded the affected parts with blisters to stop the migrations of the disease.”

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“ A tailor, aged 24, had long suffered with a scaly tetter which broke out sometimes on the face, at others on the hands, and at last just above the knee. He had tried all kinds of remedies in vain. From the knee, it flew to the breast, and from that time his breathing became difficult, the mucous membrane of the larynx affected; his voice was hoarse, and he expectorated mucous sputa either purulent or streaked with blood. Blisters applied on the different parts diminished the oppression in a most decided manner.”

ALIBERT.

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“ A boy, aged 10, was threatened with the loss of sight by the retrocession of a furfuraceous tetter, which first made its appearance on the left side of the head. He was promptly relieved by a small blister at the back of the neck.”

ALIBERT.

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“ After the application of blisters, I have always found diarrhœa arrested, to the great relief of the patient.”

BAGLIVI.

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“ *Raymond*, to whom the medical profession is indebted for many valuable observations on cutaneous diseases, used to cure tetters, scald-head, and all diseases of the skin by the employment of exutories. In repelled tetters, the use of large blisters on the seat of the disease appeared to him the only remedy.

*A. Paré* has recorded a case of a young girl who had a suppurating tetter on the face, and was cured by the application of a blister upon it. This bold experiment of the great surgeon has been successfully repeated by many practitioners.”

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“ The principle of miliary fever, when once it has found admission into the body, must be expelled by the exhaling vessels. Experience demonstrates that they are the best adapted to carry off morbid miasmata; nature always gives them the preference.

“ The means adopted for the purpose are diaphoretics, proper diet, and blisters.

“ Frictions, next to blisters, produce the most decided effect. It is not unusual to see all alarming symptoms at once disappear. When they are employed at the onset of the disease, the sweats do not appear, the eruption is less abundant, and often does not come on. They draw the morbid matter outward, and are especially advantageous in malignant miliary fevers; these exutories should be then freely applied, and always kept open.”

BARRAILON.

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“ The salutary effects of blisters are nowhere more frequently observed than in the Hospital Saint Louis, which is the great receptacle for chronic diseases. They are there daily applied to displace inveterate inflammations, to counteract morbid tendencies of the tonic powers, etc.”

ALIBERT,

*Head physician of the Hospital St. Louis.*




## CONCLUSION

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We might continue our extracts without end : such passages abound in all the best medical works, and a patient reader might soon accumulate enough of them to make a large volume; but those we have already given amply suffice for our purpose.

Our object has been to call attention to a curative agent which holds an honourable place in all schools of medicine, and in all nations; equally esteemed by Hippocrates and Galen; always placed in the first rank by the greatest medical authorities of ancient and modern times.

We have scrupulously respected the *text* of the authors quoted, in order that our readers, if we should be honoured with any, may perceive the differences in language and principles all leading to the same result : *the efficacy of exutories.*





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