

**Chiropodologia, or, A scientific enquiry into the causes of corns, warts, onions, and other painful or offensive cutaneous excrescences : with a detail of the most successful methods of removing all deformities of the nails; and of preserving, or restoring, to the feet and hands their natural soundness and beauty. The whole ... systematically confirmed by the practice and experience of D. Low, chiropodist.**

### **Contributors**

La Forest, Nicolas Laurent, Chirurgien-Pédicure, active 1781.  
Low, D. chiropodist.

### **Publication/Creation**

London : Printed by J. Rozea ... Sold by the author ... T. Hookham ... T. Davies ... Scatcherd & Whitaker ... and W. Richardson ..., [1785]

### **Persistent URL**

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/b43cq87f>

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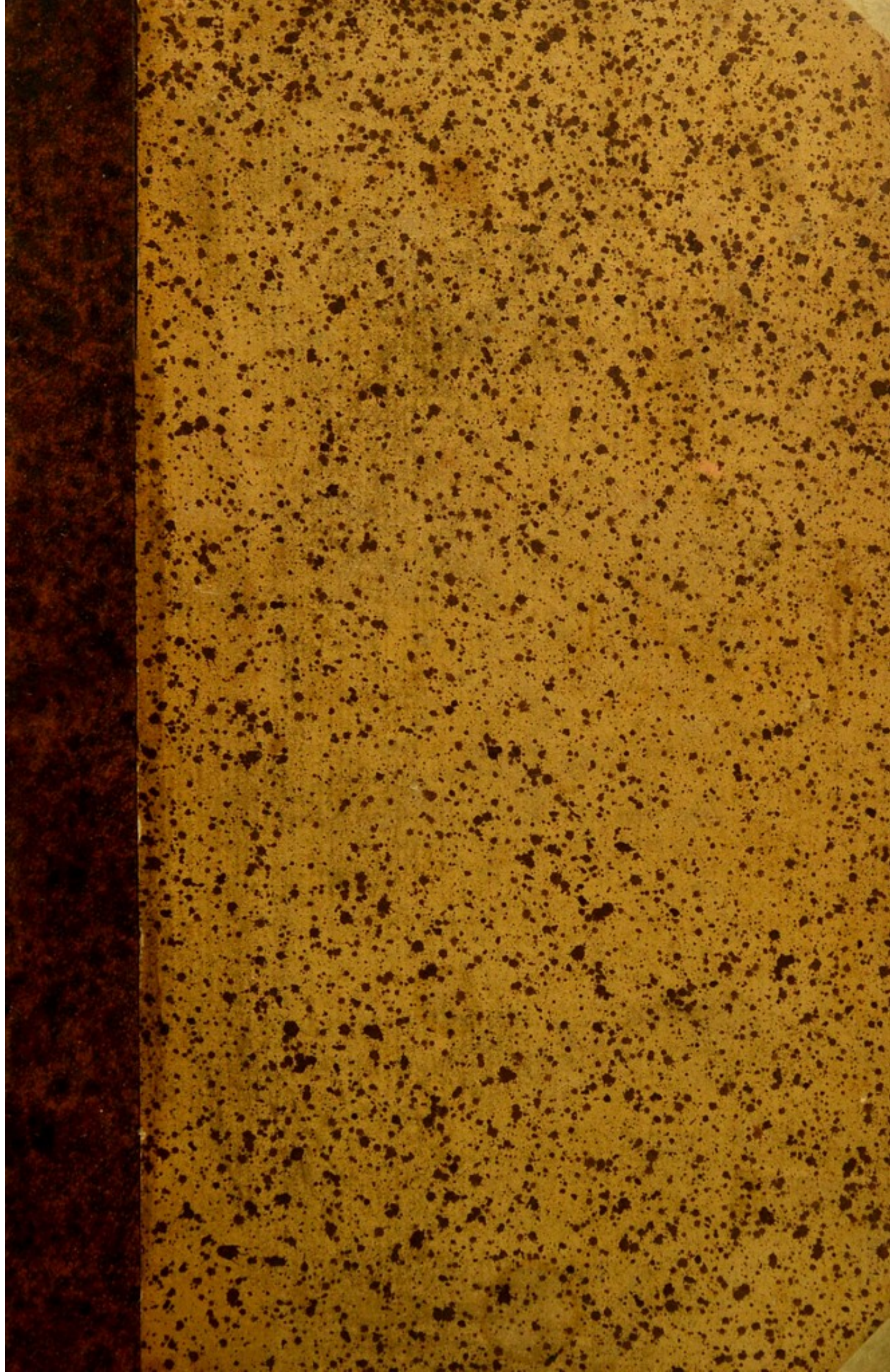
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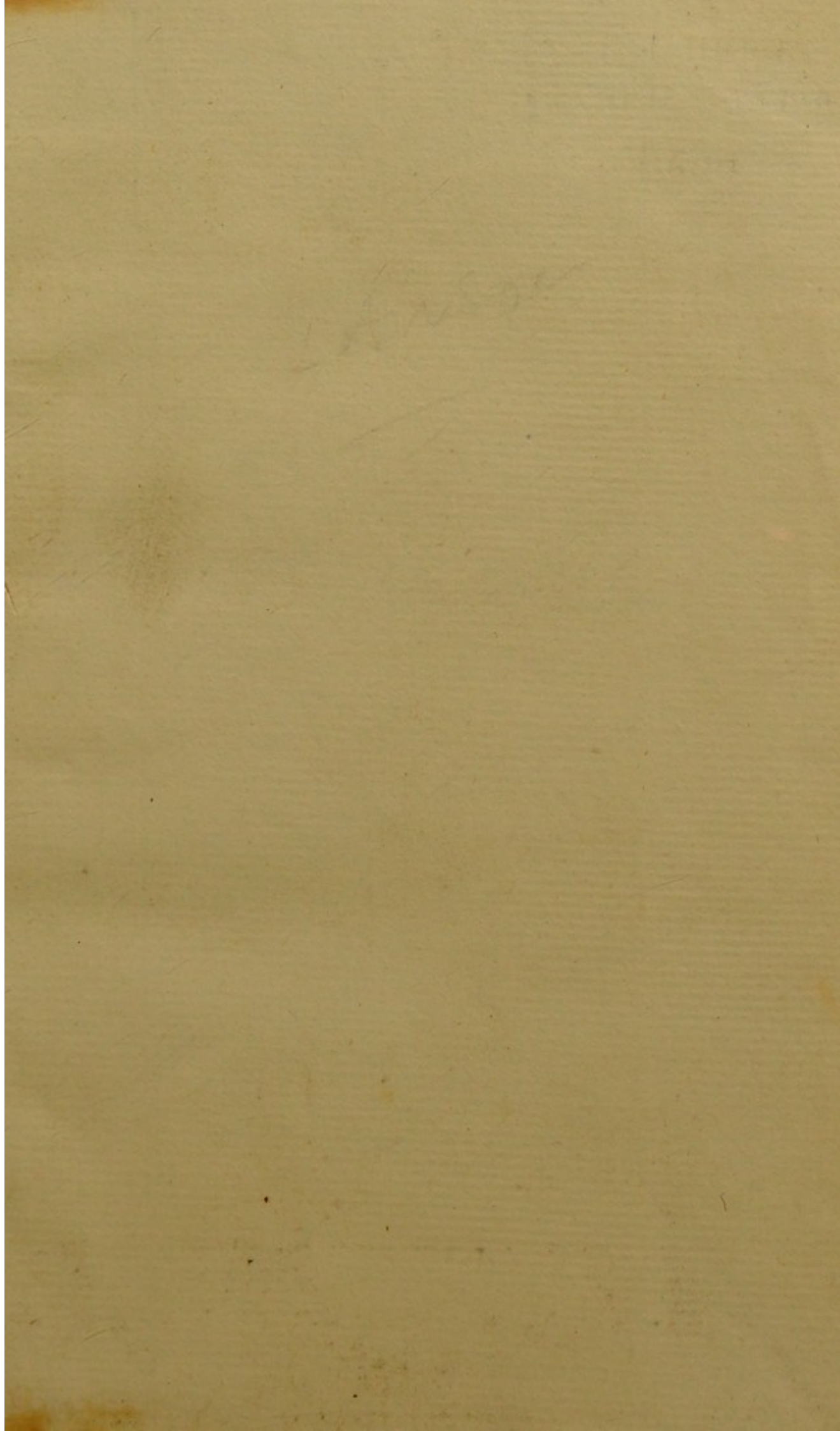






Supp. 59661/13

LA FOREST, NICOLAS LAURENT







**CHIROPODOLOGIA.**



CHIROPPODOLOGIA.

*Very rare*

# CHIROPODOLOGIA,

OR, A

## SCIENTIFIC ENQUIRY

INTO THE CAUSES OF

CORNS, WARTS, ONIONS, and  
other painful or offensive CUTANEOUS  
EXCRESCENCES :

WITH

A Detail of the most successful METHODS of  
removing all Deformities of the NAILS ; and  
of preserving, or restoring, to the FEET and  
HANDS their natural Soundness and Beauty.

THE WHOLE

Founded on the approved Doctrines of the first Medical  
and Chirurgical A U T H O R S, and systematically  
confirmed by the Practice and Experience of

D. L O W, C H I R O P O D I S T.

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— Si tibi vera videtur,  
Dede manus : aut, si falsa est, accingere contra.  
LUCRET. *Lib. 2.*

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L O N D O N :

Printed by J. ROZEA, No. 91, Wardour-Street, Soho.

S O L D B Y

The AUTHOR, No. 42, Davies Street, Berkeley Square ;  
T. HOOKHAM, New Bond-Street ; T. DAVIES, Ruffel  
Street, Covent-Garden ; SCATCHERD & WHITAKER,  
Ave-Maria-Lane ; and W. RICHARDSON, Cornhill.

[circa 1770]



CHIROPODOLOGIA

OR

SCIENTIFIC ENQUIRY

INTO THE CAUSE OF  
CORNE, WARTS, ONIONS, and  
other painful or obnoxious CUTANEOUS  
EXCRESCENCES:

349012 WITH

A list of the most successful Remedies of  
them by all the Authorities of the NAILS; and  
of including, according to the FET and  
HARRIS's original Bandage and Ointment.

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is now in the Press, and will be published  
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No. 10. Strand, London.

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## P R E F A C E.

**N**umberless are the diseases and deformities of the feet and hands; numberless also are the specifics, or pretended specifics, which have been pompously announced, and credulously adopted for the cure of them. With too much truth, indeed, may they be styled *pretended*; for, as on the one hand, the very circumstance of their *multiplicity* evinces, that no *real* discovery of the kind has yet existed, so, on the other, we may from every rational principle in medicine conclude, that, like many other still more important desiderata in the healing art, nothing worthy to be so called ever *will* exist.



Let it not be supposed then, that the Author of the following Treatise, stooping to rank himself with the *charlatans* of the day, means to insinuate that he is possessed of any such *general* nostrum, or conceives it to be in the ingenuity of man to devise one. Far different is *his* object in the ensuing pages; and from *them* he trusts it will appear, that, scorning to mislead by artifice, it is his sole desire to instruct with candour.

Convinced that, like all other complaints incident to the human frame, the *external* ones in question, trifling as they may *comparatively* appear, are too various, and too complicated, to admit of a *specific* mode of cure, he has for many years, partly as a source of rational amusement, and partly as an object of professional emolument,



emolument, made it his study to ascertain their *actual causes* from their *known effects*.

This was no easy task; but it was the only one which could open to him the avenues to truth: and hence it is that, having to the fruits of his own observation and experience, added those of the most distinguished practitioners, both ancient and modern, he has been at length enabled to form such a series of plain rules and directions, as cannot fail, he flatters himself, to qualify ladies and gentlemen to become **THEIR OWN CHIROPODISTS**, unless in particular cases, which may require the interposition of a very nice manual operation.

In private practice they have already



x INTRODUCTION.

Various as the diseases of these parts are in their effects, there yet appears to be little diversity in their causes—so little indeed, that we may reasonably reduce them to two heads; namely, violent or immoderate exercise on foot, and the use, or rather the abuse of shoes. To these may be added, as a co-operative cause, the slothful inattention of people in general to the parts themselves, from an absurd contempt of the manifold evils to which, through such inattention, they are continually exposed.

The grand fault, however, is to be ascribed to the habit of wearing short or narrow shoes, or rather, perhaps, unrefined as the idea may appear, to the habit of wearing them at all. Without shoes, the most delicate feet, far from being injured

injured



injured by fatigue, would be more and more hardened and invigorated by it; and for the truth of this remark, let us turn our eyes to various countries yet uncivilised, in which the *luxury* of wearing a SHOE is still unknown, and in which is likewise still unknown the *pain* which results from a CORN.

In fact, nothing can be more evident than that from the use of shoes, and especially those which the tyrant FASHION has so long modelled for us, the feet are exposed to a perpetual friction. From this friction originate CORNS, CALLOSITIES, and those bulbous excrescences, which, resembling an onion in form, are as yet undignified with a more polite, or more scientific appellation than that of ONIONS merely. Beside, it



not only checks the NAILS in their growth, but augments their deformity; and, while it obstructs the natural course of the perspiration, it renders that important fluid so acrid and corrosive, as not unoften to produce, in addition to the above-mentioned complaints, others still more painful and more dangerous. But, waving general assertions, let us proceed to a detail of those stubborn things called **FACTS.**

**CHAP.**



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# CHIROPODOLOGIA.

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## C H A P. I.

### A DEFINITION of CORNS.

**D**IFFERENT authors have given to this complaint different names. What we call a Corn, Avicenna describes as an excrescence little different in substance from the Nails, and situated near to one or other of the extreme joints of the toe. This definition, however, seems not to be conformable to the real nature of a Corn.

The Latins called it sometimes *white Wart*, sometimes *Clavus*, or *Nail*; and this last name it obtained merely from its  
resemblance



resemblance to the head of a nail. By others it has been styled--quaintly enough, it must be confessed--the *eye of the foot*; an appellation that took its rise from a certain black speck visible on the centre of the Corn, and similar, as alleged, to that on the eye, which is the instrument of vision.

Few medical writers, even of antiquity, have omitted to treat of Corns. Celsus, in his dissertation on the diseases of the skin, distinguished them from other cuticular excrescences, by the circumstance of their abounding less in blood. Bernard Valentine touches upon their nature, and their various causes, in his large system of surgery; and he, moreover, relates fundry instances of mischief that had happened from the imprudent, or the unskilful cutting of

Corns.



Corns. Juncker enters copiously upon the subject of them, and lays down a variety of methods by which they may be cured. Verduc has noticed them also, in his Pathology; nor did the great Heister think it beneath him to devote a whole chapter to a discussion of the means by which relief might be obtained from such troublesome, if not dangerous complaints.

Corns have also been commented on by Dolæus in his Encyclopedia; by Pigray in his Epitome; by Col-de-Villars, in his Course of Surgery; by Lavauguion in his Treatise of Operations; by Freke in his Art of Healing; and by a variety of other gentlemen highly celebrated in the medical world. If we attend ever so minutely, nevertheless, to all that has been said by them on the subject, we shall still have  
the



the mortification to find, that our labour has been in a great measure lost ; and that the authors in question, meanly stooping, almost without exception, to become the fervile plagiarists of each other, have produced nothing valuable as the fruit of THEIR OWN *observation and experience*.

Considered in a general light, a Corn may be defined a round tubercle, or cutaneous excrescence, little different in its nature from a Wart, or a Callosity.

Wifeman is of opinion, that there is an essential difference between a Corn and a Wart in one respect, namely, that the latter pushes itself outwardly from the skin, and the former, commencing



mencing in the cuticle, spreads its roots inwardly ; a remark which, founded as it is in truth, has been uniformly confirmed to me by practice.



CHAP.



## C H A P. II.

*Of the* ORIGIN *and* NATURE *of* CORNS.

**T**HE cause of this complaint is ascribed to the existence of a gross and viscid humour, which, hardened in the pores of the skin by a constant pressure, forms at length a callous substance.

Platerus alleges, that excrescences of this sort are produced by the nutritive juice destined for the use of the skin, but obstructed and hardened in the pores by means of this constant pressure.

According to the doctrine of Lavau-  
guion, Corns are occasioned by a rupture  
of the nervous filaments of the *plexus*, or  
reticular substance of the skin; in which  
case,



case, the nutritive juice, which otherwise continually distils from their extremities, becomes coagulated under the epidermis, or scarf-skin, and thus gradually forms the substance of such excrescences.

This system is not only highly probable in itself, but has also for its support the testimony of observation; for I have never yet found a real Corn which was not either on the articulation of the phalanges, or at the extremity of one of them.

Hence I conclude, that Corns and Callosities originate from one and the same cause, namely, a constant pressure or friction. This difference is observable, however, that Corns are more frequently produced by pressure, and Callosities by friction; because the latter more particularly



larly affects the epidermis, which is the natural seat of a Callosity, whereas the former, penetrating in its effects to the inward extremity of the very hide, violently compresses the heads of the bones, and thus lacerates the adjacent parts.

In slightly uncovering the surface of a Corn with a proper instrument, we may perceive two, and sometimes even three, white specks. These are vulgarly called its *roots*. They are neither more nor less, however, than so many lacerations, or rather, more properly to describe them, so many ruptured points, in which the lymph, obstructed in its circulation, has become coagulated.

Sometimes the callous substance of a Corn appears perfectly firm and dry; sometimes,



sometimes, again, it is found of a consistence resembling glue. This last circumstance, however, rarely happens but to persons advanced in years, who have been long subject to Corns ; and the reason is, that Nature having for a long period chalked out for herself a passage toward the toes, the humours, reduced to a greater degree of attenuation, form a more copious efflux to those parts.

In many cases, beneath the Corn there appears a vesicle, or little bag of blood, which, the moment it begins to ferment, creates grievous pains.

Great anguish is also experienced from a species of Corn which affects the articulations of the phalanges of the toes, but particularly of the little toes. From the



most minute attention and enquiry, I am convinced that this Corn proceeds, like all the rest, from a rupture, or laceration of the nervous filaments of the skin; but that the laceration having happened when the capsulæ of the joints, and probably also the adjacent membranes, were swelled, the skin had formed an adherence thereto. And this adherence is attended with the more pain, as from the least friction, the skin, deprived of its natural moisture, is sure to be affected in the most sensible manner.

Let me not close this article without observing, that a genuine Corn does not always confine its ravages to the toe. I have already observed, that the lacerations which give birth to Corns are occasioned by a friction of the boney parts,



parts, or by an external pressure. Not only therefore may the soles of the feet, but also their sides, be affected by them; and in such cases, the Corn is surrounded with a hard Callosity, which, encreasing its bulk, tends not a little to harass the patient, and to encrease his misery.





## C H A P. III.

*Of the PAIN occasioned by CORNS.*

**M**ANY causes contribute to the pain occasioned by Corns; a pain which, as I have already shewn, is particularly violent, when there happens to be an adherence of the skin to the adjacent membranes, or to the capsulæ of the joints.

In those which are callous at their extremities, a continual filtration is formed from within, where the source of the complaint lies; but from this filtration, which may be considered as an effort of Nature to unburthen herself, dreadful



dreadful shootings arise, and, not un-often, very alarming inflammations.

In itself, a Corn is absolutely void of sensibility; nor would it at all be productive of pain, but from its said connection with, and adherence to the skin, or to the capsulæ of the joints. This is demonstrable from the quantities of horny matter which are daily pared from Corns, without exciting in the patient the smallest sense of uneasiness.

The excrementitious humour that forms the substance of a Corn, may not unaptly be compared to a piece of cat-gut, which becomes more or less shrivelled when dry, and more or less tumefied when moist. In each of these states, as occasioned by the atmosphere,



Corns are productive of pain, often too of inflammation ; and hence perhaps arose the saying, handed down to us by our grandfathers and grandmothers, that persons thus afflicted require not an *almanack*, predictive of the changes that may happen in the weather, their *feet* being sufficient monitors to them on that head.

Before I proceed to elucidate the methods of either palliating or eradicating the evils in question, it may not be improper to point out such as experience has confirmed to be effectual against certain other cutaneous inflammations and excrescences, which though widely different from Corns, are yet often confounded with them. This duty I think the more incumbent upon me, as it may  
enable



enable my readers to ascertain clearly when they are, and when they are not afflicted with Corns ; and thus put them upon their guard against the delusions of quacks, who, because they may occasionally have had it in their power to cure certain *inferior* complaints of the feet and toes, scruple not to boast that it is equally in their power to eradicate Corns, and every other disorder of those parts, however obstinate.





## C H A P. IV.

*Of certain CUTANEOUS EXCRESCENCES  
vulgarly, but erroneously, styled CORNS.*

**T**HE feet are liable to a number of external maladies, on which it would be needless, and indeed superfluous, to expatiate at present. By our learned countryman, Doctor Turner, and other writers, who have enlarged on the various diseases of the skin, ample instructions are given concerning them; and, at any rate, the object of the present Treatise (so far as it relates to the feet) being to investigate the nature and cure of those accidents merely which proceed from violent or immoderate exercise on foot, or from the use of short

or



or narrow shoes, confusion, not information, would be the result, were I to extend my views farther.

In walking, the toes are unavoidably exposed to a greater or less degree of friction. If this friction be violent, and continued but for a small length of time, the skin becomes scorched : it then appears full of white specks, large as a lentil ; and in this state the sweat, or perspiration, precipitated through its natural channels, but at length suddenly intercepted at the extremities, becomes so acrid and corrosive as to occasion the most painful inflammations in those parts.

The method of being relieved in such cases is perfectly simple, and consists in gently removing, with a proper instrument,

ment,



ment, so much of the skin as appears white, and scorched ; in resting the foot, and the body also, if it be convenient ; and in covering the parts affected with a bit of fine muslin.

Between the little toe, and the toe next to it, adjoining to where they begin to articulate with the bones of the metatarsus, the skin is perpetually apt to be compressed, and pinched in walking. Thereby the epidermis is loosened ; and from the ease with which this substance is regenerated, superfluities are apt constantly to accumulate from it on the external parts—superfluities which I have repeatedly beheld not inferior in size to a filbert.

Here also the most advisable expedient  
is



is to pare off the accumulated superfluity, or excrescence, with a suitable knife. Beneath, the flesh will appear tender, and of a vermillion hue: no wonder, then, that in such cases the operation, mild as it is, should be attended with some degree of pain; and especially when it is considered, that all excrescences, like those now before us, are perpetually liable to irritate the adjacent parts, from the circumstance of their being more or less impregnated with the acrid and corrosive qualities of an obstructed perspiration.

The above operation being performed, it will be necessary to fortify the parts by the application of a little lavender-water, or of any other similar water. The spaces between the toes must then be covered



covered with some carded cotton ; taking care, however, to change it every day, lest it should form itself into lumps. In all such cases, be it remembered, rest is highly necessary.

These complaints may also be treated as common burns ; for, in fact, they can be considered as nothing more than burns, occasioned by the friction which the toes sustain by violent exercise.

For this purpose I have often communicated to my patients, with success, the following innocent recipe :

*The whites of two eggs ; two ounces of tutty of Alexandria ; two ounces of quicklime, dissolved in nine waters ; one ounce of new wax. — — Thereto let as much of the*  
oil



*oil of roses* be added as may be necessary to form it into an OINTMENT of a middling consistence ; then apply it as you would to a common burn.

And here let it be noticed—noticed, alas ! with regret, that the persons who suffer most by the *pedestrian* evils here mentioned, are those who by nature are the least able to sustain them—the LADIES ; and of this circumstance the whole blame is to be ascribed to the funnel-like conformation of their shoes at the toes, through which the feet are as it were forced to pass, from the preposterous elevation of the heels.

To the list of such ailments may be added little nodosities, which frequently appear on the sole of the foot in various places,



places, to the no small injury of the adjacent parts. These are occasioned by a deficcation of the nervous *fibrillæ* of the skin; and the pain they communicate is like that which we experience in walking with gravel or small stones in our shoes. They must be removed, by a suitable sharp instrument, from the interior extremity of the skin, which thereby recovers its natural elasticity; and as they are not apt to regenerate of themselves, we may effectually triumph over them by one or two operations.



## C H A P. V.

*Of the PALLIATIVE CURE of CORNS.*

THE cure of Corns is twofold; the one being merely *palliative*, the other actually *radical*. The latter is, indeed, often an effect of the former; but never ought the radical method to be attempted, unless when the palliative one has proved ineffectual.

This last mode of cure consists in extracting, with a proper knife, the callus of the Corn, as much of it, however, as may be found practicable; for it is a certain fact, that so long as the roots of this callus remain unextracted, we shall be perpetually subject to a reproduction of the Corn itself.



It is customary with many persons to soak their feet in tepid water for about half an hour before they proceed to the excision of the callus; but if this operation is to be performed by a person of skill, such soaking had much better be omitted.

By an experienced practitioner, the surface of a Corn may be removed without creating pain: and hence he is enabled to perceive the different strainers of the excrementitious matter; which matter manifests itself by sundry white or black specks, vulgarly styled the *roots of the Corn*. These must be probed to the bottom; an operation which is the more easy, as the specks in question always appear perfectly distinct, when the parts have not been pre-

pre-



previously softened by the above-mentioned custom of bathing them.

In the cutting of Corns, no force must be used. We must, on the contrary, use the knife with delicacy, and contrive so to raise the edge, that it may not be obstructed by, or entangled in, the callus. The instrument, proper for uncovering, or removing the surface of a Corn, must be flat; and that which is employed to penetrate to the roots, if we wish fully to extract them, must be pointed, and concave. Nevertheless, if the surface of the Corn be so firm and dry, that we find it impossible to remove it without running a risque of blunting the edge of the instrument, or of torturing the patient; in that case, it will be highly proper to

D

moisten



moisten the part with a little tepid water.

Those Corns which discover no white or black speck, after having had their surface laid open, should not be cut very deep. If this precaution be neglected, they will assuredly bleed; and therefore, in such cases, when we perceive the flesh beneath to be of a natural colour, we must pare the edges, and thus close the operation.

With strict propriety may the feet be *then* steeped in lukewarm water. They should not remain in it, however, much above a quarter of an hour. By the expiration of that period, we shall find the adherences to the callous part, which has been excinded, filled up, and covered with a  
very



very white and spongy prominence; which, on emerging the feet from the water, must in like manner be removed.

Thus it is that, under a skilful hand, we may rest assured of obtaining a palliative cure of tolerable permanence; and I can even declare that, by the above-described method, I have effectually destroyed many Corns, without farther trouble either to the patient or to myself.

I cannot close the present chapter, however, without touching farther on the mischiefs that flow from the practice of soaking the feet in water, as a preparative for the cutting of Corns; and without also indicating the real methods by which, in such complaints, where a palliative cure merely is required, my readers may with



safety undertake to become their own operators.

By soaking the feet in water, we so mollify the parts, that (the callus and the adjacent flesh being reduced to one and the same state) the patient himself is no longer able to distinguish the one from the other; and in this case, is it to be thought wonderful, that even the most expert practitioner, puzzled how to guide his instrument, should, from motives of a prudential fear, do little more than barely pare the edges, or the extremities of the corn?

Let it not be understood, however, that I am so absolute an enemy to this *preparatory* expedient, that I would have it abolished in all cases.--No:--I am ready to admit,



mit, because I have repeatedly had occasion to observe, that every person who cuts own Corns, will find an advantage in giving his feet a previous soaking for about half an hour. But let it be remembered, that this advantage is solely gained from the awkwardness which he feels, and which every man *must* feel, while he officiates as *his own* Corn-cutter; and that, thus circumstanced, if the instrument should unhappily become entangled in the callus, without in the mean time creating a sense of pain, he runs the utmost hazard of pricking some nervous or tendinous part; of opening the membranes of the joint, and of separating its ligaments.

From accidents like these have proceeded dreadful mischiefs, terminating, not unoften, in death itself; and merely to



prevent them, is the bathing-practice in question to be commended. It would be absurd, nevertheless, to imagine, that death could ensue from a mere effusion of blood in the cutting of a Corn. The mischiefs, to which I have alluded, are solely to be imputed, on the contrary, to a want of care in the operation. In cutting *one's own* Corns, for example, especially when they have not been previously somewhat softened by moisture, it often happens that the instrument, entangled in the callus, rudely penetrates through it into the very quick, before we are aware. We then hastily withdraw the instrument, leaving the parts of the callus to re-unite of themselves, and to become impregnated with the extravasated blood, or with filth, if not both. Hence, then, proceed suppurations—suppurations



too which are often fraught with danger, especially if the blood be in a corrupt state, or if the extremities of the patient, rendered feeble by age, are impaired in their propellent powers.

What I have advanced above, as proper to be observed, in order to obtain a palliative cure, may, in general, be considered as little more than preparative for a radical one; for, as I before intimated, it would be in vain to expect the latter, unless we had previously employed the methods proper for the attainment of the former.



## C H A P. VI.

*Of the* RADICAL CURE of CORNS.

**B**OLD must be the man, who will, *in every case*, promise a radical cure of Corns; and credulous, as well as bold, must be the patient, who, relying on such fallacious protestations, will endanger his health, if not his life, by adopting many of the pernicious experiments which are daily recommended to him for that purpose.

From what has been already observed on the nature of Corns, we may be convinced how uncertain it is to extirpate them so effectually, that they will never return; and beside, when Nature has once chalked out for herself a particular path



path for the deposition of this or that particular humour, nothing can be more difficult, nothing more dangerous, than to make her deviate from it.

In order to obtain a radical cure, I have myself tried various expedients with a number of persons, who were willing to run all risques, could they but be assured of getting rid effectually of their Corns. In all of these cases I acted with safety, and in many of them with success. But this success was frequently obtained by methods from which I least expected it, while others, which, comparatively speaking, I considered as infallible, proved actually abortive.

The doctrine of specifics in general is, in truth, a doctrine of absurdity, as well as  
of



of imposition ; and men of candour and intelligence have long since acknowledged the impossibility of discovering any thing of the kind for Corns. Turner observes, in his Treatise of the Diseases of the Skin (and before Turner it was the remark of Sydenham, the Hippocrates of England) that the man who could devise a specific even for Corns, though at the expence of a whole life's study, would deserve the grateful thanks of his posterity, and die with the glory of having rendered an inestimable benefit to mankind.

Is it not worse than folly, then, for a person to pretend that he is possessed of a nostrum effectual for the extirpation of Corns of every kind ? And is it not a degree of madness to imagine that one and the same remedy can act with an uniform degree



degree of force on the different qualities of different skins?—If there be a person wild enough to entertain any such notion, it must be one who has never attended to the manner in which Corns grow, and to the manner in which they are destroyed.

The gums are among the best remedies for Corns; and of these I reckon galbanum to be the best. Galbanum warms, attracts, and resolves. With these qualities, it often produces a cure; but it is so offensive in point of smell, that, while we continue to use it, we must, in some measure, forego the pleasures of society. After having dissolved it in vinegar, and properly prepared the Corn, it is applied to the size of a pea, and carefully changed every twenty-four hours.

The



The common pitch, which shoemakers use, is also very serviceable for the destruction of Corns; and it is used in the same manner as galbanum.

Gum Ammoniac softens, attracts, and resolves humours and hardnesses; properties which render it very efficacious against Corns. In general, whatever softens, melts, and resolves, is possessed of this virtue, but particularly every species of gum.

I shall now present receipts for the composition of a few plasters, which I can recommend as both safe and efficacious.

#### A PLASTER FROM SENNERTUS.

*Take one ounce of the above-mentioned pitch;  
half an ounce of galbanum, dissolved in  
vine-*



*vinegar ; one scruple of Sal Ammoniac ; one dram and a half of Diachylum. Mix the whole according to art.*

Another from HELVETIUS.

*Half an ounce of crude Antimony, pulverized ; two drams of Mercurius dulcis ; six grains of corrosive Sublimate.*

Bray the whole for a considerable time upon a porphyry, and incorporate it exactly with the white of an egg, so as to form it into an ointment of a tolerable consistence. After having properly prepared the Corn, apply it to the size of a lentil, and renew it every twenty-four hours.

A third approved Recipe.

*Take Ceruse diluted with Rose-water, Litharge brayed with Lily of the Valley-water,*



water, Minium purified with Morel-water, of each three ounces; of the Oil of Roses by infusion, twenty-two ounces; of yellow Virgin wax, one pound.

Put the whole into a varnished earthen vessel, and add four ounces of Morel-water. Boil it by a slow fire, till the water shall have evaporated; remembering always to stir it with a wooden spatula, that the lithage may be kept from burning, and made to incorporate with the other ingredients. When you perceive that the whole has assumed a tolerable consistency, take the vessel from the fire, and add seven ounces of refined Camphire, brayed in from six to seven drops of the Spirit of Lavender, and six drams of Turpentine. Then stir the whole, till it appears to be of a sufficient consistency for a plaster,



*plaster, and in applying it, use a bit of soft glove-leather.*

I have tried each of these plasters ; and if they are not without caustics in their composition, they are also not without correctives sufficient to prevent all mischief from them. I can even assure my readers, that from the use of them no risque can accrue to the most delicate skins ; but that, on the contrary, if persevered in, they may, by promoting the circulation, lead to the destruction of even inveterate Corns.

The methods, which I have next to propose, are more simple. A momentary ease, however, is all that can be expected from them ; for where a Corn exists, the grand object must always be



to extirpate the *callus*. In order to render this callus soluble, we may with propriety employ either green wax chrystalised, or the soft wax, which notaries use. In this intention, soap of every kind is useful; as also bruised Jubarb, Marigold-leaves, Rose-leaves, or Ivy-leaves. For the like purpose, we may have recourse to other substances, which, possessed of emollient properties, have a natural tendency to maintain the callus of the Corn in a due state of softness and solubility, and to mitigate the pain that results from it.

Certain it is, that no remedies approach more to the nature of specifics, than those of a caustic quality, which are applied for the extirpation of Corns. They are replete, however, with danger; for if, in melting, they happen to attack the ner-



vous and tendinous system, dreadful may be the consequences. For my own part, I should prefer an actual cautery, in order to destroy the different strainers of the excrementitious matter; for all we have to desire, in such cases, is to separate this matter, and to divert it from the passages which led to the formation of the Corn.

Avicenna directs Corns to be gradually desiccated with a bit of burning wood, which should be made to approach, as near as possible, to the parts affected: and he adds, that, after having repeated this operation till the Corn has disappeared, we must, in order to destroy the root of it, apply melted butter.

Another remedy, seemingly not less



uncertain in its effects, is directed by Chauliac. In the first place, he says, we are to scrape the excrescence from the Corn, and render it as smooth as possible. We must then apply to it a plaster, or a tin-plate, with a hole in the centre, equal in circumference to the Corn, and pour therein a drop of burning sulphur, to remain upon the part till it is extinguished; which being done, we must rub it with a little cerate, and direct the patient to avoid exercise or motion.

Rouffelot, another French writer on the Diseases of the Feet, relates the case of a person of rank, who had been for ten years a prisoner in the Bastille. This gentleman, he observes, after having cured Warts upon his Hands, by a method peculiar to himself, employed that method, with



with equal success, against his Corns: For this purpose, forming a small ball from a spider's web, he placed it upon the Corn, and set fire to it. The web, thus knotted together, and consuming but gradually, excited in him a most acute sense of pain; but it was the instrument by which alone his Corns, like his Warts, were made effectually to disappear.

My sole reason for mentioning these three violent remedies is, that every person who may have the temerity to put them in practice, may be warned, by the pain which they excite, not to try them too far. I own that from the last expedient I have myself witnessed success; but, at the same time, I must declare that it is one which ought by no means to be used indiscriminately.



The truth is, many persons, in an extremity of anguish, are hardy enough to undertake any thing which may promise to give them ease; and ease, they are too apt to think, cannot be obtained speedily and effectually but by the strongest remedies. But there can be little prudence in exchanging temporary pain for permanent lameness; which is sure to follow from all *violent* applications, when there is a strong adhesion of the Corns to the nervous or tendinous parts of the toes, or of the soles of the feet. On no account, then, must recourse be had to either of the said very *forcible* methods, without proper advice; and even in those cases, which may seem most to require them, the patient, if he would consult his *future* ease and happiness, will be careful previously to consult some person, who,



who, from study, or from practice, may be enabled to determine with judgment, not only about his complaint, but about the remedy proper for it.

It is of the last consequence, indeed, never to employ any methods but palliative ones merely, when the Corns are painful, and accompanied with symptoms of inflammation; and in such cases, if it be proposed to attempt a *radical* cure, the prudent way is, not to operate at all, till the inflammation shall have subsided.

In this state of pain and inflammation, the patient must, without delay, repose himself, in order to abate the inflammation, which, probably, may have been solely occasioned by violent exercise on foot, or by shoes too short, or too narrow.



But, if the inflammation cease not, we may reasonably conclude, that an abscess is formed around the callus, or beneath it. In this case, we must apply to the Corn a plaster of Turner's-cerate, spread upon a bit of glove-leather, about the size of a shilling, and cover the foot with a cataplasm, composed of bread and milk, and the yolks of two eggs. The cataplasm must always be changed as it becomes dry; and, if the inflammation be considerable, we may even, before it is applied, embrocate the whole part with the oil of roses, or with olive-oil.

This accident, even when properly attended to, will sometimes take up forty-eight hours, without the danger, however, of any fresh accident supervening. The pus then shows itself about the callus, where



where a proper vent has been formed for it; and the part being bathed with warm wine, over it must be applied a diachylum-plaster, which completes the cicatrification.

Persons, in cutting their own Corns, especially when they are situated on the lateral parts of the toes, are liable to open one of the little arteries. This misfortune will occasion an effusion of blood; but let it not create too great an alarm. The mode of remedying it is simple, and consists in applying to the orifice a bit of common blotting-paper, secured with a small bandage.

They are also apt to prick a nerve, or a tendon; and then the pain, horrible to an extreme, is sometimes even convulsive. In such cases, the pure balsamic remedies



must be employed; as Oil of Turpentine, Balsam of Peru, &c.

Often, too, from credulity, or from inexperience, they are induced to apply to their Corns plasters composed of cantharides, or of other violent caustics. From this misconduct, inflammations supervene; the skin becomes excoriated; and even the tendons are sometimes laid actually bare. These mischiefs, however, are not to be remedied by fat and unctuous applications. Spirituous and desiccating ones, on the contrary, are proper; and it must not be omitted to apply to the whole part an emollient cataplasm, in order to dispel the inflammation.

If a slough appears, it must be removed by a digestive, composed of fresh butter, the  
oil



oil of sweet almonds, the yolk of an egg, and a little saffron ; or else by Basilicum, with a little of the Balsam of Turpentine. When the slough becomes loose and moveable, the digestive must be taken off ; and in its stead it will be proper to apply such balsamic remedies as I have recommended in a pricking of the nerves and tendons.

It may, perhaps, be thought that I have been too minute in the precautions, above laid down, against disorders so *trifling in APPEARANCE*, as those of which I have been treating. Ever let it be remembered, however, that the Feet are liable to no disorders which are *trifling in REALITY*.

Beside, it is to be observed, that the bones of the phalanges of the toes are  
spongy,



spongy, and no wise crustaceous, consequently easily rendered carious; that Corns have their seat near to the sheaths of the tendons, are often adherent to them, and capable of diffusing pain over the whole muscular system with which they are connected; that, consequently, the humours, rendered more or less corrupt, may communicate their baleful influence to the whole habit.

Such are the reasons which have induced me to be so particular in my directions about the treatment of the disorders in question; disorders, which are found to be uncommonly obstinate, when neglected, and which, therefore, fraught as they also are with mischief, cannot be remedied too soon.

Having discussed the subject of Corns, let us now proceed to that of Warts.



## C H A P. VII.

*Of the NATURE, CAUSES, and different  
SPECIES of WARTS.*

**A**CCORDING to Galen, Warts are an heterogeneous and unnatural substance, pushed with violence toward the skin, by dint of the internal faculties: and from this definition we may conclude, that they are of the same nature with every other cutaneous exuberance or deformity.

Juncker says, Warts are extraordinary excrescences of the nervous fibrillæ of the skin, which settle chiefly upon the Face and Hands. The principles of all such excrescences consist in a saline, gross, and atrabilious humour, which, denied the power of circulation, thickens insensibly,  
till



till it forms itself into the callosities under consideration. When the circumambient juices are found, they are productive of no kind of pain ; and, even when they are left to their free course, the most offensive circumstance about them is the unseemly appearance which they give to the parts affected. This remark, however, extends by no means to the Warts which are situated on the soles of the Feet ; for these, from the lacerating violence which they occasion in walking, are experienced to be a source of infinite pain.

Authors have reckoned up many sorts of Warts. They all proceed, nevertheless, from one and the same principle, differing from each other merely as to species. The ancients do not agree with  
the



the moderns either about their name, their nature, or their cause; and therefore I shall not treat, at present, but of those which are most known.

Warts, then, properly so called, are of three species, namely, the round, the flat, and the pendant; and they all incline to settle on the Hands, or the Face, rather than on the Feet.

The round ones, which are the most frequent, resemble a young leek in the head; and hence it is, that in France the round Wart is distinguished, to this hour, by the name of *porreau*, or leek.

The flat ones, though less prominent than these, are yet much larger. The Latins called them *verrucae formicarum*; which,



which, uncouth as the expression sounds, may be translated *Ant-Warts*; and the reason why they obtained this name, must have been, that, in cutting their surface, we feel a pain similar to what is commonly experienced from the bite of an Ant. Celsus is of opinion, and experience, in fact, tells us, that this species of Wart is particularly inclined to fix either upon the palm of the Hand, or upon the sole of the Foot; and in this last case, for the reason I have already assigned, the patient is generally subjected to no small trouble and inconvenience.

The pendant ones, styled by some authors *verrucae pensiles*, and by others, *achrocorda*, generally take root on the Hands of Children, and vanish of their own accord.



Different species of condylomata, tubercles, and even spots on the skin, have also been classed as Warts; but, for my own part, I shall confine my remarks to those cutaneous excrescences which are to be considered as Warts, according to the general acceptation of the word.





## C H A P. VIII.

*Of the* TREATMENT *of* WARTS.

WE know of two general methods by which Warts may be cured; namely, extirpation, and the application of external remedies. Turner, however, recommends for this purpose three remedies; and these are the cautery, whether actual or potential, incision, and ligature.

These different expedients are to be adopted according to the species of the Wart; but it is always necessary to examine previously, whether or not the excrescence be accompanied with a malignant quality which may render it  
can-



cancerous. In this case, the diagnostic sign is a continual pricking, accompanied with an unusual sense of pain in the part affected. We must also pay a particular attention to the spot on which the excrescence is situated, in order to enable us to determine the proper remedy, or treatment, which should be adopted; for, otherwise, the patient might probably be exposed to accidents similar to those which I noticed in the last chapter upon Corns.

The round, and the pendant Warts being nearly similar, the same treatment is proper for both, when their situation is favourable for it; that is, when they are not placed upon the joints of the phalanges. In such cases, we may employ  
the



the method of ligature, and effect an extirpation of the Wart without incurring the danger of a defluxion. For this purpose, let the root of it be tied round with a bit of horse-hair, or waxed thread, and compressed to what degree the patient can bear. By these means, the juices are intercepted in their communication with the part; and the Wart, with ease deficcated, falls off insensibly. In order to get rid of it more expeditiously, I have often seen the part rubbed with arsenick, or with sublimate; but this is a practice highly dangerous. When the Wart has begun to disappear, however, it may not be improper to apply to the root an escharotic, or even a common needle, made red-hot; nor can any mischief flow from the application of a spider's web, according to the method which in the preceding

ing



ing chapter I described the gentleman to have used with success for his Corns.

Under the like circumstances, Warts of either of these species may, with equal certainty, be conquered by incision. This operation is performed by cutting them till they are reduced to a level with the skin. It is an operation, however, which renders the use of a cautery necessary, in order to dry up the root of the Wart effectually; whereas the operation of ligature is, of itself, generally sufficient to carry it off entirely.

The Warts in question may also be destroyed in the same manner as Corns, by slightly opening them around with a proper incision-knife. But this is an operation which should never be performed



formed but by a person of knowledge and experience, unless the patient be willing to expose himself to every risque which can flow from the want of those qualifications, so essential to a real Chiropodist.

The flat Warts, namely, the *verruca formicariæ*, or, as they were likewise styled by the Ancients, *myrmecia*, are still more difficult to be removed; and for this reason, that, beside being less prominent than the others, they are more deeply, and more firmly rooted.

Many authors have delivered it as their opinion, that Warts in general should be cauterised; and for this purpose we find the most violent escharotics prescribed;



cribed, such as Sulphur, the Lapis Infernalis, and Sublimate. For complaints so trifling, however, let patients beware of having recourse to applications so dangerous.





## C H A P. IX.

*The same Subject continued ; with approved  
RECIPÉS for the CURE of WARTS.*

**R**HAZIS affirms, that in order so to resolve and deficcate Warts as to obtain a perfect cure of them, they must be rubbed with the leaves of the Caper-tree, or with moist Carobs.

Other learned practitioners have advised an application of the leaves of Yarrow ; as also of the herb Robert, India Purflane, the greater Scrophularia, and Wart-wort. Each of these may be applied, in a bruised state, either together, or separately. Their properties  
are,



are, to relax the parts, and to resolve the coagulated humour; nor can any danger accrue from the use of them.

The juice of the *Trifolium Acetosum*, and of the common Milk-thistle, may likewise be used; and though both these herbs are of a corrosive quality, yet is that quality so slight as to be productive of little, if any injury, even to the most delicate skins.

Different authors have recommended a cataplasm of goat's dung, vinegar, and bruised bishop's-wort; as likewise a liniment, of which the following is the recipe:

*Take of the Oil of Tartar, three drachms; of white camphorated Ointment, one drachm; of Quick-lime, one scruple.*



A recipe for another liniment to be used in such cases.

*Take of new Wax, Rosin, and Oil of Camomile, one drachm each; of Tacamahaca, two drachms; of Orpiment, one drachm: and form the whole into a liniment or plaster.*

The ancient method of treating Warts (and it is the one which, from experience, I can pronounce to be the most eligible consisted in the use of caustics and acids. It is a method which doubtless requires a previous knowledge of the state of the Wart; but still there are few cases in which it will not produce a cure. The Wart being, as I have already intimated, an assemblage of a number of the cutaneous fibrillæ, the sole object is, to corrode those fibrillæ so as to disunite them;



them ; and this point being gained, the Wart itself necessarily perishes, and crumbles away.

Aqua-Fortis I have always found perfectly safe, as well as successful, when applied with prudence. In using this remedy, take some of the very best Aqua-Fortis, and dip into it the point of a tooth-pick. The first drop would be too large ; therefore let it fall, and then apply the point of the tooth-pick to the middle of the Wart. Repeat this operation twice a-day, till the Wart be disunited in all its parts, and then it will drop off of itself.

The Oil of Tartar, by deliquium, produces the same effect, though more slowly. It is to be observed, however, that



that when the Hands are full of Warts, the large ones only are to be touched; for when these disappear, the small ones are sure to follow.

Galen mentions a man, whose only method of cure consisted in sucking them with his lips; by which means they became so prominent and loose, that he was able to tear them out with his teeth. The custom, however, is an *antedeluvian* one; and, happily, modern improvements have rendered it no longer necessary.

But, in order to banish such complaints, it is not sufficient to employ merely the remedies above set forth; the patient must have recourse to different other expedients, which, whether the object be to accelerate a cure, or prevent  
 pain,



pain, can alone be determined by the prudence of a skilful operator. If, for example, we touch a flat Wart on the sole of one of the Feet with Aqua-Fortis, either the patient must undergo a sense of pain, when the fibrillæ become disunited, or he must avoid putting the affected Foot to the ground. In this case, it is necessary to put a substance of some sort (and nothing can answer the purpose better than a bit of an old hat) between the shoe, and the sole of the Foot. This substance must be fitted exactly to the shoe, with a hole precisely under where the Wart is, and large enough to contain it. By such precaution we obtain the double advantage of avoiding pain, and preventing a farther growth of the Wart; nor is it less useful when the soles of the Feet are afflicted with troublesome Callosities.



Simple as Warts are in themselves, there are more popular mistakes respecting the destruction of them, than there are certain methods by which they may be cured. In fact, every person seems to have his own particular remedy or remedies, or, more properly to express it, his own particular error or errors; and to be ridiculed, they require but to be examined.

That the vulgar should embrace delusions—that those delusions should be published to the world, and even insinuated into practice—these are circumstances which have an appearance of possibility; but that medical authors—authors, too, of learning and reputation—should not only broach, but propagate the most egregious absurdities, which folly, under the cloak of science,

ence,



ence, could suggest, that is a weakness at which reason recoils with astonishment.

Thus it is, however: and even Etmuller scruples not gravely to tell us of the great benefit he experienced from the human *usnea*; a kind of greenish moss which grows upon the skulls of persons who have perished by a violent death, and been for some time exposed to the open air. Apply this moss, says Etmuller, to a Wart, and you will find it at once a speedy and a certain cure.

But a remedy still more extraordinary is recorded by Juncker; a character equally conspicuous in the medical world. He desires his readers to take a thread from the shirt of a dying criminal, at the part, however, which seems to be most impreg-



impregnated with sweat; as, for example, under the arm-pits. On this thread we are to form as many knots as the patient has Warts; and with one of the former we must rub one of the latter, in succession, till they are all rubbed. This ceremony being performed, the thread is carefully to be buried in a moist place; and—*wonderful to tell!*—it will be found, that in proportion as the knots are consumed, the Warts are consumed also. Juncker declares, that he never knew this remedy to fail. It might be so; but it will require no small degree of faith to believe him, till it can be explained wherein consists the affinity of a Wart with the perspiration of a wretch doomed to suffer upon a gibbet.

Were I not ashamed to dwell on such

scien-



*Scientific* puerilities, I could quote many other visionary expedients which authors, otherwise entitled to high respect, have handed down to posterity, as actually infallible against Warts. All I shall add, therefore, on the subject of these complaints is, that the best applications for the person who means to be his own operator, are those which are the most mild; and that, on the contrary, caustics, under the direction of a skilful Chiropodist, will be found to act with much more speed, as well as with much more efficacy, without in the least endangering the most delicate skin.

CHAP.



## C H A P. X.

*Of CALLOSITIES, their NATURE, their  
CAUSES, and their CURE.*

**C**ALLOSITIES are the effect of an habitual friction, or compression of the Feet. By such friction, or compression, the epidermis, or scarf-skin, is particularly affected; and with so much ease is this substance regenerated, that it is no sooner detached from the mucous parts to which it had adhered, than another is formed that prevents them from again uniting. The primitive epidermis being thus deficcated, and denied farther nourishment and growth, each succeeding one becomes in like manner detached, in proportion to the friction, or compression; and these, uniting themselves into a body, become



become that excrescence which we call a Callosity, and which, in its formation and texture can be compared to nothing more aptly than the *stratum super stratum* of a common paste-board.

Callosities occupy all the parts of the Foot which, from whatever cause, are subjected to a constant friction, or pressure. In countries where the peasants are taught to go bare-footed, we find but one Callosity; and this Callosity, covering the whole sole of the Foot, serves to it as a guard from external injury. Hence it is, that we see people, thus rudely reared, tread familiarly over the most rugged stones; and that, without encountering in their walks a substance sharp enough to pierce the soles of a shoe, their own bare soles are unsusceptible of pain.



With us, however, it is different; and the soles of our Feet are hardened but partially. Thus, when our Callosities have attained a certain degree of conglutination and dryness, they become impenetrable as horn, but are, till then, unproductive of pain; and it is at this stage that, whether we walk, or use any other violent exercise on foot, they are sure to pinch and bruise the tender flesh adjoining. From these pinches and bruises proceed defluxions, accompanied sometimes with tumours, inflammations, and even abscesses; and these effects take place chiefly under the articulation of the great Toe with the first bone of the Metatarsus, which, with the Heel, forms the chief seat of Callosities in general.

Upon the whole, however, these complaints



plaints are not painful, unless when accompanied with accidental circumstances which render them so; and yet, like Corns, they are subject to one inconvenience, which is productive of a very sensible uneasiness, namely, that of being more or less swelled or contracted, as the weather is more or less moist or dry.

Destroy but the cause which created a Callosity, and the Callosity itself will vanish spontaneously, without the use of any external application whatever. But as it is impossible, when the complaint is seated in the Feet, to make the *cause* cease, without actually ceasing ourselves to walk, the point is, to render the *effect* as little troublesome as possible. This can alone be done by paring the Callosity, when it has acquired a certain degree of thickness.



ness. It is an operation unaccompanied with pain, if cautiously performed with a suitable instrument. In the first place, it is necessary to soften the part by immersing it in tepid water; and then the callus is excinded, leaf by leaf, as it were, nearly in the same manner as it was formed. Care must be taken, however, not to cut too deep; for, beside the pain which an error of this kind might create to the patient, especially in walking, other disagreeable effects still might follow.

In the event of a misfortune of this kind, apply to the part, the moment it feels painful, a cerate composed of wheat-flour, and new wax, divided into equal parts, and duly incorporated together. But for the cure of Callosities, and for the prevention of the disagreeable accidents  
which



which may supervene from them, there is no method so certain as that of having them prudently pared with a proper instrument. I must confess, nevertheless, that I have often seen good effects from the practice of rubbing them with pumice-stone, or with a piece of the skin of a dog-fish, after the parts have been soaked in water.

If the Heel, or the articulation of the great Toe with the bone of the Metatarsus, sustain a bruise, accompanied with an extraordinary pain in the middle of the Callus, with a heat and inflammation about it, recourse must be had to the means above recommended for softening the part. When this is accomplished, let the Callus be gently pared off, *stratum* by *stratum*: and if it appears to be inclina-



ble to form into an abscess, we must immediately procure a vent for the matter; corroborate the part with some warm vinous or spirituous liquid; and, lastly, heal up the wound by the application of a little gummed diachylum.



CHAP.



## C H A P. XI.

*Of the NATURE and CAUSES of ONIONS; with Methods by which they may be prevented, as well as cured.*

**O**NIONS are an unnatural tumour of the cold oedematous kind, soft, lax, and of a whitish aspect. *In themselves, they are not painful; but such is their softness, that in pressing them with the finger, they retain the print of it, provided they are not actually dried up at the centre. Their usual seat is at one or other of the interior sides of the Foot, on the articulation of the Metatarsus with the great Toe; and women are more commonly troubled with them than men.*



Their cause, totally different from that of Corns, or of Callosities, is to be ascribed to a violent and continued trituration of the synovia; and by this trituration the humour so called is often so impoverished, attenuated, and divided, as to be forced from its natural situation, and carried, in a state of coagulation, to the centre of the tumour.

The cartilages, which line the cavities of the bones, thus deprived of their wonted cooling nourishment from the synovia, become dry and tumid. A swelling even supervenes at the heads of the bones of the above-mentioned articulation of the Metatarsus, occasioned by the depression, added to the over-heat, of the boney laminæ; and consequently they are made to occupy more room. The tendons, which serve for the movement of the Toe, suddenly



denly lengthened out, and squeezed one against another, frequently render it crooked, and force it into a situation either above or below the adjoining Toes ; and in this case the Foot assumes an appearance of deformity, which it is impossible for a shoe of the most exquisite workmanship to conceal.

But it may be asked, “ Whence proceeds this trituration of the synovial juice ?” I answer, it proceeds from two causes.

The first cause is, the habit of wearing Shoes with high Heels, such Heels especially as the ladies wear. In fact, the Foot being thus raised, with the Heel, upon a pivot, as it were, with hardly a surface, two other supports are necessary, in  
order



order to walk with firmness. One of these is furnished by the little Toe, and the other by the articulation of the great Toe with the bone of the Metatarsus ; and it is by the friction and pressure they thus undergo, that Onions are produced.

It is, indeed, impossible that, from such a position, they should not suffer greatly in these respects ; because the great Toe alone is stretched out, while the point of the Foot forms a declivity ; and because, which is an argument more unanswerable still, Nature tells us, that in order to walk with ease, the Foot should be placed horizontally upon the ground.

The second cause is, the habit of wearing Shoes too short. By reason of the constraint in which the Foot is kept, from  
the



the Heel to the extremity of the great Toe, the outward part of the above-mentioned articulation or joint, is not only liable to be bruised, but to form a prominence, which must, of course, be exposed to a continual friction. Hence proceeds a stoppage in the circulation of the blood and lymph; and whether, in the mean time, the synovial fluid should make its way to the centre of the part affected, and become dried up, or should unite itself with the coagulated blood, and create a fermentation, in either case the most intense pain would follow.

I intimated before, that women are much more subject to Onions than men; and I trust I have now assigned just reasons *why* they are so. It is to be hoped, then, that the above hints will have their  
 due



due weight with all those who are not determined, right or wrong, to prefer *fashion* to *ease*; for it is an undeniable truth, that the only method of effectually preventing, not only Onions, but every other disorder of the Feet, is to avoid wearing either short Shoes, or high Heels.

While the Onion is yet in a state of softness, it may be easily remedied. For this purpose, many people say, "Let the patient put a little of his *spittle*, *fasting*, into the hollow of his hand, and rub the part with it till the spittle is dried up; remembering, however, that the operation must be renewed for several mornings successively." But this is the language of ignorance. On the evening of each day, however, it is proper to apply to it a little  
bag



bag of Sal Ammoniac, steeped in Rose-Water, and to take it off in the morning.

A plaster, formed from the gall of a hog, may also be applied with advantage; and it is thus prepared:—Take the gall of the animal, and suspend it in the chimney till it is so far dried as to form a kind of thickish pomatum; then take of it to the size of a pea, spread it upon a bit of an old glove, and apply it to the Onion, renewing the plaster every twenty-four hours.

When the centre is callous, from a desiccation of the mass of synovia, the part thus hardened must be extirpated; and over it, in order to prevent irritation, emollients and dissolvents should be applied. But the treatment of Onions



can alone be determined with precision by the nature of the accidents with which they are complicated; and in proportion as these vary, the prescriptions for them must vary also. At all events, however, they should be checked in their infancy; for by tampering long with them, the patient often experiences to his sorrow, that a cure which, with proper advice, might have been obtained with ease in the beginning, cannot afterwards be obtained, even by the most expert practitioners, but with difficulty.



## C H A P. XII.

## Of CHILBLAINS.

**T**HE complaints now under consideration (which in English evidently derive their name from the words *chill* and *blains*) have for their principle a stagnation of the blood, caused by a contraction of the capillary vessels of the skin, from violent cold.

For the most part, their characteristic signs are manifested by a redness in the part or parts affected, accompanied by an unequal inflation in the skin, an uncommon heat, and an insufferable itching. Their general seat is upon the Hands, the Toes, or the Heels; and sometimes they appear  
also



also upon the Elbows, the Nose, and the Ears.

Chilblains are seldom attended with much danger; yet when neglected, they not only become exceedingly difficult to cure, but are even apt to bring on suppurations and gangrenes.

When the disorder manifests itself, and an uncommon itching is felt, we must have recourse to a decoction of Marsh-mallows, with which (remembering, however, to impregnate with it a sufficient quantity of vegeto-mineral Water) it is necessary to bathe the parts for several days successively.

It is also highly expedient to attempt a resolution of the humours by the mode of  
such



such fomentations as may tend to open the pores of the skin, before it shall have become ulcerated.

For this purpose, many persons use the brine of beef, salt or salted water, cold simple water, and even snow; taking care, however, to bestow proper frictions on the parts affected, without which the pores would necessarily become more and more contracted, instead of expanded.—None of these remedies will prove effectual, however, at the more advanced stages of the disorder; and in such cases, Doctor Turner used to recommend the following prescriptions:

*Take of White Wine, one pint; of Alum, one ounce. Let them boil together for about a minute; and with this decoction, when*



*moderately cool, bathe the part affected.*  
 —Otherwise, he adds—*Take of the Oil of Laurel, two ounces; of common Honey, one ounce; of Turpentine, half an ounce. Mix the whole together, and from time to time, rub the part with it.*

These *recipes* may be adopted with success, whether the Feet or Hands are the parts that suffer. To persons who are subject to Chilblains, they act as a safe preservative likewise. In this respect, an application of the common *Turner's Cerate* is also useful. It serves to prevent a congestion, or stagnation of the humours; but we must remember to renew it, whenever it becomes loose, nor omit to continue it, while the weather remains cold.

When the parts are open, and ulce-  
 rated,



rated, or even inclinable to an ulceration, we may with advantage have recourse to the following *recipe*, which, simple as it is, requires some degree of nicety in the preparation:

*Take, then, a lump of Alum, and burn it till it becomes actually calcined. This being done, take of the substance thus calcined, and reduced to a powder, half an ounce; of Litharge two drams.*

*Bray the whole, for a considerable time, in a stone-mortar; add a quantity of the Oil of Roses, sufficient to form it into the consistency of a Pomatum, and apply it to the parts affected.*

In all cases it is to be observed, that when the extremities of the body are



deeply affected by cold, or, as it is vulgarly expressed, *frost-bitten*, we must, on no account, approach a brisk fire; for thereby, the humours being still more obstructed, dangerous inflammations may supervene. In such predicaments, to be precipitate in obtaining relief, is to be imprudent to an extreme, and to defeat the very end which we are so anxious to accomplish. The proper method, therefore, is to revive the benumbed parts (that is, to restore in them a due circulation) by degrees; and for this purpose, let them be bathed in water, tepid at first, and rendered afterwards, *gradatim*, more warm.

CHAP.



## C H A P. XIII.

*Of the NAILS, viewed in a general Light.*

**T**HE Nails, whether of the Toes or  
 Fingers, are hard and solid bodies,  
 transparent, and of an oval figure. Situated  
 at the extremities of those parts, in their  
 substance they resemble horn; for, like  
 horn, they are composed of a number of  
 longitudinal fibres. These fibres, becom-  
 ing more or less united and consolidated,  
 in proportion as they become more or  
 less detached from the epidermis, or scarf-  
 skin, follow, in their formation, the shape  
 of the curvatures at the said extremities;  
 which extremities Nature designed them  
 to cover, and to protect, as it were, with  
 a shield.



In point of thickness, the Nails, as I have already observed of other cutaneous excrescences, are formed, *stratum super stratum*, like a common pasteboard. Unlike all such gross substances, however, the Nails are so far diaphanous as to discover the qualities of the humour which predominates in the body. Thus they are generally of a purplish hue in men of a sanguine temperament; dark-coloured in old people, and in melancholic habits; and pale in persons of a delicate constitution. They change their colour on the approach of a fit of the ague, whether tertian or quartan; and a skilful physician knows how to form useful conclusions from the appearances which they assume in cases of poison or contagion.

If of a proper conformation, they are  
commonly



commonly renewed nearly at the return of every fourth month. There are persons, nevertheless, who regularly lose their Toe-Nails entirely every year, at a certain period ; and who have fresh ones grow up in their stead, without exciting the smallest pain.

Though the Nails of the Fingers, and the Nails of the Toes, are perfectly alike in their substance, and in their mode of accretion, or growth, they are yet subject to accidents widely different. In the following chapter, I shall consider the complaints to which the Finger-Nails are chiefly exposed, with the proper methods of preventing, or of curing them; and in the succeeding one, I shall take a similar view of those which are more immediately apt to affect the Toe-Nails.



## C H A P. XIV.

*Of the proper Methods of preserving the  
FINGER-NAILS—Of the Defects in  
their original Conformation—Of the Acci-  
dents to which they are liable, and the  
Means by which they may be remedied.*

**A** Well-shaped Hand is no small addition to a well-shaped Body. If they do not correspond with each other in symmetry, we are instantly impressed with an idea of deformity, or defect; and for this reason, that the Hand is one of those parts which, of course, present themselves most obviously to our view.

As from a mere glance at the Hand, we naturally form our notions of the degree of gentility or vulgarity with which  
a per-



a person has been brought up, so it is from the attention which he may have given to his Nails, that we are enabled to judge of his personal cleanliness or sloth.

Certain it is, that Nails, well-formed, well-arranged, transparent, free from spots or furrows, of an oval figure, and of a vivid colour, contribute greatly to the beauty of the Hand. But these are advantages which fall not to the lot of every man; and if at all they are to be obtained, when originally withheld by Nature, it can alone be by the advice and assistance of a skilful practitioner, who has made the diseases of such parts his study.

If the Nails are faulty from their primitive conformation—that is, if they are  
by



by Nature rough, uneven, or furrowed, it is rarely possible to improve them; but if their only defects are, that they incline more to push to the one side than to the other—that they are too much covered at the roots—that, having been for a long time cut too short, they can no longer be made to extend to a level with the skin—then it comes within the reach of an expert Chiropodist to remove the evil, and to restore them to their native elegance.

It has been pretended by numbers of the empyrical tribe, that when Nails, defective even from Nature, have been made to fall off, by the means of a plaster applied to them for that purpose, they will be succeeded by others beautiful, and well-formed. Experience, however, proves the falsity of this notion; and, under such

cir-



circumstances, the patient may think himself exceedingly happy, if his Nails do not grow up in a state more unseemly than before. But as there are cases in which it may be necessary to produce new *Toe-Nails*, by a destruction of the old, I shall point out, in their proper place, the true methods of performing this critical operation.

A Nail, originally of a proper shape, will always grow again with its primitive beauty, whatever accident may have befallen it; provided, however, that the earliest attention be paid to the complaint, and that the root itself be not damaged. In such cases, and, indeed, on every occasion, when the object is to promote the growth of a Nail, it is proper to apply to the part a cataplasm, composed of two or  
 three



three handfuls of *Cinque-foil*, beat up with a sufficient quantity of *Hog's-lard*.

After a severe fall, or when the Nails, and parts adjacent, have, from whatever cause, received a violent contusion, we must instantly dip the Hand into cold water. This is one of the most powerful repercussives, or repellents; and if, notwithstanding the said precaution, the blood should become extravasated under the Nail, it may be removed by pricking the part where it is thus lodged.

This operation is performed without pain; and it often prevents the loss of the Nail. The blood being thus dispersed, our next step must be to apply to the part a small pledget impregnated with some balsam of a healing and deterfive quality.

If



If the Nail be torn in part from the flesh, we must, with a proper instrument, pare it down as near to the root as possible, and apply some simple digestive; as, for example, a pledget composed of the yolk of an egg, the oil of Hypericum, or St. John's Wort, and Turpentine, duly mixed.

When a sharp substance of any kind may have pierced through the Nail, or penetrated beneath it, no inconvenience will follow, if, after having let a little blood, the wounded part be dipped in olive-oil, and carefully wrapped up, in order to guard it from the external air, and from filth.

During the growth of a new Nail, we must always remember to apply the cataplasm,

plasm,



plasm, above recommended, of Cinquefoil and Hog's-lard; nor must we omit, on such occasions, to use a Finger-stall constantly.

The white *specks*, which so often disfigure the Nails, are occasioned by a dryness in the laminæ, of which the Nails themselves are composed, and by a consequent defect in the adhesion of their constituent parts. The method of preventing them is easy, and consists in frequently dipping the points of the fingers into a little river-water, in which a small portion of alum has been dissolved.

Not less simple is the general mode of preserving to the Nails their proper *shape*. For this purpose, they must be cut



cut ovally, and so as to correspond with the configuration of the fingers, without being allowed either to over-top the flesh, or to be over-topped by it. The pellicle of the extremity of the epidermis, at the root of the Nail, of which it often covers a considerable portion, may also be excised with the points of a pair of scissors, or with some other suitable instrument; but, in thus excising it, we must be careful not to penetrate to the quick. \* This operation being duly attended to, or rather that hereunder mentioned, in order to preserve the Nails always clean and bright, as well as shapely, I would recommend the following prescription :

*Take*

\* It is often, however, hardly possible to guard against this accident; and therefore my usual practice, on such occasions, is to remove the pellicle in question with a bit of common slate-pencil, rounded into a proper form for that purpose at the point.



Take of the Oil of bitter Almonds, one ounce; of the Oil of Tartar, by deliquium, one dram; of prepared Crab's Eyes, half an ounce. Add thereto as much of the Essence of Lemon as may be necessary to give it an agreeable flavour; dip into the whole a bit of sponge, and so apply it.



CHAP.



## C H A P. XV.

*Of the Defects in the Conformation of the  
TOE-NAILS ; and of the Accidents to  
which they are exposed.*

**T**HE Nails of the Toes are commonly more thick than those of the Fingers. This is the only circumstance in which they differ from each other materially ; but it is a circumstance which Nature has wisely ordained, inasmuch as the superior thickness of the Toe-Nails serves greatly to fortify the Foot in walking, and to guard it against external injuries.

The reason why the Nails of the Feet thicken with so much more ease than the



Nails of the Hands, is, that the juices which contribute to the growth of the former, are necessarily, from the very situation of the parts, more copious.

One of the principal faults in the conformation of the Toe-Nails, is their tendency to penetrate, in an angular direction, into the circumjacent flesh. There are some Nails also which, instead of following the level of the skin, become more prominent as they grow. Others there are which, however well formed originally, acquire at length so extraordinary a degree of thickness, that no *scissars* will cut them; and not a few are there which, possessed of no determinate form, can hardly be considered but as mere callous substances. It often likewise happens, that the nutritive juices, after their afflux to  
the



the Toes, being impeded in their proper office of contributing to the growth and formation of the Nails, stagnate in their angles, or at their extremities, and become at length so putrid, as well as viscid, underneath, as to make them perish, and fall off insensibly.

Such are the principal defects that relate to the conformation of the Nails of the Toes.—With respect to the injuries to which they are subject independently of their conformation, little needs to be said. These are, in fact, reducible to two heads; namely, the damage they may sustain from the fall of a heavy weight upon them, and that which may ensue from their having violently hit against a stone, or other hard body, whether in walking or running.



In the former case, it is rare that the accident, when violent, is not followed with a loss of the Nail; because the blood, necessarily extravasated beneath, forms a painful fermentation, which, terminating frequently in an inflammation and swelling of the whole Toe, creates an insufferable anguish to the patient. When it is more mild, however, the only mischief is an *ecchymosis*, or a deposit of blood under the skin, at the root of the Nail.

In the other case—that is, when the Nails have received a casual injury in walking or running—we seldom find all the Toes affected. It is the great Toe alone which suffers; and though thereby, in very bad cases, a loss of the Nail might follow, yet a new one would soon spring up in its stead.



In collisions of this sort, the more slender the Nail is, the less resistance it makes; and therefore only a few of the *laminae*, of which it is composed, will be loosened from the root. But those *laminae*, rendered incapable by such accidents of contributing to the formation of the Nail as usual, will afterwards grow beneath it; and, instead of preserving their common flat figure, they will assume a pyramidal one, and often produce no small degree of pain to the patient, without discovering any unusual appearance externally. By such shocks even the stoutest Nail may sustain a disunion of all the *laminae* that enter into its composition. In this case, the Nail changes its form entirely. It ceases to grow in length, but increases so much in bulk, that I have



actually, from this very cause, seen a Toe-Nail as big as a filbert.

In general, the accidents which befall the Nails of the Toes are exceedingly painful; but, if speedily and skilfully attended to, there can be no doubt but that they may be cured with perfect ease and safety.





## C H A P. XVI.

*Of the Methods of remedying Defects in  
the Conformation of the TOE-NAILS.*

**T**HE methods now under consideration consist, in general, of those which may have a tendency to correct the Nails in their mode of growth, in order to give to them, if possible, a better form.

It often happens, that the Nail of the great Toe inclines, more or less, to penetrate into the flesh, on the one side or the other. This misfortune, productive as it is of a violent pain and inflammation, is attended with the additional hardship, that it renders it difficult, if not impossible, to walk. In order to remedy it,







gled with the flesh: then cut it; and, after having extracted it gently with a pair of tweezers, properly constructed for the purpose, apply the lint as already directed.

When the Nail of the great Toe is affected, the chief circumstance to be dreaded is, an encrease of proud, fungous flesh around the part; and for this reason, that the humours have a natural tendency to resort thither. In order to eat away this proud, fungous flesh, applications have been recommended of calcined Alum, Minium, and the common red Precipitate. These remedies, however, must be used with extreme caution; and though Doctor Turner, in his Treatise of the Diseases of the Skin, bestows the highest encomiums on the  
common



common red Precipitate in such cases, yet it would require, at least, the skill of a Turner to use so violent a corrosive with tolerable safety.

The defects in the conformation of the Nails proceed, as I have already observed, from a greater afflux of humours to the parts than is necessary for their growth. This superfluity, lodging itself under the angles, or at the extremities, of the Nails, renders them rough and protuberant; and in order to reduce them to a proper size, or even to mitigate the pains of which they are thus productive, no method can be better than that of scraping them.

As the Nails, when originally misshapen by nature, seldom, if ever, assume  
a more



a more perfect form in their second growth, we ought not to extract them by art, unless when they are in danger of rotting off, from the causes before assigned; and then, by destroying the source of their corruption, we may be enabled to produce, at least, a Callus to supply the want of the Nail.

In cases where it may be necessary to destroy the Nail (after having satisfied ourselves that no mischief can accrue from opening a fresh passage to the humours, whether from their own depravity, the advanced age of the patient, or his feeble constitution) we must, after having sufficiently attenuated it with a suitable instrument, apply a cataplasm composed of white Lily-roots, and roots of Althæa, mixed up with Oil of Roses; and should this

recipé



recipé prove ineffectual, a small vesicatory will make it fall off, without either pain or danger.

The offensive Nail being thus removed, the part must be bathed with a little warm wine, in which have been boiled one dram of Cyprefs-Nuts, one dram of Gall-Nuts, and the bark of a Pomegranate; with an addition of a little of the juice thereof, so as to act as a corroborative: and, when the new Nail begins to appear, we must not omit to accelerate its growth by an application of the cataplasm of Cinque-foil, recommended in pages 112 and 114 of the present Treatise.

CHAP.



## C H A P. XVII.

*Of the Methods of remedying the Accidents to which the TOE-NAILS are exposed.*

**A**MONG the accidents in question, few are more grievous than a swelling and inflammation of the fleshy parts of the Toe, from the constant friction or pressure which it sustains from the Nail; and in such cases, while we apply to the Toe itself a mucilaginous plaster, we must use for the swollen and inflamed part a cataplasm of bread and milk, with the addition of the yolk of an egg, and a little powdered saffron. Wrap it round the whole of the part affected; and, when dry, renew it.



Should a deposit of extravasated blood, or of any other noxious matter, be formed under the Nail, we must procure a vent for it as soon as possible; and if this precaution be neglected, we run the risque of deranging its roots, and consequently impeding its future growth. We must then, having bathed the part with a little warm wine, apply a pledget to it, and bind it up. It will soon appear covered over with a crust; but this crust must not be meddled with, and will in due time fall off of itself.

Hildanus relates the cure of an inveterate ulcer on the Toe, which deserves to be repeated in this place for its singularity, and still more for its importance in teaching us how necessary it is, *in every disorder whatever*, to know its *real cause*.



The Patient was a young man, a native of Zurich, whose great Toe had received a contusion, which was followed, first, with a swelling and inflammation, and, soon after, with an ulcer, that baffled every effort to heal it. There was also a fleshy excrescence on the Toe, larger than a bean, which covered almost one half of the Nail. Attempts were made to conquer this excrescence by caustics, till it appeared, that what had been consumed by day, returned in the night like a fungus. Hildanus, in endeavouring to ascertain what it was that thus obstructed the cure, perceived, that the Nail was separated from the flesh beneath the excrescence; and that the pain and defluxion were occasioned by its constant irritation of the sound flesh about the root of the Nail. Having discovered the cause, his first steps were,

were,



were, to purge the Patient, and to take a little blood from the arm of the side on which the Toe was affected. He then put a little of the powder of burned Alum to the excrescence; and, in order to mitigate the pain, a cooling cataplasm was applied, of which he gives the form as follows:

*Take of Bean-flour, two Ounces; of the Powder of red Roses, of Balauftines, of Cypress-Nuts, and of Saffron, two Drams each.*

*Render the whole of a proper consistency with the Yolk of an Egg, the Oil of Roses, and Rose-Water; then apply it warm, not only to the Toe but to the whole Foot.*

By this treatment, Hildanus adds, the swelling



swelling disappeared, and the pain and inflammation ceased. The excrescence also diminished by degrees: and when it had so far abated as to leave uncovered the Nail which was detached from the flesh, he excinded the remainder with a pair of scissars, and a scalpel; applied to the part a desiccative powder; and completed the cure, presently after, with the simple addition of a plaster of Diapalma.

When the Toes suffer from the fall of a heavy weight, put the Foot into cold water; and then apply to the part a paste composed of Acorns, newly gathered, and Soap, bruised together, and rendered duly moist with a few drops of Brandy.



When they have sustained a shock in the action of walking or running, or when, from any other cause, the *laminae*, detached from the Nails, and rendered superfluous, sprout up with pain in a pyramidal form, the most advisable method is, to extract them with a proper instrument.

Of all the accidental complaints to which the Feet are liable, this is the most frequent. Ignorant people call it a Corn under the Nail. It is, in fact, the boast, and the triumph of Quacks; and for this reason, that all such *Corns* (if *Corns* they must be called) are easily extracted, and that, *when extracted*, the operator must have been a bungler indeed, if the pain do not cease.



The Nails, as I have already mentioned, are renewed, in, or about, every fourth month. It is to be observed, therefore, that the substances which form these complaints, when detached from the root of the Nail, grow beneath it so imperceptibly, that frequently the pain is not felt for two months after the accident happened; and as it is impossible to extract them at the extremity of the Nail, without cutting into the quick, so there is a necessity for piercing it at the very spot where the extraneous matter is lodged. This operation, skilfully performed, is not, as it may be supposed, attended with pain; but care must be taken immediately to fill up the aperture, which has been made in the Nail, with a little lint, dipped in some spirituous liquid,



Upon the whole, I trust that by a due attention to the directions I have above faithfully laid down, my readers may not only be enabled to preserve their Nails in a proper form, but to prevent (if not in all cases actually cure) a number of external complaints, which, however slight in appearance, are sure to terminate in very serious consequences, when, from whatever cause, neglected.

POST-



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## P O S T S C R I P T.

**A**T the close of a work which, little capable of furnishing *general entertainment*, has professedly for its object purposes of *general utility*, the Author thinks it incumbent upon him to announce, that he continues, as usual, to dispense the following valuable articles; for the perfect safety, as well as peculiar efficacy, of which he is happy in having an opportunity thus publicly to pledge—what, he trusts, will never be forfeited by him—his HONOUR.

Though they are all the actual fruit either of his own invention or improvement, yet to neither of them will he presumptuously ascribe the praise of being an absolute *specific* remedy; that is—plainly



to express what, in fact, amounts to an absurdity in terms—a remedy *positively infallible in all cases, and under all circumstances whatever*. This he can freely affirm, however, that for a considerable number of years they have been successively administered by him to hundreds and hundreds of both sexes; and that, to this hour, an instance has not occurred, in which they have failed to afford complete and permanent satisfaction both to the Patient and the Proprietor.

This notice he conceives to be the more necessary, as certain ingredients, essential to the composition of sundry prescriptions recommended in the course of the foregoing pages, cannot, at all times, and in all places, be obtained but with difficulty, nor, *when obtained*, prepared



pared without some skill, added to a considerable degree of trouble and attention.

In order, then, to obviate such inconveniences, the public, on application to D. Low, at his House, No. 42, Davies-street, Berkeley-square, may always be accommodated with,

1st. His **CHIROPODO-SALVE**, or **CORN-COMPOSITION**, at 2s. 6d. *per* pot, with directions.

2dly. His **TINCTURE FOR WARTS**, at 1s. 6d. *per* phial, with ditto.

3dly. His **EMOLLIENT LOTION**, so eminently useful, as well as pleasing, in its application to the feet or hands, when from a defect of perspiration, or failure in the propellent powers, they feel dry, parched or inflamed, at 5s. *per* phial, with ditto.



He likewise begs leave to recommend  
his REAL STEEL NIPPERS, price 5s.

A L S O,

His new-invented IVORY NAIL-MO-  
DELS for the hands, which are so happily  
contrived as to form the Nails gradually  
and agreeably into the shapely appear-  
ance of an elegant convex, price 10s. 6d.  
*per set*, with ample directions.

N. B. The Author's days of consultation  
AT HOME are, Mondays and Fridays;  
and the remainder of the week he de-  
votes to an attendance on such ladies  
and gentlemen as may chuse to honour  
him with their commands to wait upon  
them at their own houses, either for ad-  
vice or assistance.

F I N I S.



