

Popular observations on the diseases of literary and sedentary persons. To which are added hints for their prevention and removal / By W. Andre Pearkes.

Contributors

Pearkes, W. Andre.

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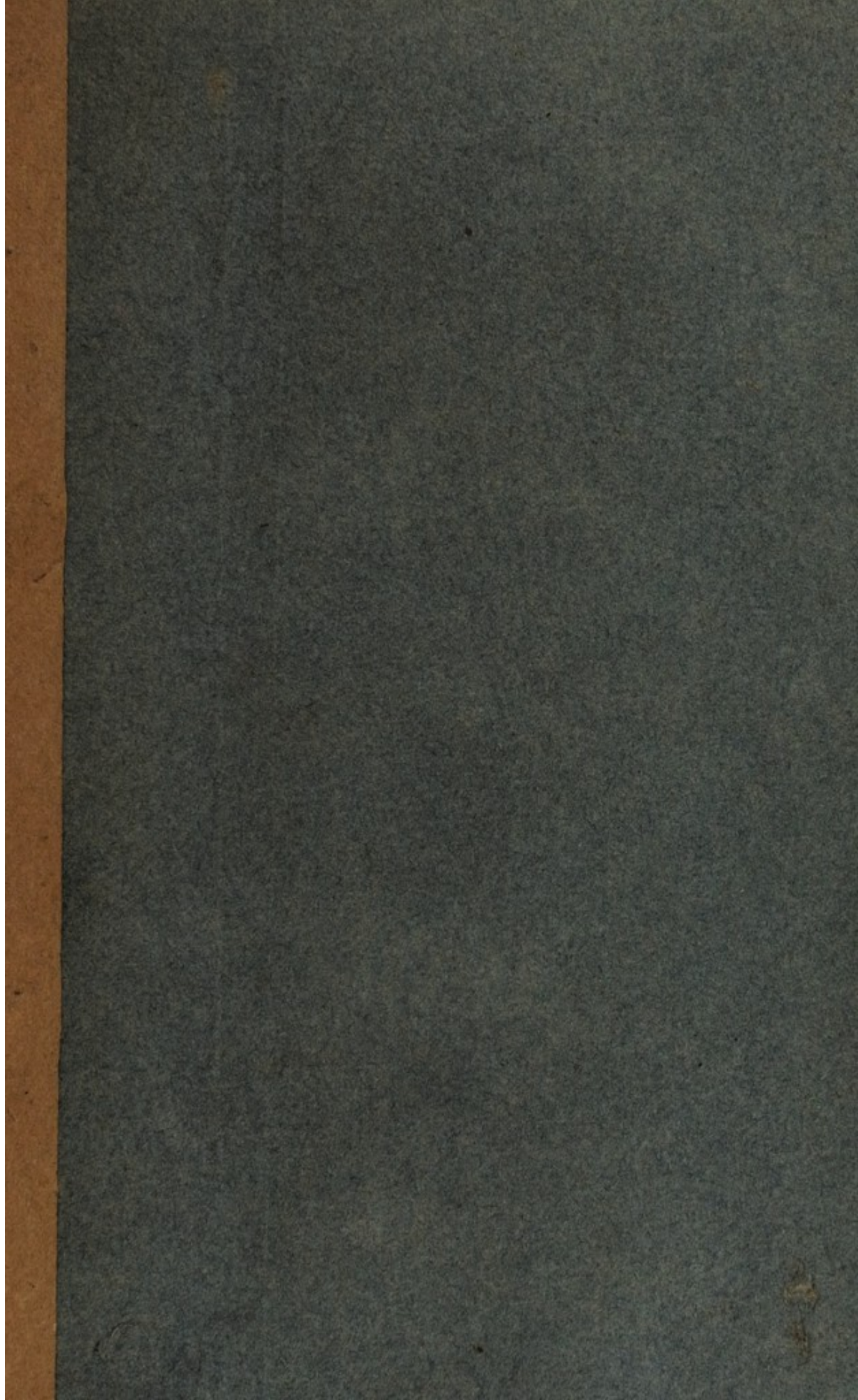
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In the Press,

BIBLIOTHECA BRITANNICA:

OR,

A General Index

TO THE

LITERATURE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
ANCIENT AND MODERN,

WITH

SUCH FOREIGN WORKS AS HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH,
OR PRINTED IN THE BRITISH DOMINIONS;

INCLUDING ALSO

A COPIOUS SELECTION FROM THE WRITINGS OF THE MOST CELEBRATED
AUTHORS OF ALL AGES AND NATIONS.

IN TWO PARTS.

In the First, the Authors are arranged alphabetically, and of each, as far as possible, a short Biographical Notice is given, to which is subjoined a Chronological List of his Works, their various Editions, Sizes, Prices, &c.; and in many instances the character of the Work.

In the Second, the Subjects are arranged alphabetically, and under each the Works, and principal parts of Works, treating of that Subject are arranged in Chronological Order. This Part also includes the Anonymous Works which have appeared in this country.

By ROBERT WATT, M. D.

"The chief glory of every people arises from its Authors." Johnson.

"Catalogorum accuratio ita necessaria est Polyhistori ut, mapparum Geographicarum Cognitio Peregrinatio." Morhof.

GLASGOW:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY ANDREW AND JAMES DUNCAN,
AND PUBLISHED BY LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN, LONDON, AND
ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO. EDINBURGH.

Of this Work Dr. W. published a Prospectus in February last, which, being very generally sought after, was soon exhausted, and required to be reprinted in May. Both editions are now out of print. In this Prospectus a very ample specimen of the Work was given, accompanied with such explanatory observations as were deemed necessary to make the plan understood.

The First Part, or Division of the Work, contains the Names of upwards of Forty Thousand Authors, and of each, as far as possible, a short Biographical Notice is given. It serves, therefore, as a concise but comprehensive Biographical Dictionary, containing not only all the names to be found in other Biographical Dictionaries, but many thousands more derived from other sources. The lists of their Works, too, are much more ample, their titles are given at length, and their various editions, translations, and subsequent improvements are most minutely noticed. It thus forms a Catalogue of Books more minute, and vastly more comprehensive, than is to be met with in this or perhaps in any other language. Great attention has been paid to the earliest printed Books, both at home and abroad, not only arranging them, as has been done by Ames, Herbert, Dibdin, and others, under their respective Printers, but likewise under their respective Authors. By great economy and method, Dr. W. has condensed into this part of his Work the substance of all that has been published with regard to the early history of Printing. The account given of the Greek and Roman Classics, and other more modern Works which have been regarded as classical, is much more comprehensive than any thing which has been printed in this country. With each is given an account of all the English translations, whether printed separately or forming a part of other Works, and likewise the principal translations which have been made in the other modern European languages. The account given of British Writers and their Works is universal, embracing every description of Writers and every branch of human knowledge. The selection from foreign Authors forms a considerable part of the Work, so that the BIBLIOTHECA BRITANNICA serves

not only as a catalogue to British Literature; but also to the Literature of every other nation. This Part, besides containing a full and correct list of every Author's separate Works, contains also the titles of such detached Papers as he may have contributed to Transactions, Memoirs, Journals, and other periodical publications.

The Second Part, or Division of the Work, is a minute Index to the First. In this Part the Subjects are arranged alphabetically, and under each all the Works, and principal parts of Works, treating of that Subject are arranged in Chronological Order, so as to form a sort of annals of what has been written on every subject, from the first publication to the last. Like a map, it brings the whole under the eye at once. But this Part, besides serving as a minute Index to the First, includes also a very complete list of all the anonymous publications which have appeared in this country. These are inserted according to their respective subjects and dates, with a reference to their publishers, or the libraries in which they are to be found. There is, therefore, no subject, with regard to which any thing has been written, that may not be as easily found as a word in a dictionary, and the successive publications regarding it as readily come at as the different significations of a word. The chief novelty of the Work consists in this Part. By a peculiar mode of reference, though an Author's works be referred to from a hundred places in the Second Part, his name and other particulars respecting him and his Works require to be given only once. A single letter, with one, two, or three figures, is all that is necessary at each reference. While the BIBLIOTHECA BRITANNICA thus differs in its construction from every Catalogue that has appeared, its plan is so simple that every person, however small his pretensions to learning may be, can understand it at once. It presupposes no knowledge of any subject beyond its name. It is equally intelligible to the student on the first day of his study as on the last. The labour of learning generally consists not less in discovering where the best information is to be found, than in treasuring it up. To the mere tyro it will point out in an hour as many Authors, on almost any subject, as the most learned could hope to discover in half a lifetime.

Such a Work, if well executed, must supply a most important desideratum in the Literature of our country. The opinion formed from the Prospectus and Specimen has been most favourable. The list of Subscribers is pretty numerous, and respectable in the highest degree, including, among the greatest literary names in the nation, the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and the Chancellors of the two Universities of England. The Typography will be a most favourable specimen of the highly improved state of that art in Great Britain. The Type is the same as is used in THIS PROSPECTUS. A sheet contains above one hundred thousand letters, which is equal to the matter of six sheets printed in the ordinary manner of modern publications. The First Part, consisting of thirty-five sheets, or 280 pages, is now in the Press and will be published in February, price ONE GUINEA. This is estimated to be about one-sixth of the whole. The Work, when completed, will form two handsome quarto volumes, of from 8 to 900 pages each. A Part will be published every three or four months till the whole is completed. As the number of Subscribers which have come to hand since the Work was put to press is much greater than was expected, Noblemen, Gentlemen, Public Libraries, and others, to prevent disappointment to themselves, will do well to send in their names as early as possible to the Author, the Publishers, or their respective Booksellers, as the number of copies remaining, after the Subscribers are served, will not be great; and, from the enormous expense of publication, there is not the least chance of a second edition being undertaken for many years. The Plan of the Work, as now printing by Messrs. A. & J. DUNCAN, Printers to the University of Glasgow, is somewhat different from the specimen given in the Prospectus. Among other improvements, each sheet will contain about one-eighth part of more letter press than the Specimen, and the mode of reference is rendered still more plain and simple. From the delay, expense, and trouble, attending the printing of large paper copies, that part of the plan is abandoned.

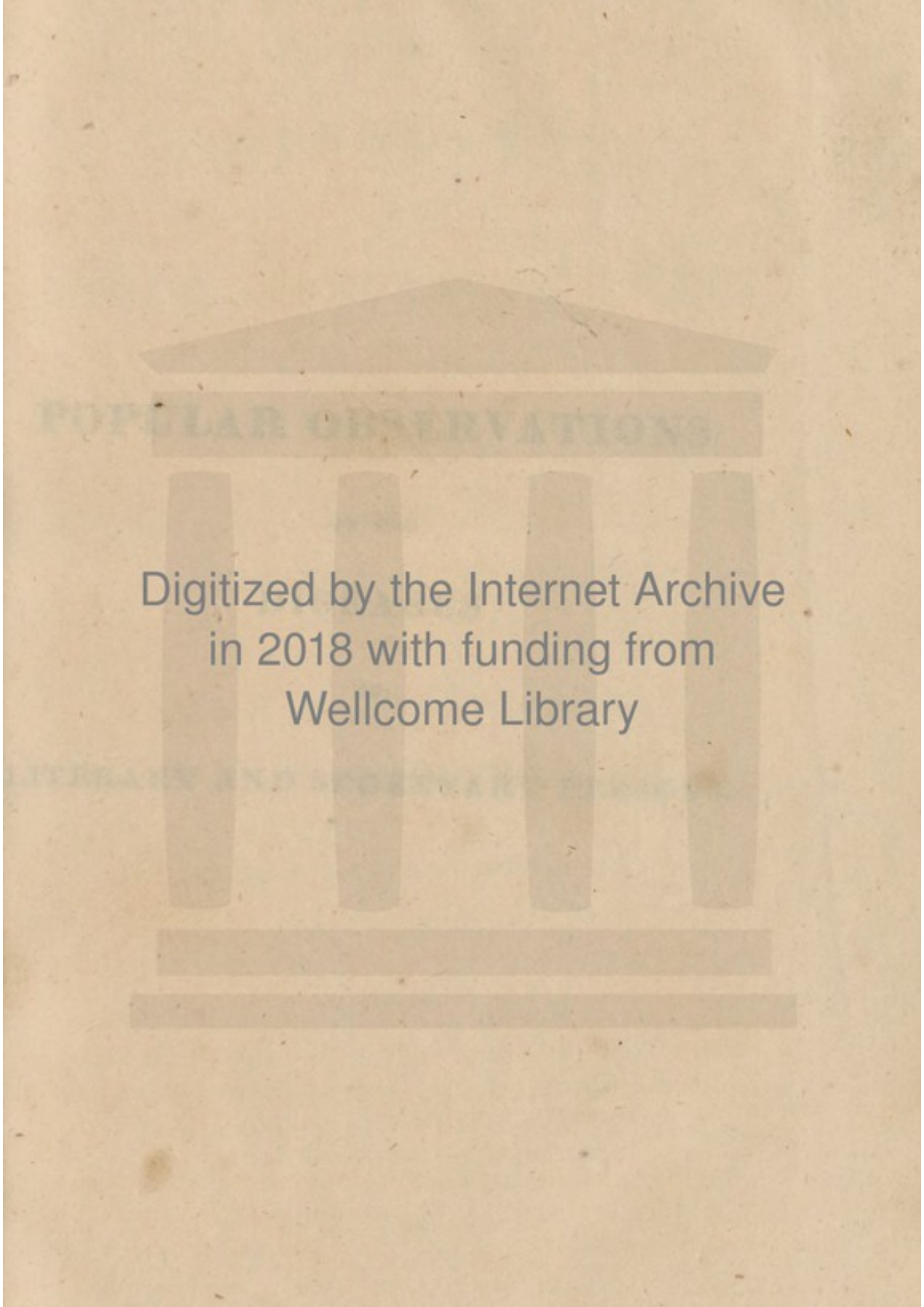
December 1st, 1818.

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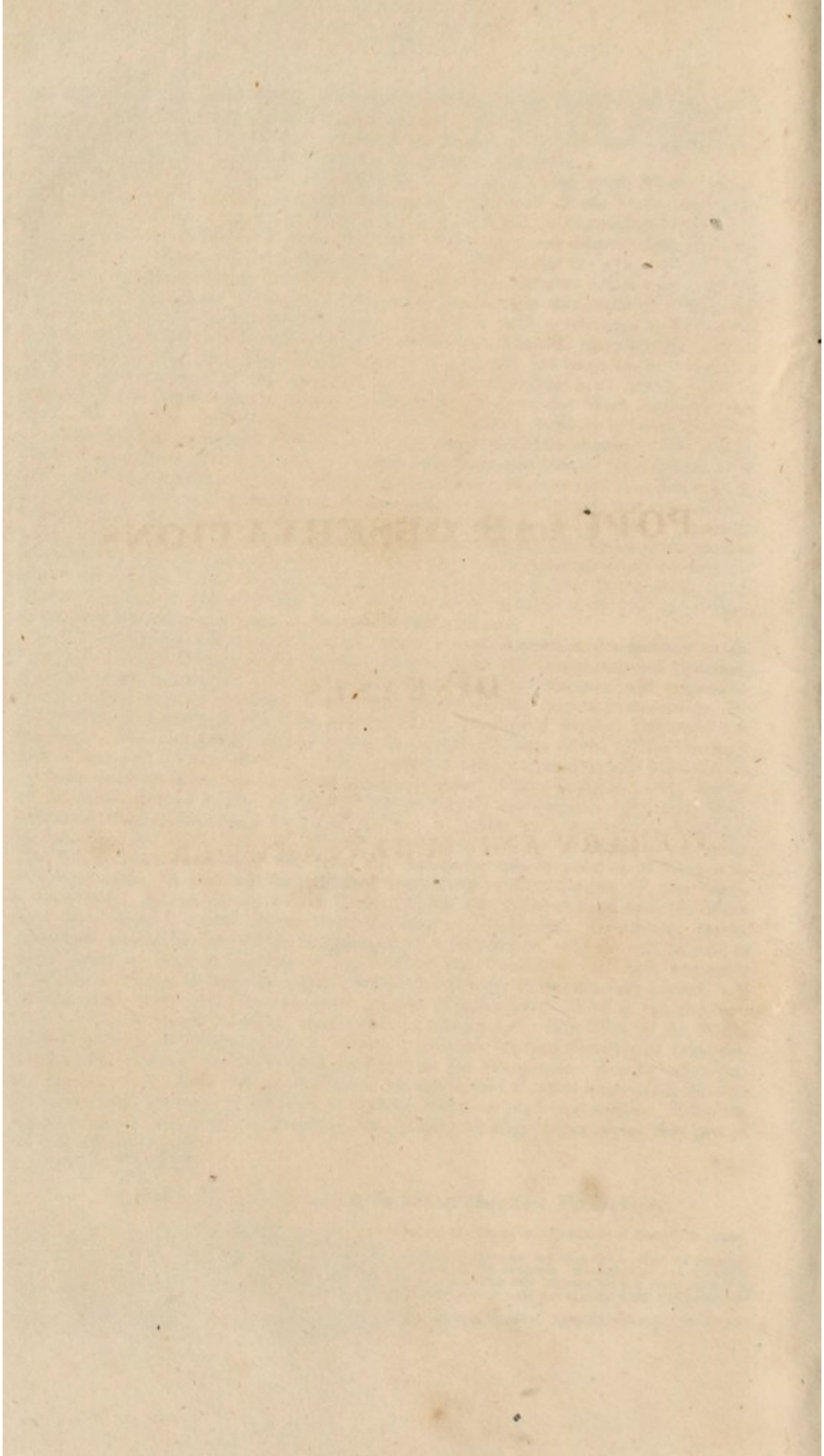
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II. Treatise on the History, Nature, and Treatment of Chincough, illustrated by cases and dissections. With an Appendix respecting the diseases most fatal to children under ten years of age. 8vo. 10s. 6d. in boards. Though this work is written chiefly for the profession, and gives an entire new view of that insidious and often fatal disease; yet it is so far adapted to general readers as to enable them to treat ordinary cases of Hooping Cough with success, and to judge when further medical assistance is necessary.

III. Rules of Life, with Reflections on the Manners, Talents, and Dispositions of Mankind. 12mo. 8s. in boards. This volume, beautifully printed by Ballantyne, is without the Author's name.



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POPULAR OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

DISEASES

OF

LITERARY AND SEDENTARY PERSONS.

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LITURARY AND MEDICAL HISTORY

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TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
HINTS
FOR
THEIR PREVENTION AND REMOVAL.

By W. ANDRE PEARKE,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

Non est vivere, sed valere vita.—**MARTIAL.**

LONDON :

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OF

THE

J. Gillet, Printer, Crown Court, Fleet Street, London.



TO THE HONORABLE
MR. JUSTICE PARK,

&c. &c. &c.



SIR,

IN allowing me to dedicate the following pages to you, I feel very sensibly the honor thus conferred on me, but lament that the work is not more deserving of such distinguished patronage.

I am, Sir,

With every sentiment of respect,

Your obedient servant,

W. A. PEARKES.

*2, North Addington Place,
Camberwell.*

TO THE HONORABLE

MR. JUSTICE PARK

of the Court

Sir,
In allowing me to dedicate
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W. A. PARKER

2 West 4th Street
Cincinnati

(viii)

PREFACE.

AS precepts for the preservation of the health of *others* have in all ages employed the pens of our most celebrated writers, it appears somewhat extraordinary that so little should have been put forth in connection with those diseases of which they are *themselves* so peculiarly the victims. To supply this deficiency is the object of the present undertaking; in the course of which the author has endeavoured to point out, in a familiar manner, divested as much as possible of all scientific technicalities, which tend but too often to bewilder the general reader, the innumerable maladies by which

literary men, and indeed all of sedentary habits, are surrounded, and to recommend such a method of removal or prevention as is consistent with the enlightened medical practice of the present day. In performing this task, he has carefully examined the labours of his predecessors, and thus brought to a point whatever was compatible with the design of his work.

POPULAR OBSERVATIONS,

&c.

IT is an observation of long standing, that, although study has a tendency to strengthen the faculties of the mind, it at the same time weakens the original powers of the body. If the latter be not endowed with a certain degree of energy the former cannot exert itself powerfully : still a moderate exercise of both strengthens the whole system. Celsus, one of the most celebrated writers of antiquity, after cautioning literary men against the danger of their occupation, gives most excellent advice, and shows the best means of guarding against the diseases to which they are

liable, as will appear in the sequel. Plutarch goes still further, and observes, that they should not only subject themselves to medical precepts, but that they should even study them, and laments that any should sacrifice their lives in, oftentimes, useless study, whilst they neglect the art of preserving health.

The ordinary diseases to which sedentary men are subject arise principally from two causes—the too great exertion of the mind, and a want of necessary exercise ; for the proof of which we need not look further than to the effects produced by them.

Metaphysics teaches us the influence exercised by the mind over the body, and the body over the mind ; but in medicine, though its object may not be so vast, we perhaps go on more certain grounds: without looking to the primary causes of this reciprocal action, we are content to watch

the phenomena resulting from them. Experience also proves that a certain state of the body produces a certain action on the mind, and *vice versa*. The union of the mind and body is so strong, that we cannot suppose the one to act without producing some effect on the other; the sensations being communicated to the body through the medium of the brain.—

Whilst the mind is occupied, the different blood-vessels of the brain are in a state of greater or less activity, and consequently are more or less excited, which tends to fatigue it. The mind, indeed, is as susceptible of fatigue, after intense study, as a man of robust constitution is after long continued bodily exertion. Of this fact there are doubtless many convinced from their own experience, who have been affected with head-ache after too severe and long-continued an application to any particular object. An observation of any one

deeply engaged will show, that not only are the eyes affected, but that the muscles of the face appear completely relaxed and sometimes even convulsed. Plato observes—when the action of the mind is too strong, the whole system sustains a shock which causes debility. Ramazzini, a celebrated Italian physician, states—“ the union of the body and mind is such, that they alike partake of the good or evil which may occur ; the mind is incapable of exertion when the body has undergone much fatigue, and one strong exertion of the mind destroys the body, by dissipating the animal spirits necessary for its support.”

To prove the immense influence which the mind exercises over the body, it will be sufficient to state—1st, That when we are studiously engaged, the brain is excited. 2dly, That every part of the body which is excited must become fatigued,

and if that excitement is continued for any length of time, the functions will be deranged. 3dly, That all nerves proceed from the brain. 4thly, That the nerves are one of the principal organs in the body, and that they are necessary for the performance of every function ; and should their action be disturbed, every part of the animal economy must sympathize.

By an attentive perusal of these remarks, it will be seen that when the brain is injured by the action of the mind, it must necessarily follow that the nerves will suffer, and consequently the bodily health become at last affected. The brain, which is the part principally engaged, the nerves, which derive their origin from it, and the stomach, are the parts which soonest indicate the pernicious effects of excessive study, which, if long continued, pervades every part of the system.

The effects of mental fatigue are the

loss of appetite, and cessation of digestion, causing general debility ; as this increases, spasms, convulsions, and total loss of the senses supervene. The first symptoms which characterize these disorders are irresolution, inactivity, and a disposition to seriousness ; sadness, and dread of futurity ; an over-attention to the health, and, upon any sudden occurrence, a fear of imminent danger. Many will be obliged to abandon their favorite employments ; for the weakness of their nerves renders them incapable of attention, the memory becomes obscured, and the ideas confused, which unhappy state is succeeded by head-ache and palpitation. By the aid of rest, generous diet, and exercise, a partial return of vigour is effected, which soon, however, disappears.

The persons, who suffer most from disorders of this description, are those whose ideas are directed continually to one ob-

ject ; by which means the mind is so strongly impressed by it as to be rendered incapable of receiving any other impression, on which account it becomes fatigued, and ultimately destroyed. If any one particular muscle be kept continually in action, the body will suffer more than if the same degree of action was exerted successively on each individual one ; so it is with the mind : if different sensations were communicated, the fatigue would be less.

When the mind is engaged, the brain receives a great quantity of blood, which gives too strong an action to the vessels, producing head-ache, inflammation, delirium, convulsions, and apoplexy, and opens the door to an infinite number of maladies, both of body and mind. Who has not experienced the unrefreshing sleep which follows mental anxiety ?

A slight irritation of the brain produces

watchfulness ; greater irritation causes convulsions, and a higher degree produces apoplexy, a death too frequent among men of sedentary habits.

It must not be imagined that profound study alone tends to weaken the nervous system—for any employment which requires the continual exertion of the eyes will weaken the head, and cause giddiness, an inclination to vomit, and a sensation of languor.

The different vessels which compose the human body contain fluids, which are constantly circulating through them : while these vessels act with neither too strong or too weak a force—when the fluids are of their natural consistence, and are not moving with too great velocity, a man is in health. But it is the motion of these fluids which is of the most consequence : as, when that changes, the fluids and solids change with it ; if the motion

is too rapid, the solids become thick, and the fluids are impoverished ; if too slow, the fibres of the muscles are relaxed, and the fluids become attenuated.

The heart is the first agent in producing the movement of the blood ; but it could not be effected by that alone : the Author of Nature has therefore ordained other means to assist in aiding the circulation and augmenting the action of the blood-vessels ; muscular contraction is one of the most efficacious, as may be ascertained in blood-letting, the surgeon being frequently obliged (from the blood not flowing so freely as could be wished) to make the patient move his fingers, for the purpose of bringing the muscles into action, which necessarily increases the current of the blood.

The principal effects of exercise are to strengthen the muscular fibre, to keep the fluids in their natural state, to give an ap-

petite, to facilitate the secretions, above all the perspiration, and to produce an agreeable sensation in all the nervous system. The effect, on the contrary, produced by a sedentary life, is to destroy the tone of the muscles, and to make them, from disuse, incapable of sustaining the slightest motion ; the circulation being deprived of a considerable agent is abandoned to the sole force of the heart and vessels, which is at first felt in their small ramifications, and eventually throughout the entire system. The natural heat is diminished, the humours begin to stagnate, become corrupted, and the functions appear altered, the secretions and evacuations are no longer performed, and the body becomes feeble. Regular evacuations are the most certain indications of good health : if they are not regularly performed, the acrimony of the juices, by degrees, undermines the constitution—the

strength diminishes, the blood becomes poor and thin ; from this cause proceeds another disease—dropsy, so often met with amongst men of sedentary habits, and which, in some instances, causes an effusion of water on the brain. This malady is noticed by Van Swieten, who, in speaking of the effect, says—“ Studious men, and those who lead a sedentary life, are often exposed to a species of apoplexy, that proceeds from this cause, and which makes its appearance by degrees ; at length they become languid and indolent, their spirits are cast down, the memory fails, they become stupid, and often remain in that state for a length of time before death puts an end to a miserable existence.” I have occasionally seen men of the first talent, who have done much in the advancement of literature, live for more than twelve months in complete idi-

otism, and at last die by this species of apoplexy.

The parts which first feel the want of exercise are those in which the vessels, naturally weak, are most in need of aid to keep the fluids in their proper state of activity, and above all, those organs destined for the important function of digestion. The stomach being weakened, the nature of the juices are altered ; digestion goes on slowly, and is imperfectly performed ; for the power of the organs being diminished, the different aliments are not converted into good chyle, but become putrid. Vegetables are decomposed, and form acids, which irritate the nerves, causing pain in the bowels, cramp, and that unpleasant and painful sensation called heart-burn. Meat turns rancid, occasions putrid eructations, continual thirst, diarrhœa, fever, general de-

bility, and an inexpressible feeling of uneasiness. The juices themselves, which the stomach continually secretes, become depraved, and incapable of performing the office they were destined for, and destroy the appetite. The intestines are also affected, and the action of respiration, which, when natural, presses upon the different organs, while we inspire, causes an increased circulation, which is diminished by the want of tone in the muscular fibre, and the intestines consequently have not the power of expelling their contents : hence, that constipated state of the bowels, to which sedentary men are so subject. The fæces, by their induration, press on the neighbouring part, and by becoming acid, irritate the intestines ; the putrid parts being absorbed and carried into the blood, the whole system is contaminated. These are not the only parts which suffer from this want of activity—

all the others sympathize. Those which are destined for the secretion of the bile become totally deranged, the bile thickens, and does not pass into the intestines, part being detained in the gall bladder, undergoes a further change, is inspissated, producing gall stones, occasioning excruciating pain, which can only be relieved by their passing into the intestines, or being voided ; but it unfortunately happens that they are sometimes of so large a size as to render this impossible. Indeed, if the patient's constitution be destitute of the requisite energy to pass them, he may be doomed to suffer for the remainder of his life. When the bile is thus vitiated, it acquires a great degree of acrimony, giving rise to abscesses in the liver. Amongst the diversity of evils to which men of this class are subject, caused by a defective circulation and derangement of the digestive organs, we must reckon hypochon-

driacism, which may be divided into two different species—that which is simply nervous, caused by intense study, producing a torpor of the sensorium, and that which depends on defective digestion, and a diminution of the evacuations produced by inactivity. It will be easy to comprehend in what manner these two species of disease are so often found united, and why they are generally so difficult to eradicate. The lungs also, from the delicacy of their structure, are very subject to disease ; and I have frequently found asthma, inflammation, suppuration, and abscesses produced by the irritation attendant upon mental exertion. Another effect of a sedentary life is the diminution of insensible perspiration, a very considerable and important evacuation, the regularity of which is essential to health. The vessels which perform this, are so weak, so small, so remote from the grand source of the circu-

lation, and so exposed to injury from external impressions, that if the circulation is not assisted by exercise sufficiently powerful to excite a certain degree of action in these vessels, it is almost impossible the health can be good. The superfluous fluid, which should have been carried off by the pores of the skin, is thus driven back upon some particular organ, and produces pain, cholic, diarrhœa, cough or fever. It having been shown that mental anxiety tends directly to debilitate the nervous system, it may not be improper here to remark, that indolence is capable of producing, nay, often does produce, the same effects, especially in weak-minded persons.

The nervous system is certainly very important to the well-being of the individual ; and when any of the essential functions are deranged, it invariably participates : whenever this is the case, we may

rely that some incipient disease is advancing, which will require the most attentive observation to counteract.

Mental anxiety and want of exercise we have already seen is one of the *principal* causes of the diseases incident to sedentary men, but there are others which I shall now notice:—1st. As the posture of a man, while sitting, impedes the flow of blood into the inferior extremities, and the bent position of the body constrains the different organs of the abdomen, their functions are impeded, digestion is again interrupted, and the stomach, being so frequently compressed, suffers more particularly. These mechanical irritations, joined to those already noticed, render sedentary men so subject to diseases of the stomach and intestines. The blood also, being obstructed in its return to the heart by the veins, is determined by its own gravity to the fundament, and produces

piles, and that troublesome, painful, and often dangerous, disease, denominated fistula.*

More clearly to point out the nature of these complaints it is necessary to observe, that the blood having been sent, by the heart, through the arteries, for the nourishment of the body, is returned by the veins which are remote from the influence of the heart, and, from want of impulse, returns through them with considerable difficulty ; which circumstance sufficiently indicates, why any addition to this natural obstacle may be so increased as to cause these diseases, and conse-

* I cannot let pass this opportunity of acknowledging the great advantage I have derived from the use of an instrument invented by that excellent practical surgeon Mr. Whately, in the cure of this disorder, and of thus publicly testifying my gratitude for this and many other acts of kindness for which I am indebted to him, during my professional studies.

quently explains why they are so frequent with persons leading an inactive life.

Any one whose mind has been much and anxiously engaged during the day, ought to retire to rest early, otherwise that repose, which it is desirable should be calm and tranquil, will be so much abridged, as to render it insufficient to produce the effect originally intended by Nature, that of recruiting the vital energies, which had been previously exhausted : for the brain having been greatly excited, the ideas are continually returning, either preventing sleep altogether, or rendering it more a kind of stupor. Sleep, says the celebrated Dr. Cullen, is a state of the animal economy which spontaneously occurs in man, and perhaps in all other animals, in their natural and healthy state, once in the course of every diurnal revolution of the sun. In man it is variously modified, but in its most natural

and complete state, it consists in a total cessation of the exercise of all sensation and thought, and consequently of all intellectual operation ; and at the same time, therefore, all exercise of volition, or the exercise of will, and every motion, from the brain to other parts of the system, entirely ceases. Natural sleep occurs more or less readily as the causes producing it have been greater or less ; and chiefly according to the labours of the preceding day—but more certainly, if those irritations, commonly arising from the exercise of the functions, or from external impressions, are more completely absent ; and particularly those of the former kind, arising from intercepted digestion, from the earnestness of mental occupation, and from the increased action of the sanguiferous system. When sleep occurs in spite of the circumstances that have a tendency to prevent it, it will be broken by

those irritations, that is, by the causes of watching frequently intervening ; or if these do not proceed so far as to excite watching, they may render the sleep incomplete, by producing only a partial interruption of thought : and as this exercise of thought, when it is partial only, must be irregular, so it must produce that incoherent and inconsistent thinking which we call *dreaming*. According to the degree of the causes, dreams may be mild, and perhaps agreeable ; or, according to the violence of these causes, they may be more turbulent, and with more emotion produced. It appears then, that even from moderate causes, they are different, and prove either cheerful or gloomy, according to the tone of mind prevailing in the person. The ancients were well aware of the baneful effects of study, when nature ordained that the faculties should be at rest, and never used to dedicate the

night to serious employments. In continuing our employments during night, we subvert the law of nature, who destined the commencement of it to repose ; we are invited to it by the humidity of the atmosphere, by silence, darkness, and the example of every living animal, as well as by the vegetable creation. The greater part of animals feel sensibly their powers diminish at sun-set, and indulge in sleep till morning returns, when the air regains its wonted salubrity.—The dangerous influence of the nocturnal air is strongly marked in some people : Van Swieten says, he knew a man affected with the gout, who could never read after sun-set without causing an increase of all its symptoms. Nor does the constitution suffer less from meditation while in bed ; for long application of the mind, as before stated, causes a great determination of blood to the head, which is favored by the

horizontal position of the body ; the sleep which follows augments it, and that organ must, for the same reason, suffer by this pernicious practice, as the body does by the privation of sleep, which is the consequence of sitting up late at night. The head becomes violently affected, the nervous system is deranged, palsy is produced, and the memory fails.—There is no function, when deranged, so difficult to re-establish as that of sleep ; and, though we sacrifice it without the least feelings of regret, we are probably doomed for years to mourn the loss of it ; and well may we exclaim with the poet—

O, gentle sleep,
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frightened thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eye-lids down,
And steep my senses in forgetfulness ?

The dense and impure smoke which arises from the different lights made use of

by those who study at night, augments in no small degree the danger, by adding to the corruption of the surrounding atmosphere; they are equally hurtful to the eyes and lungs, and although the burning of wax lights may, in a slight degree, remedy this, it must nevertheless, in some measure, always exist.

The confined air which men shut up in studies, counting-houses, manufactories, &c. are continually breathing may be reckoned as another cause of disease, and to which too little attention is paid, though it aggravates much every disorder to which they are liable; pure air is even more essential to life than food; for animals will subsist without nourishment for a length of time; but when deprived of air they perish in a few moments; they can only breathe a certain quantity of air for a limited time, after which it becomes the most deadly poison, and

produces suffocation as effectual as the most noxious gas, or a total absence of air. At a musical exhibition in the Theatre of Oxford (some few years ago), which was much crowded during the entertainment, the candles were observed to burn dim, and some of them went out. The audience complained of faintness and languor ; and had the animal effluvia, which renders the air unfit for respiration, been still further accumulated, or longer continued, they would all have perished.

A pure, open, and refreshing atmosphere strengthens the system, facilitates the respiration and perspiration, and animates the whole frame. There is no one but can verify this observation by his own experience, and of course must know of what great utility it must be to men of sedentary habits, who, far from enjoying it, on the contrary, generally remain all day in an atmosphere, which, instead

of possessing the qualities I have described, is heavy, damp, and without its natural elasticity, which oppresses instead of animating, relaxes instead of fortifying, retards perspiration instead of favouring it, and augments by that the bad effects of all the other causes so prejudicial to health. This neglect is not only with some persons confined to the state of the air, but even extends to their persons, which has more influence in aggravating disorders than has been generally supposed. One of the most pernicious effects is diminishing perspiration.

The neglect of the teeth is another cause which should be attended to ; for, by not being frequently cleaned, they become incrustated with tartar, which not only causes a most foetid and infectious odour, vitiates the saliva, and destroys the gums, but causes inflammations, abscesses, and ulcerations, insinuates itself between

the gums and the teeth, and getting down to the jaw loosens them, and deprives the stomach of the help of mastication, so important to every one, but most especially to those who, like sedentary men, are so liable to a debilitated state of the digestive organs. The more the food is masticated the more it approaches to the nature of a fluid, and is therefore much easier of digestion. The great recruit of strength after eating is owing to the introduction of fresh chyle into the system ; an animal body, like a vegetable, cannot survive with vigour without the reficient power of new juices to supply the loss of those which were wasted and carried off by the action of the body ; for as oil is the pabulum of flame, so that vital fluid blood, in purity and due quantity, is insensibly necessary to feed the lamp of life ; and this chiefly depends on the digestive faculty of the stomach rather

than the quantity or quality of the aliment, since daily experience shows us that plenty of the most nutritive aliment will be insufficient to sustain the infirm, whilst those of strong constitutions and good digestion will gain strength, though living on the hardest food.

The custom of reading while at meals is one which tends directly to weaken the stomach. The action of the nerves is so essential to the purposes of digestion, that, if the nerves going to the stomach were tied, the food would become putrid instead of being digested; while the mind being occupied suspends the distribution of the nervous influence from that organ at the time it is most necessary; hence the digestion becomes vitiated; the food remains a long time in the stomach and is badly digested; a great quantity of air is disengaged which irritates and distends it, and which,

when it is carried off, leaves the stomach in a very debilitated state.

Xylander, in a letter to Plimpius, on the diseases brought on by the exercise of magistracy, saw with exactness, and explained it in a work conformable to the theory of those times, “That those who took off the heat of the stomach to attend to business were incapable of digesting their food.” It has not escaped the notice of many writers on diet.

The ardour for study or business carried to this excess is equally ridiculous and blameable ; it does not allow time for taking proper nourishment, and is frequently accompanied by one meriting as much censure ; I mean that of not attending to the calls of nature. The fæces being long retained become hard and putrid, and irritate the intestines, alter the natural secretions, and oftentimes cause most dreadful diseases. The little vessels which carry

the nutritious particles into the blood are filled with putrid matter and contaminate it, or what is probably more fatal, is, that the nerves cease to act and are by the extreme distention rendered paralytic. The bladder and intestines have no longer the power of expelling their contents. Galen, who was well acquainted with these disorders, says he has seen many persons who have retained for a long time their urine, either from being too much engaged, too idle, or from motives of decency, who afterwards lost the power of evacuating it. At other times, it produces a disease (incontinence of urine) very opposite in appearance, but depending on the same cause, and only differing from the other in a different part of the bladder being affected. I have often seen persons who, not having evacuated their urine with sufficient frequency, have at last lost the power of retaining it, and it

was constantly dribbling away. But what is more dreadful is, that death has been produced by this indiscretion.—Tycho Braché being at a feast with the Emperor Rodolph II. from long retaining his urine, forfeited his life to his false delicacy.

May we not look upon seclusion as another cause productive of disease in men of this cast of character? it is what they voluntarily impose on themselves at first, and which at last becomes habitual; but it has many real disadvantages. Dr. Blair justly observes, “ One of the most distinguished privileges which Providence has conferred upon mankind is the power of communicating their thoughts to one another. Destitute of this power, Reason would be a solitary, and, in some measure an unavailing principle. Speech is the great instrument by which man becomes beneficial to man;

and it is to the intercourse and transmission of thought, by means of speech, that we are chiefly indebted for the improvement of thought itself. Small are the advances which a single unassisted individual can make towards perfecting any of its powers. What we call human reason is not the effort or ability of one, so much as it is the result of the reason of many, arising from lights mutually communicated, in consequence of discourse and writing." Man was made for man, and mutual intercourse has advantages which cannot be renounced with impunity. Nothing contributes so much to health as agreeable and cheerful society. This moral cause joined to the physical one of melancholy often throw these men into a state of mind, the effects of which are as hurtful as those of cheerfulness would be beneficial ; it produces that misanthropy, that ill humour, that dissatisfaction, and that

disrelish for every thing, that it may probably be regarded as one of the worst maladies these men are subject to.

Though Art's fair works and Nature's gifts conspire
To please each sense and satiate each desire,
'Tis joyless all. ——— ———

Having pointed out the causes which generally produce the disorders that studious men and those employed in business are so frequently afflicted with, I shall proceed to notice those which depend more on the particular object of their occupation, and also those which are more peculiar to certain organs.— Anatomists are frequently attacked with violent fevers, occasioned by the infected air which they are continually breathing and they are exposed to those diseases which depend on corrupted bile. The putrid blood, &c. of the dead bodies, in

which their hands are continually steeped, often causes great inflammation from the most trifling wound, or the slightest excoriation, as I have often witnessed, and have myself experienced ; frequently they prove mortal.

Chymical experiments are not without danger, from the escape of suffocating gases, which are frequently taking place, and to which many chymists have forfeited their lives ; Boerhaave would have been killed by an acid vapour had he not had instant recourse to an alkaline spirit, which was very fortunately near at hand, the vapour of which neutralized the acrimony of the acid, and put a stop to the violent spasms of the chest it had excited.—Botanists have sometimes perished in pursuing their researches ; their maladies are caused by the same means as those of artisans.—Persons employed in dry-grinding are quickly affected with

pulmonary complaints, as are also hair-dressers, bakers, masons, bricklayers, laboratory-men, coal-heavers, and chimney-sweepers ; so are leather-sellers, and dressers of flax and feathers. Men engaged in these employments often struggle with a dry cough, which ultimately terminates in consumption or asthma, caused by the particles of dust, the fumes of metals, and confined air, whereas had they removed to a purer atmosphere they might soon have recovered their health. I have often seen bakers, grocers, and type-founders affected with a peculiar disease of the skin produced by their employments.—It is said that more than one half of the men employed in coal mines die of consumption, caused no doubt by their working in what are called damp, in which the air is unfit for respiration.

I shall now make some observations on

the diseases of particular organs caused by long continued application. The eyes suffer considerably by this practice ; the continued fatigue irritates them, and frequently causes the eyelids, and the external parts, to become inflamed ; but more generally, it is the nerves alone which are affected without producing any external symptoms. The eyes of many young men have become so exquisitely sensible as to render it impossible for them to support the light, so that they have been obliged to remain, and read in rooms from which the light was so much excluded as to make it difficult for the generality of persons to distinguish even the largest characters contained in books : the vacillations and smoke of candles produced so much pain, as to render their presence quite insupportable ; nor could they even for any length of time bear the effects caused by a small lighted taper. There

are others, who, after reading a few pages, have their eyes filled with tears, which become dim, and at last it is with difficulty they can distinguish any thing. The disorders of the eyes, produced by intense application, by which the sensibility of the nerves are greatly increased, are extremely various, and require the most serious attention. I feel myself here called upon to notice a most pernicious custom, and one which is unfortunately extremely prevalent, that of applying astringent washes to inflamed eyes. I have daily opportunities of observing the direful effects of this practice, and have frequently had cause to lament having seen those who have become irrecoverably blind by the use of them. Surely no one would ever think of applying irritants to a part already so much irritated as to cause inflammation in any other part of the body? Why then should

we act differently with the eyes? I have already stated that the effect produced on the brain by study was that of causing an increased determination of blood to the part, producing a turgesence of the vessels. The same relates to the eyes; for by long continued application the blood is propelled with greater force into the vessels of that organ and distends them; so that those which before only admitted the seriferous particles of the blood, are now filled with the red particles, and give the eye that particular appearance of redness which is seen when it is inflamed. When the eye has the redness just now mentioned, together with a sense of heat, nothing acts more beneficially than warm anodyne fomentations.

Orators are exposed to diseases which depend on their vocation. Declamation, in a certain degree, is attended with most beneficial effects, and is frequently of

essential service to those in whom the function of digestion is imperfectly performed; but long continued orations, during which the ordinary course of respiration is frequently interrupted, become extremely hurtful to the lungs, which it irritates and inflames, giving rise to hoarseness, pains in the chest, cough, spitting of blood, loss of voice, suppuration, general debility, and ultimately consumption. Cicero was attacked with some of these disorders, and was recommended by his physicians to relinquish study for two years; he followed their advice, and, by rest, strengthened and rendered himself capable of returning to his avocations. Counsellors and clergymen are particularly exposed to diseases from this cause; for both are obliged to study with great assiduity, and they are likewise compelled to hold long and forcible arguments, and to lead

a sedentary life: the blood consequently flows but slowly through their lungs; they are therefore more exposed to danger, and less capable of sustaining such strong efforts. A long and vehement discourse frequently produces hernia or rupture, by the violent compression which the intestines suffer in too great an inspiration, which, though it may not be so distressing as diseases of the lungs, is, nevertheless, replete with danger; they may in some measure be hindered from taking place by the use of a truss, which, when the intestine has once descended, is absolutely necessary; for, without it, every time they have occasion to speak loud, to cough, or, indeed to use any kind of exertion, they are exposed to such an aggravation of the disease as may in a few hours cause their dissolution. Actors are likewise exposed to the same consequences. Moliere the famous French

performer died of a spitting of blood, brought on after having played in (*Le Malade Imaginaire*) one of his own pieces with much eclat. Henderson, one of our own tragedians, and a man of great merit, died of apoplexy. Singers, and those who play on wind instruments, have frequently the lungs inflamed and ulcerated. Morgagni saw a young man, who possessed a fine voice, and who consequently exercised it frequently, thrown into a consumption; the ulceration extended along the windpipe into the throat: he was suffocated in attempting to swallow the yolk of an egg.

Such, then, are the diseases incident to literary and sedentary men; and happy is he whose diversity of avocations compel him frequently to change his situation and ideas, for by these means his body has the necessary exertion, and his mind the necessary relaxation; for particular

habits, acquired by long custom, are found insensibly to gain ascendancy over the most intelligent minds, and to produce many very extraordinary effects, to the prejudice of health, as well as the moral or immoral tendency of the passions. The human body is composed of materials which must necessarily decay, and frequently be put out of order ; we are subject to diseases and the influence of the passions, which affect the spirits and intellects—and when we consider the number of exquisite movements in a state of health, and that all parts must conspire to perform their proper offices, and that the least failure occasions disease, we may well wonder we so long possess “ this muddy vesture of decay.”

Although I mention these diseases, as being the consequence of sedentary employments, it must not be supposed that those who are exposed to them should al-

ways suffer in the same way, or in the same degree. The difference of temperament, the age, and the different concatenation of events, cause a considerable variety in the effect, which shall now be noticed.—There is probably no one so completely organized, as to have every viscus in the same state, but we generally find one which is more debilitated than the rest, and this it is which first feels the impression produced by mental anxiety. If the stomach should have been naturally weak, or be rendered so by errors in diet, it will soon become affected, but the nerves may not as yet feel it. In persons whose nerves are weak, but possessing a strong stomach, the nervous system will suffer before the stomach becomes deranged. If there is want of tone in the muscular fibres there will be a feeling of languor, stiffness, extreme debility, and dropsical swellings, previous to the stomach's being affected.

Those in whom the lungs are not well formed will fall into consumptions, before any derangement is perceived in any other viscus. If the vessels of the head are debilitated there will be continual head-ache and bleeding of the nose, to which young persons are particularly liable.

The strength of the constitution is again not without its dangers ; for young men of robust constitutions, who give themselves up to the study or counting-house with indefatigable ardor, cause, by the action of the mind, an increase of action in every part of the body ; and inflammation, which is the consequence of irritation, is thereby produced in those of strong temperaments, which frequently causes death on the first attack : but if, by relaxation of the mind, together with the aid of proper medicine, they are fortunate enough to regain their health, and they immediately (as is frequently the case) ap-

ply themselves with the same assiduity, they are afflicted with the same disorders, and are, by continued fevers, at length reduced to a state of great debility, and from which there is but little hope of their recovery, as nothing so much exhausts the powers of life as an increased action of the heart and arteries.

If sedentary employments produce in adults the diseases I have enumerated, how much more hurtful must it be to children ; and there are many who have been sacrificed by long-continued application ; indeed we frequently see those that are this way inclined, whose talent is astonishing, commence by being prodigies and end by becoming fools. This acuteness of sensibility is often very remarkable in those children pre-disposed to scrofula, which the want of exercise and the consequent debility never fails to exasperate. Childhood should be devoted

to exercise, which strengthens the body, and not be spent in study, which debilitates it, and causes a train of most dreadful sufferings. Nature never intended we should arrive at perfection, but by slow and gradual means. When the mind expands prematurely, and children are permitted to make great application in cultivating science, the body cannot receive the necessary supply of nourishment, the strength therefore fails, and every function ceases to act, a striking proof of which is afforded in the celebrated John P. Baratier, as recorded by Dr. Johnson. He was born at Schwoback, in the year 1721 : at five years of age he understood Greek, Latin, German, and French ; he next studied Hebrew—and at nine years old was able to translate every part of scripture into Latin. When ten years old he entered the university of Altdorf, and in the same year wrote a letter to

Mons. Le Maitre on a new edition of the Bible, Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Rabbinical, which is inserted in the Bibliothèque Germanique. In the year following he published the Travels of Benjamin of Tudela, translated from the Hebrew into French. He was afterwards admitted a member of the Academy of Berlin, and created M. A. by the university of Halle. At seventeen he was reckoned the best informed man in Europe. Though he possessed such energy of mind, he was subject, from his earliest infancy, to many diseases ; and at eighteen he was attacked with a cough, which was soon followed by loss of appetite, sleep, and such a train of evils, as made him most anxiously wish for death, as the only relief for his sufferings, which happened when he was nineteen. I have seen, says Boerhaave, a young man of the first talent, in fact a complete prodigy, who was cut off at the

age of twenty-five ; and another, who was extremely clever, who devoted day and night to study—who gradually wasted away without the characteristic of any particular disease, at the age of nineteen. There are many born with most superior talents—of active and penetrating minds, who give to study or business the time destined by nature for repose, who are afflicted with a most distressing and dangerous depression of mind, and, in the flower of youth, become victims to their exertions. In children the blood circulates with much greater velocity than in adults, and their constitutions not having received sufficient strength to resist the effects produced by the excitement caused by study, they sooner sink into a state of debility. Compare the children employed in manufactories with those working in the open air—in the former we see them rickety, scrofulous, distorted, and,

indeed, nothing but disease is manifest : but in the latter, who range in a pure, uncontaminated atmosphere, we find the glow of health on their cheeks, their dispositions lively, their appetite good, and their faculties of mind extremely acute. It is cruel and absurd to confine children for a length of time to any employment—it diminishes the energy of their mind, destroys their health, and annihilates their talents. Anaxagoras, an ancient philosopher, in his last illness, being asked by his friends if he had any wish ungratified, gave this answer—“ My only desire is, that the month in which I die may be kept as a yearly holiday by the children of Lampsacus.”

The evils which too much fatigue produces in children are much aggravated by their being compelled to continue at those studies or employments to which they have a natural dislike ; which, indeed, at

all ages is pernicious, for the disgust which is created, joined to that of the excitement produced in the brain, renders them more liable to be the victims of disease. Boerhaave has noticed a most striking alteration produced for the better in those who had been obliged to occupy their minds in study or employments for which they had a disrelish, on their being relinquished, and following others more congenial to their taste.

—All constraint,
 Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
 Is evil, hurts the faculties, impedes
 Their progress in the road of science ; blinds
 The eye-sight of discov'ry, and begets,
 In those that suffer it, a sordid mind—
 Bestial, a meagre intellect, unfit
 To be the tenant of man's noble form.

Though premature study is thus prejudicial to health, it is not less dangerous to commence at too late a period of life ; for those persons who have been indolent in

their younger days, cannot suddenly devote themselves to study, without incurring the risk of producing such a degree of excitement as will be attended with the most fatal consequences. Nature is only led on by degrees ; when the mind has been long occupied by any particular object, it is with the utmost difficulty we shall be able to change it. If we review (says the famous Haller) the history of human life, we shall find that in infancy we have hardly any memory ; only simple impressions, which soon vanish, but which notwithstanding excite strong ideas in the mind, as is obvious from the crying of infants. The memory is perfected by degrees, and the ideas received by favorite objects and familiar persons remain impressed in the mind of the infant ; while, at the same time, the imagination likewise increases, which is often very powerful in young children : for instance, terror

in no age produces more violent or more deplorable effects. Afterwards the number of our ideas increases, the faculty of preserving past ideas is impaired, and at the same time the power of imagination becomes torpid. Thought resides in the soul, it attends to the sensations which are either brought by the senses, or recalled by the imagination; frequently also by the mere signs which recur to our mind. Attention is when an idea occupies the mind principally or solely for any length of time. The comparison of two ideas instituted by the mind, is called judgment or genius, when the mind, by comparing them, discovers them to be alike or dissimilar. Genius consists in a vivid sensation, conjoined with rapidity of thought, so as instantly to abstract from notions their points of similitude or dissimilitude. The principal source of judgment, invention and wisdom, consists in

the slow examination of ideas, by which they are considered by the mind in every point of view, and in the attention of the mind being confined to one object, to the exclusion of all other ideas.

Sedentary employments are equally dangerous to those who are far advanced in life ; and we ought therefore to diminish our mental occupations ; for the faculties of the mind are perceived to lessen with our bodily strength ; and those persons who know how to moderate their anxieties in proportion to their age, will be the most likely to preserve their health in the decline of life.

There are other causes besides excessive study and sedentary employments, which will produce many of the diseases before alluded to. The passions of the mind cause many disorders by the impressions made on the nervous system. The human mind is principally actuated

by two passions, hope and fear ; the former increases the energy of the nervous system, and, as it were, lifts it above itself, the latter sinks it below its natural standard. Most of the subordinate passions appear to be compounded of hope. Terror is a species of sudden fear impressed with extreme violence. Hope promotes a free circulation of the blood, stimulates the nerves, and increases their power on all vital parts, assists digestion, gives strength and vigour to the limbs, and fortitude to the mind. Fear, on the contrary, deadens the feelings of the nerves, chills the blood, retards its motion, impairs the appetite, and depresses the spirits. Joy, when moderate, contributes to health ; but when sudden or excessive, produces a kind of torpor or palsy of the nerves, suspends the motion of the heart, and occasions a mortal syncope. Sorrow is accompanied by lan-

guor, loss of appetite and sleep, giddiness of the head, effusion of tears, and fainting ; it suspends the secretions, respiration becomes difficult, and it is the cause of frequent sighing, to relieve the breast of its oppressive load.

Happiness and misery fill up the outlines in the portrait of human existence. Every one naturally endeavours to attain one and avoid the other, but by different means, which are often disproportionate to that end. Extravagance of hope often ends in disappointment, and even a series of pleasurable events at last create satiety. The violent passions of the mind, disturb its union with the body, and injure health. A pure and uncorrupted conscience, the reward of virtue, will best reconcile them to each other, and cause them to act in union, that will speak peace to the mind whatever the world may say, and shield it from the malignant effects

of slander and unmerited abuse. That man will enjoy the best health who can expostulate with the extravagance of his ideas, and convince himself that what he prefers most is not always best for him ; who is not arrogantly elevated by the delusive smiles of prosperity, nor servilely cast down by misfortune, which may often be converted into a real benefit.

———If misfortune comes she brings along
The bravest virtues. And so many great
Illustrious spirits have convers'd with woe,
Have in her school been taught, as are enough
To consecrate, and make ambition
Even wish the frown beyond the smile of fortune.

Having thus pointed out the state of the body and mind, and shown how, by their mutual sympathy, they co-operate with each other, I shall proceed to make some observations on the best means of preventing the diseases arising from ex-

cessive study or sedentary employment. The first difficulty to be overcome with those who are too fond of study or too anxious about their affairs is to convince them of their dangerous tendency. The difficulty is much augmented by the good opinion of themselves, which is, I am sorry to say, frequently met with in those persons whose abilities give them some degree of superiority over the generality of mankind, or the silly pride of those who estimate their worth by their riches. However anxious we may be, or whatever arguments we may make use of (to try and convince them of their dangers), it is but too often in vain, as they deceive themselves by many false ideas : one depends on the strength of his constitution, another thinks that as he has become habituated to it, the effects pointed out cannot be produced, others hope to escape because they have not as yet felt them, and

some are regardless of the bad effects which have already appeared, and are heedless of the disease under which they labour, provided it does not incapacitate them from attending to their favourite pursuits. Even when the diseases have arrived to such a height as to cause dejection of the mind, and produce such effects on the nervous system as to make them fearful of every occurrence, we are not more fortunate ; for their gloomy state of mind makes them despair that any thing will afford them relief. We have on record many lamentable instances of persons labouring under this state of mind (in which even the most distant hope of succour is excluded) having committed the shocking crime of suicide. This, and the difficulty of re-establishing the health of men possessing such ideas, should act as an additional reason, for strenuously urging a proper regulation of conduct, and of at-

tending to the best means of preserving health.

The first preservative, without which every other means must fail, is the occasional relaxation of the mind. Time spent in repose and agreeable company cannot be said to be lost ; for it strengthens the body and gives the mind the power of exerting itself with vigour, and those moments consecrated to relaxation will be greatly recompensed by the uninterrupted enjoyment of good health. It is during the moments of recreation that the fancy is struck with the most happy ideas ; then the mind expands itself.

Animus eorum qui in aperto aere ambulant attollitur.

The comparison made by Plutarch is very apposite. “A little water,” says he, “nourishes and strengthens plants ; too great a quantity kills them : so it is

with the mind; moderate exertion strengthens it, but excessive fatigue destroys it."

If there is any case which demands more attention than another, it is that in which the head is the most likely part to be affected; for that is with the greatest difficulty restored to its natural functions.

Having stated that inaction was the second cause of the diseases incident to literary and sedentary men, it appears that exercise is necessary for guarding against them, and it will prove much more efficacious if taken in the open air, which frequently produces a gradual, salutary and lasting change in the habit, and is attended with a circumstance I should think likely to recommend it, which is, that it must be beneficial to all, and cannot be injurious to any one. Pure air is so necessary to the existence of animals that it is not only taken into the

lungs during inspiration, but it is largely mixed with the food, and forms, indeed, a part of the animal system. The florid colour of the pulmonary blood, or that which has circulated through the lungs is owing to its having been impregnated by pure air ; when respiration is laborious or obstructed, as is the case in persons affected with asthma, the florid colour of the blood is rendered more faint and pale ; on the contrary, when the action of the lungs is uninterrupted, and we breathe a more pure and dephlogisticated country air, the whole mass of blood becomes perceptibly more florid, and imparts to the countenance a fresh and ruddy appearance.

Those men who are shut up in their studies or counting-houses, frequently complain of head-ache ; their eyes are hot, the lips and mouth parched and dry, they have an unpleasant tightness in the chest, and pain

at the pit of the stomach ; sometimes they are drowsy, subject to watching, and a sense of languor. If they still continue at their avocations every symptom is augmented, whereas three or four hours exercise in the country would have dissipated them, recalled their serenity of mind, and strengthened the constitution.

It is to be regretted that men of sedentary employments are not sufficiently convinced of the connection between the mind and body. The ancients were well aware of it, as may be inferred from many of their writings. Moses Maimonides, the oldest of the Arabian physicians, says, "Seeing that health contributes much towards the cultivation and knowledge of divinity, and that men of weak health cannot sufficiently contemplate the works of nature ; it is, therefore, absolutely necessary that they should carefully avoid every thing detrimental to health, and on

the contrary make use of every means in their power which can tend to preserve and strengthen it." "The disposition of the mind," says Descartes, "depends so much on the temperament of the body, that if one could find any means of increasing our penetration, it is to exercise we should look for it." This observation is verified by that eminent physician Hoffman, who mentions idiots who came to the proper enjoyment of their senses by being compelled to take exercise. All those whose avocations are sedentary should never fail of devoting at least one or two hours a day to this purpose, which without doubt is most proper before dinner. Walking has many advantages ; it is the exercise I should decidedly prefer, and most strongly advise, as bringing every muscle of the body into action, and carrying off the superfluous nervous irritability. It should be frequently had

recourse to during the day, and never continued when it has caused fatigue. Although a person may not be able to walk more than one mile at first, by repeated attempts, he will at length walk five or even ten miles, without feeling any degree of lassitude. Horse exercise is certainly very salutary, though it cannot always be had recourse to: it is of essential service to the head, but above all to the viscera; for it prevents the accumulation of fæces by exciting the peristaltic motion of the intestines. But it does not, like walking, propel the blood into the extremities; for those who are in the habits of riding very frequently have their hands and feet extremely cold. Herodicus, the master of Hippocrates, is said to be the first who used the gymnastic art, and he recovered his health by that means, and though naturally of a weak and delicate constitution he preserved

his health and faculties till he was one hundred years of age. He no doubt carried it to excess in some instances ; which is often the case with those who are enthusiastic in their discoveries and are not sufficiently aware of the benefits and dangers which may arise from them, though he carried it to a faulty extreme by the indiscriminate use of it in all diseases. Surely the moderns are much to blame in expecting to remove some of them without it, and particularly those arising from sedentary employments, or such as are caused by weakness or some fault in the solids ; for to them the power of exercise is immediately applied. Exercise increases bodily heat, by rendering the blood more fluid, and promoting a free and *equal* distribution through the whole vascular system. Many diseases, therefore, proceeding from a sluggishness or any defect in the circulation of the blood,

may, by exercise, be often effectually removed ; such as nervous and hypochondriacal disorders, ague, rheumatism, and palsy. It is, indeed, a sovereign remedy either in preserving or restoring health : it assists the secretions, renders the body less liable to the vicissitudes of the weather, or the attack of putrid diseases ; in a word it animates every part of the system, and gives alacrity and vigour to the mind.—As the animal juices are accumulated by nourishment and rest, so are they consumed by abstinence and motion ; and it is a circumstance of the highest importance to health that the natural balance may be kept up between the solids and fluids. The salutary power of exercise and good air is particularly exemplified in laborious country people, who, notwithstanding their indifferent food are generally hearty and strong. They have a much better appetite and digestion than

the indolent. By the increased heat attendant upon exercise, the oily and watery parts of their food, such as it is, will be more uniformly mixed, and worked up into a proper degree of richness and consistence for the nourishment of the body.

Hismonæus cured himself of nervous debility ; and Galen informs us that being himself of a naturally delicate habit, he always dedicated some few hours in the day to exercise. Socrates used to play with his children. The Grand Pontiff Scævolius and Scipio used to play at battledore, and amuse themselves on the sea shore, in order to relax the mind, and preserve their health, strength and cheerfulness. The Cardinal Richelieu amused himself with gentle bodily exercise, to ease his mind from the laborious occupations of the cabinet: Anthony de Grammont coming once unawares upon him,

when quite alone, found him without his coat, jumping about the room.

When we find men like these amusing themselves in this way, may I not venture to recommend it to even the most learned of our days without the fear of wounding their feelings. A sea voyage is very beneficial, and when it can be obtained, should never be neglected. It promotes the functions of the liver, and favours the due performance of every secretion and excretion. Octavius Augustus began while young to study the fine arts with much assiduity: he was afflicted with the diseases incident to literary men; but he proved himself wiser than many, for he knew how to avert the impending evils, and by relaxation and exercise regained his health. Riding in a coach cannot be called exercise and it will not afford much benefit: it should be left for those per-

sons that have lost the use of their limbs. Men of sedentary habits can always take exercise more congenial to health, if they do not delay too long. The different kinds of exercise by which they would be most benefited are those which call every part of the body into action, such as walking, fencing, sparring, tennis, billiards, skittles, and cricket ; some of these have fallen into such disrepute that many persons would be ashamed to be seen engaged in them ; nor can they be brought to believe that the abandonment of these useful recreations is one of the principal causes of the great and lamentable increase of nervous disorders. It is much to be wished that the gymnastic art should be as it formerly was, the object of attention to the masters of schools.

Those men, who are anxious to palliate their want of activity, may say, there are many persons who have lived to a great

age, and their health has not been injured, though they were not in the habits of taking exercise, and that artisans do not suffer any of these diseases ; but, they should recollect there is an essential difference between one who is mentally occupied, and who is also confined to his desk, and one whose employment does not require any exertion of mind, and who is continually in motion. If it should be urged that women enjoy good health, though they lead a sedentary life, I think the case is still less applicable ; for Nature has made them more susceptible of agreeable sensations, has given them more lively dispositions, they talk more, eat less, their minds are far less occupied by intense thinking. Their sleep is not interrupted by the disturbed state of mind which long attention and anxiety occasion, and there are innumerable other incidents daily occurring to them, which do not

happen to men ; which circumstances are sufficient to enliven the mind and increase the flow of blood, and cause its equal distribution through the whole system, without fatiguing any particular organ.

With respect to artisans, it must be acknowledged they do not take as much exercise as could be wished, still they have a decided advantage over literary and sedentary men, who are continually confined to the desk or counting-house ; for although they continue at work during the week, still their labour is not of such long continuance as among the latter ; besides, they enjoy themselves on Sundays and other days of relaxation, which are continually occurring ; there is also a great difference in many other respects ; for although the whole body may not at times be in motion, still some part or other of it generally is, and which is not unfrequently pretty active ; in some arts

it is so considerable, as to be attended with great fatigue, which if it be not sufficient to preserve their health, still gives this class of persons an advantage over those who are inactive, and spend their days in reading and writing.

Let me not, however, be understood to assert that inaction is not hurtful to many artisans. I am well aware that most employments have some peculiar disadvantage ; for the labour of the husbandman, perhaps, is the only one which does not affect the constitution : all I wish to impress is, that literary and sedentary men suffer more severely, and that the energy of the mind tends directly to produce more baneful effects than the employments of sedentary artisans, whose diseases seem to depend on four principal causes :—1st, Insufficiency of exercise and impure air. —2dly, The unwholesome damp situation in which they live (their habitations

being generally crowded and dirty).—3dly The prejudicial effects of certain substances they are preparing, or those used for the purpose of so doing.—4thly, The continual fatigue of one part of the body. Upon these rest all the causes which prove detrimental to their health.

However necessary exercise may be to preserve the health, or to restore it when once lost, it is nevertheless requisite to pay some attention, and not to carry it to excess, lest by abuse it should become hurtful; for excessive fatigue instead of doing good and strengthening the system, never fails to cause debility. We are very liable to run into extremes, and from a state of inactivity to pass too hastily to its opposite, under the fallacious idea that two or three days' violent exercise will do as much good as if taken with caution daily: but this is a most dangerous mistake; for it not only exhausts the

strength and causes faintness ; but the vessels being weak, the risk is incurred of producing such an increased action in the blood vessels as to produce the rupture of some of them, and bring on bleeding of the nose, spitting, or indeed, vomiting of blood.

Celsus observes in his Aphorisms, sudden labour after too much rest, or sudden rest after too much labour, is not without danger; changes ought to be made by little and little :—

Begin with gentle toils, and as your nerves
Grow firm, to hardier by just steps aspire.
The prudent, even in every moderate walk,
At first but saunter ; and by slow degrees
Increase their pace.

When all at once from indolence to toil
You spring, the fibres by the hasty shock
Are tired and crack'd, before their unctuous coats,
Compressed, can pour their lubricating balm.
Besides, collected in the passive veins,

Their purple mass a sudden torrent rolls,
 O'erpowers the heart, and deluges the lungs
 With dangerous inundation : oft the source
 Of fatal woes ; a cough that foams with blood,
 Asthma, and feller peripneumony.

Seneca has with great justice observed that the exercise which dissipates the spirits is not fit for those men who have occasion for mental exertion.*

It is of great importance not to take exercise after having eaten a full meal. For digestion, which is neither fermentation, dissolution, nor trituration, but a combination of all these, is promoted by tranquillity, and requires the nervous energy to complete the process. If after eating we make any great exertion, the functions are always deranged ; for

* Nam exercitationes, quarum labor spiritus exhaurit, hominem inhabilem intentione ac studiis acrioribus reddit.—Epist. 15.

the continual motion of the stomach impedes the due action of the digestive organs.

We should always, (says Celsus,) rest after meat, and not disturb the mind with thinking, nor the body with walking, though ever so slowly. Riding is most certainly the very worst exercise which can be taken soon after a meal. After having remained a long time without taking exercise, there will be felt some inconvenience when we begin to take it, and it will almost seem to do more harm than good ; but it must not be discontinued on that account, for though a slight degree of exertion may cause weariness, still by being repeated we shall find that we are capable of increasing it every day, and in the course of time perceive that we have acquired such a degree of strength in the muscles as to be able to sustain considerable exertion without producing

fatigue, and indeed with the most happy effect. When less exertion of the mind is made, and more exercise taken, the greatest part of the diseases enumerated will be hindered from occurring ; but as it cannot be hoped that every one will be convinced of the dangers they subject themselves to, it will be proper to mention such things as may tend to aggravate their infirmities, and to point out such things as may help to preserve their health.

The food (says Hippocrates) should be proportionate to the fatigue ; if the strength of the body is greater than the food, it nourishes and strengthens the body ; but if the quantity of food surpasses the strength of the body, (that is, if the stomach cannot digest it), it produces a train of evils.

Plutarch particularly notices the propriety of a reciprocal proportion between exercise and food for the preservation of

health, and its importance will be seen on recalling a previous remark ; viz. That it is the action of the digestive organs which separates from the food the chyle necessary for our support, and changes it into our own substance. If then these organs, the chief of which is the stomach, be too weak to act on the food, or the quantity of food being too great, instead of being digested, assimilated, and converted to the proper substance necessary for recruiting the system, shall become corrupted, it will remain as extraneous substances, irritating the intestines without affording any nourishment. Let this therefore be laid down as a general rule, that from whatever cause the digestive power of the stomach is deprived of its natural strength, a spoon diet will be the most efficacious means of affording relief. For by this the inconvenience of sleepiness, palpitation of the heart, flush-

ings of the face and the other oppressive symptoms attendant on indigestion, will be alleviated.

Mr. Abernethy, in a very valuable work which he published some time ago, mentions his having been afflicted for a great length of time with a disorder, during which he had no appetite ; he, at length, resolved not to eat till his appetite returned ; and even then he gratified it very sparingly, eating only vegetable food, and drinking only water. “ In one week,” says he, “ my appetite became keen, my digestion easy, my stomach tranquil, and every symptom of the disorder with which I had been so long afflicted, left me.”

It is then the strength of the digestive organs which should be considered ; and there are so many causes which have a tendency to destroy their powers, that they cannot be expected to remain long in their natural state. It should be recollected, that though the digestive organs may not be de-

bilitated, yet the insensible perspiration, so essential to the well being of man, (and which Sanctorius, an Italian physician, who indefatigably passed a number of years in a series of statical experiments, ascertained amounts nearly to five-eighths of the aliment we take in, but which varies considerably, according to the season of the year, the constitution, age, sex, and exercise,) not being carried on in sufficient quantity from the want of proper exercise, and the loss therefore not being great, there is less need of replenishment.

If we compare a robust labourer with a man confined to his desk or study, the one being always in the open air, taking continual exercise, is lively ; and, from not fatiguing his mind with intense thought, enjoying a refreshing and tranquil sleep—every secretion being performed with the greatest regularity, the coarsest food is not hurtful to him, for he has

every requisite for its being properly digested ; which is not the case with sedentary men, many of whom increase the difficulty, by swallowing their food without being properly masticated. Besides, in country people, every organ destined for the secretion subservient to digestion, is in its most healthy state, the muscular fibres of the stomach act with their natural force : in fact, there is no organ but performs its office ; the fæces are evacuated, the chyle passes without any obstacle into the blood-vessels, and is soon changed into a pure and wholesome blood, the superfluous parts are carried off by urine and perspiration, and the whole frame remains in a state of perfect equilibrium.

If we were to give a strong working man nothing but broths, poultry, and light foods, he would soon be hungry, and become attenuated—for he thrives better

on coarse food. Any person of a weak and delicate habit of body using the food which peasants are in the habit of eating, would be affected with violent pains in the stomach, and every symptom of indigestion. Boerhaave says : “ There are some sedentary men who are *bon-vivans*, and are not satisfied unless they eat those kinds of food, which they cannot digest ; but it is absolutely necessary they should either renounce these or their studies, otherwise the most severe pains, or the most fatal obstructions of the bowels, will be the consequence of their indiscretion.”

Attention should be directed to the choice as well as the quantity of food, for errors in one or the other will prove equally prejudicial.

It is not my intention to detail every species of food which is either useful or detrimental to health ; but I shall content myself with mentioning the ge-

neral class of aliments which should be shunned, and those which may be taken with advantage. Those which are improper are—

1st. All fat meats ; for they increase the relaxation of the fibres of the stomach, blunt the action of the saliva, the digestive qualities of the bile, the intestinal fluids, and occasion, by the slow manner in which they are digested, an unpleasant feeling at the pit of the stomach ; they become rancid, and produce violent symptoms of irritation.

2dly. Those of a slimy or clammy nature operate in the same way as those before mentioned. These two classes comprise pastry, creams, &c.

3dly. Flatulent vegetables, such as greens, cauliflowers, &c. which frequently produce a most distressing and painful distention of the stomach, and embarrassment of the head. The development of air which

takes place in food is one of the greatest agents in favoring digestion, and we should not long survive, were we to feed on that deprived of air: but this air, so useful, so necessary when the organs are in their natural state, in which the disengagement of it is regulated by the action of the stomach and intestines, becomes hurtful when the organs are debilitated, for then the food is more corrupted than digested; it remains a length of time in the stomach, and the air being given out too rapidly, and in too great a quantity, the stomach is distended, the air becomes rarefied by heat, and causes frequent eructations, producing great pain: it compresses the viscera, alters their functions, and sometimes produces inflammations.

4thly. Those meats which are naturally hard or rendered so by being smoked or salted, which the digestive organs act but slowly upon, are likewise very pre-

judicial, and should be avoided, as they cause the same painful sensations as those already mentioned.

5thly. Those which are either too acid or which, by being acrimonious, produce insupportable irritations on the delicate nerves.

The species of food which seems to agree best with debilitated stomachs, are :

1. The tender flesh of young animals, with the exception of pork, duck, &c.
2. Fish of all sorts.
3. The different farinaceous grains, wheat, rye, oats, rice, and barley, and some of the leguminous grains : these may either be taken by themselves, or put into soup, forming a nourishing food, easy of digestion, and which may be used with advantage. Those herbs which are neither too relaxing nor too acid.
4. The different kinds of roots which are generally used, composed of a farinaceous substance mixed with saccha-

rine matter. Ripe fruits are extremely beneficial, as they contain a great quantity of sugar, which may be seen in a granular state on the surface of them, by their being kept after having been dried. Figs, a very saccharine fruit, were anciently the chief food of the *athletæ* or public wrestlers in Rome. The juice of the carrot, and, still more, of beet, yield a considerable quantity; the general calculation is about four or five pounds from one hundred of the root. From the experiments of Proust, it appears that a coarse sugar may be procured from grapes. Margraff (in the *Mem. de l'Acad. de Berlin*) says, that all the roots made use of for diet, and no doubt many others, contain sugar not inferior to that of the sugar cane, and which can be extracted without much difficulty. He says, that eight ounces of the juice of skirwort yields one ounce and a half of sugar.

Although certainly sugar affords great nourishment, still it must be acknowledged, that it frequently produces unpleasant symptoms in some persons ;—this fact is noticed by Dr. Pemberton, who states that he has observed, that a gnawing pain in the stomach, a craving desire for food, and an increased flow of urine, constantly succeeded the use of sugar in the morning, and to have as constantly disappeared when it was omitted.—5. Bread, which is the chief subsistence of all nations, affords great nourishment, and has therefore been emphatically termed “the staff of life.”—6. Eggs.—7. Milk.

The use of these aliments may be rendered more salutary, by some observations which it is of importance to make. With respect to meat, it may be eaten either roasted or boiled, which renders it more soluble in the stomach ; and it is only in these ways, that the firmer parts,

as the tendinous, the ligamentous, and membranous, can be duly softened, and their gelatinous substances rendered subservient to nutrition: but if these processes are carried too far, the nutritious juices are extricated, and there remains nothing but dry fibres incapable of sustaining the strength of the constitution. All fried meats are less easy of digestion than those prepared in any other manner. — Eggs afford much nourishment, when they are new laid, and not much boiled, and they are a species of food which does not irritate the stomach, and are very easy of digestion; but, when the least putrescent, they are very hurtful: they are well adapted to those who are troubled with acidity of the stomach. If any one experiences any difficulty in digesting them entire, they will find that, by taking the white only, this inconvenience will be remedied, it being more

easy of digestion—at the same time it affords great sustenance to sickly persons.

Milk is one of the best and most digestible of all aliments, and is well adapted for sedentary men, if they have not acidity of the stomach, but it should not be taken with food which is capable of producing any alteration in it, or which is difficult of digestion. Indeed, it should never be taken but alone, with bread, rice, or when the food previously taken into the stomach is perfectly digested; for if it be mixed with the acids which exist in vegetables, it forms a coagulum, which renders it difficult to be acted upon by the stomach.

Chocolate must be considered more as an aliment than as a drink, for it consists of decoction of two substances—1st. a farinaceous substance, easy of digestion, and extremely nourishing; 2ndly, of a bitter penetrating oil, which, together, form a

species of food which quickly strengthens the body. It should not, however, be used by those of sanguine constitutions ; for it augments the quantity of blood, heats the body, like all greasy aliments, and sometimes occasions pain at the pit of the stomach, indigestion, loss of appetite, and constipation.

In enumerating the diseases to which sedentary men are liable, I stated, that when the bile was hindered from passing into the intestines, it becomes inspissated, and produces gall-stones, one of the most painful and dangerous maladies to which they are liable. Vegetable acids are the best remedies which can be employed against them, for they have been ascertained, by experiments, to possess the property of neutralizing the bile and imparting to it a saponaceous quality ; they retain it in its natural state of fluidity, and thereby relieve the obstruction, excite

the torpid intestines to perform their functions, and, consequently, remove the habitual costiveness, and all the train of symptoms attending this class of disease. They will be found to agree best with an empty stomach, and should not, therefore, be taken after meals—nor should any thing but water be drank with them. They should be carefully avoided by those who have acidity of the stomach, when the intestines are much relaxed, or when the constitution is much debilitated.

There are other precautions necessary with regard to the different kinds of aliment, and for which no general rule can be given ; but every one must judge by his feelings which are beneficial and which are detrimental.

Such is the great sensibility of the stomach, that food, scarcely perceptible to the taste, will produce violent pain, sickness, and vomiting ; it has, as it

were, the power of chusing whatever is grateful or beneficial to itself, and refusing what is injurious to the constitution. There are few persons who have not some particular propensity or aversion to certain kinds of food; cheese, honey, or other things of the like nature, which are agreeable to some, and act on others with the violence of a poison. Thus the stomach gives warning and denies admittance to what would be injurious, and often craves with avidity such things as prove salutary. Hence the eager thirst for cold water in the height of a burning fever, which, being permitted, has been known to terminate the disease, and save the patient's life, after the power of medicine has failed.—Some find that their stomach will digest meat better than vegetables, which occasionally produce a disagreeable sensation at the pit of the stomach; such persons will do well to abstain from them.

Others, again, will find vegetables more suitable; we must leave their own feelings on this head, to direct them in their choice, by following which they will seldom err. Plutarch was of opinion that sedentary men should live entirely on a vegetable diet, on the plea that animal food diminishes the natural acuteness of the mind. Although many other authors, and the example of some celebrated philosophers, might be adduced in favour of this hypothesis, still, I cannot but think there is great danger in confining men of this description wholly to a vegetable diet. Galen, Plimpius, and many others thought that fish was the most wholesome species of food for those who led an inactive life. He who means to be a rational epicure and to exalt the pleasure of eating beyond the reach of a sensualist, and to taste with the palate of nature, should eat with simplicity and moderation. Rich sauces

and high seasoned dishes, are without doubt, grateful to some ; but this is an acquired and depraved appetite ; for children and young people have always a dislike for them, till their taste is vitiated by custom and bad example. When the food and palate are in a natural state, the body is duly nourished ; but when the food is deprived of its soft and balmy quality, and rendered caustic by high seasoning, it stimulates the languid appetite, turns round the wheels of life too rapidly, and wears out the body before its time. Those who abstain from much wine, spirituous liquors, and spicy aliments, acquire an exquisite taste ; their spirits are more equal, their feelings more pleasurable, and they are in general much longer lived.

Thus the beneficent simplicity of nature is superseded by custom, which luxury, not propriety, has introduced ; for, it

must be confessed, with regret, that in the affairs of human life, many are more guided by their passions and the examples of others, than by reason of their own understanding :

Foul luxury's the cause of all your pain :

To scour the obstructed glands abstain, abstain !

Fast and take rest, ye candidates for sleep ;

Who from high food tormenting vigils keep :

Fast and be fat—Thou starv'ling in a gown ;

Ye bloated fast—'twill surely bring you down.

* * * * *

Fast and fear not—you'll need no drop nor pill ;

Hunger may starve, excess is sure to kill.

Simplicity of diet is one of the most important and effectual means of preserving health, and should be strictly observed by those who have a debilitated stomach ; they should never eat but of one or at furthest of two dishes at a meal. Many instances may be adduced in those persons who are naturally of weak stamina

having prolonged their existence by observing this maxim. If we reflect for a moment on the great variety of food which is frequently set upon tables during a repast, it cannot fail to appear ridiculous ; and by paying attention to the consequences resulting from this practice, we shall have many opportunities afforded of convincing us of its fatal effects.

However simple the aliments made use of by sedentary men may be, they often prove hurtful, by the habit they have of eating, as it were, mechanically, without masticating, whereby they are deprived of one of the most essential means of promoting the necessary digestion. Nothing renders the action of the stomach more efficacious than mastication : for whilst the food is undergoing this operation, the flow of saliva is greatly increased, and the food being lacerated and bruised, is more easily penetrated by the fluids

secreted by the stomach, and is soon altered to that state proper for affording nourishment to the body, without inducing fatigue of the different organs engaged in performing the necessary change. This first step towards the formation of chyle being perfectly performed by every other function is exercised with its natural facility. Mastication has also other advantages, for we really eat less without being less nourished, and it contributes greatly towards the preservation of the teeth. Its importance therefore cannot be too strongly impressed on the mind---for men of sedentary habits being generally troubled with indigestion, it becomes highly necessary they should attend to the most trifling circumstance which has a tendency to impede the performance of a function so essential to health.

As digestion is slowly performed, it is improper for men not taking exercise to

eat often, for there is a wide difference between the state of the stomach half full of food partly digested and which requires the whole force of that organ to complete it, and that in which the stomach completely empty has received its natural tone, and is supplied with the requisite quantity of its juices, waiting the receipt of new food. Every thing which is taken into the stomach in the first state, is a source of irritation, and prevents the digestion already commenced, and it does not therefore undergo the change necessary for its conversion into blood ; these persons should not eat oftener than three times a day, two light meals and one rather stronger. Many will derive much benefit from following the line of life here pointed out.

The happy effects of early rising has been so often noticed, and so effectually treated upon by many of our most eminent

authors, that it would be needless for me to attempt impressing it more forcibly on the mind. I shall therefore content myself by observing that after having risen, a glass of cold water should be drunk, and one or two hours may be devoted to study ; after resting half an hour, breakfast may be taken ; shortly after which, the mind will be in a fit state for exertion, which may be continued five hours ; then recourse should be had to exercise for at least one hour ; the fatigue of which having subsided, the stomach will stand in need of nourishment. After dinner the mind should not be employed in thought for some time, till digestion is completed, which will probably be in three hours ; but the time should be spent in pleasant society, or a gentle walk, which will not fatigue the body, is also unobjectionable.

A few hours in the evening may be dedicated to study, after which a *very light*

supper should be taken; this is of great consequence to those who have much mental fatigue :

1st. Because the blood is determined to the head during sleep, which is likewise favoured by the position of the body. There are many phenomena which indicate the presence of this plenitude, one in particular which may be frequently noticed ; I mean the grinding of the teeth, which so often occurs in children, and not unfrequently among grown up persons.

2dly. The action of the nerves being diminished during sleep, the digestion dependent on that action must be proportionately imperfect.

3dly. Anxiety of mind will disturb the sleep, and the stomach being full, causes greater irritation of the nerves, and frequently prevents it altogether.

Although a heavy supper is prejudicial to the constitution, yet it must be observed

that a great error is committed by not taking any ; for when the stomach is very sensible and the nerves delicate, and we remain for a length of time without taking nourishment, the juices subservient to digestion become acrid, and not being enveloped by the aliments, it inflames the stomach, and by that means produces precisely the same effects as those already noticed.

Those who indulge in the pleasures of the table, will, no doubt, be tempted to regard these rules as rigid and superfluous ; but many instances might be adduced which would clearly prove their efficacy as the preventives of disease. The most striking example of the kind on record, is that of Louis Cornaro, a Venetian Nobleman, of one of the most ancient families of that republic, who when only twenty-five years old was attacked with diseases of the stomach, pain in the side, gout, and fever ; and not-

withstanding a variety of remedies were tried to recover his health, he continued till he was forty years of age in a very debilitated state, when he resolved to give up the use of medicine, and follow a most rigid course of life, allowing himself only twelve ounces of solid food and fourteen ounces of liquid a day ; which is about a fourth part of the aliment usually taken by persons in the country where he lived ; the effects of which regimen he explains in a useful work entitled ‘ *Discorzi della vita sobria,*’ were such that his infirmities left him by degrees, and were succeeded by good health and a robust constitution, accompanied by a feeling of pleasure and contentment, which he had never before experienced. At the age of seventy-five he wrote a work in which he gives one of the most pleasing pictures of human life which can be portrayed ; “ I find myself,” says he, “ as lively and healthy as persons generally are

when twenty-five years old ; I commonly write seven or eight hours a day, the rest of my time is spent in walking, in cheerful society, or sometimes I take a part in a concert. I have a relish for every thing I eat ; my imagination is quick ; my memory retentive ; my judgment clear ; and what is most surprising at my age, I have a strong harmonious voice." It was not till he was one hundred years old that he died.

The immortal Newton, who lived to an advanced age, when he was employed in meditation seldom took any thing but bread and water, rarely having a little wine ; and during the whole of his life it was his general manner of subsisting, with the exception of now and then a small quantity of animal food. As a proof that little nourishment is sufficient for sustaining strength of body, I shall relate an experiment made by a Student of Physic at

Edinburgh, who confined himself for a length of time to a pint of milk and half a pound of white bread daily ; he passed through the usual labours of study and exercise, without feeling any decay of health or strength, and without any sensible loss of bulk. It is, indeed, truly surprising how long life may be sustained without taking any food. Fontanus, a respectable writer in the estimation of Morgagni, relates the history of a woman who lived fifty days obstinately refusing to take nourishment but twice during that period. But he adds, she took water by way of drink, though in small quantities. Redi, who made many cruel and unjustifiable experiments to ascertain the effects of fasting upon fowls, observed that many lived nine days without taking any food, and if they were allowed water to drink they were able to sustain life for more than twenty days. By this then it

would appear that the strength does not depend so much on the quantity of food, as it does on the purity of the blood. Animals who die of hunger, seem rather to perish by the corruption of the blood, or morbid change of its quality ; hence, a circumstance, though strange, becomes perfectly consistent and intelligent ; viz. why animals will survive so long, even twenty days or more, by the use of water only ; for this refreshes and purifies the blood.

Water is the beverage which nature has given to all nations ; she has made it agreeable to all palates, and has rendered it capable of acting on all aliments. The ancients looked upon it as the great Panacea ; and it is of essential benefit where there is acidity of the stomach, fever, or depraved state of the bile. How superior is this liquor gushing from the bosom of nature, to all the artificial

compounds which human invention can devise.—The sickly stomach oftentimes thirsts after a draught of water as the greatest cordial, while it nauseates the richest wines, and all other factitious liquors.

I am far from wishing to infer that wines or liquors are never beneficial; I would only be understood to mean that they are prejudicial by abuse, and that they only become necessary by custom. They should undoubtedly be only taken as a cordial, and not as common drinks. All waters do not even prove alike salutary; that should not be chosen which does not readily mix with soap, or which is not fit for dressing the different kinds of vegetables. Pliny tells us, “that those waters are condemned in the first place, which when boiled incrustate the sides of the vessels.” Prestwich in his *Dissertations on Poisons*, after having noticed the

pernicious effects of impure air, says, “ I shall mention the mischief of another fluid, which as it is next in use, so the bad qualities of it must necessarily be almost equally fatal and dangerous. Water is not only used for our drinks, but in preparing our bread and flesh, and it may be justly said to be the vehicle of our nourishment ; so that when it has any other properties than are necessary to fit it for this purpose, it is no wonder if in its passage through the body these make suitable impressions there : for let the gross particles with which the water is saturated be of any other nature, as metallic saline, &c. ; these, according to their various gravity, the capacity of the canals, and such like circumstances, will, when they circulate in the animal body, be, by the laws of motion, deposited in one part or the other.” For this reason the choice of water for drink among the ancients was by weight, the lightest being

preferred, as most free from all heterogeneous bodies. Spring water is only rain water, which having gradually filtered through the earth collects at the bottom of the declivities, and then makes its way to the surface, and is therefore equally pure with rain water, provided it does not meet with any soluble body in its passage through the soil. But we shall generally find even in the purest spring water a little carbonate of lime and common salt, besides the usual portion of air and carbonic acid gas. River water may be considered as merely a collection of rain and spring water ; and is therefore at least equally pure with these. In fact, when the current is rapid and the bed of the river silicious sand, it is generally purer than spring water ; for it deposits in its way every thing which was merely mechanically suspended. Well water is the same as spring water, being derived from the same source ; but it is more

likely to be impregnated with foreign bodies, in consequence of its stagnation, and is therefore rendered more unfit than the others for the purposes above mentioned ; for these earthy salts have the properties of decomposing common soap ; their acids unite with the alkali contained in the soap, while the earthly basis forms with the oil a soap not soluble in water, which envelopes the soap and gives it a greasy feel. When water is pure it facilitates digestion, increases all the secretions, prevents the different organs from being overloaded, renders the sleep more tranquil, the head clearer, and the spirits more equal.

Wine on the contrary acts as a stimulant, irritating the muscular fibres, and increasing the circulation of the blood, which if frequently repeated greatly tends to shorten the existence of man. It augments the acidity of the stomach, and it has another effect

probably of more consequence than the rest, which is that of increasing the determination of the blood to the head, and frequently produces apoplexy.

I am well aware it is very often taken under the impression that it assists digestion; but this is a fallacious idea: for it most commonly retards it even in persons of strong habits, and it is very prejudicial in most of the nervous diseases, which are the inevitable consequence of excessive study or great mental anxiety. The frequent use of warm liquids is not less hurtful than wine, and it is at present more frequently had recourse to; the sophism which has induced persons of a debilitated constitution to make so great a use of them is perhaps not difficult to explain. It is true that in such persons the circulation of the blood is carried on feebly and slowly; the humours are vitiated, and the secretions obstructed; but these depend more on the

weakness of the vessels, than on the density and viscosity of their contents, which, in point of fact, are not of their natural consistence.

To give an idea of the blood, to those who are not acquainted with its properties, I shall observe that on a cursory examination it will appear to be an homogeneous mass, but this is by no means the case; for, by numerous experiments, it has been ascertained to consist of serum, coagulable lymph, red particles, superfluous water, and extraneous substances; the serum, coagulable lymph, and superfluous water are diffused through one another, but the red particles are found to be merely mechanically mixed with them. It does not always contain the same proportion of the principles above-mentioned; for an increased celerity, whether by laborious and strong exercise, a full age, fever, or otherwise, augments the red particles, the con-

gealing force, and the cohesion of these particles. On the other hand, in younger and less active animals, and if more watery diet be made use of, the red particles are proportionably lessened, and the fluid parts increased. A person is said to be of a sanguine habit when there is an abundance of the red particles, and such persons are predisposed to inflammation, hæmorrhage, and apoplexy. A phlegmatic constitution, on the contrary, is produced by there being a redundancy of the watery part : hence occurs dropsy, and all other diseases dependant on this state of the blood. If blood be drawn from two men, the one of a robust constitution, in the habit of following a laborious occupation, and the other a person whose life is spent in his study or counting-house, and not taking sufficient exercise, or, indeed, any one who has suffered from severe illness, we shall in the first find the blood thick

and heavy, and in some respects similar to what will be observed in any one who labours under an inflammatory disorder; in the other we shall find it thin and watery. That part which in the first forms a firm substance will, in the second, be only gelatinous. In the man of robust habit it will be obvious that warm relaxing fluids cannot be detrimental to health; nay, they are evidently as necessary as though the superabundance was produced by disease; but the object of the latter should be directed towards making the blood of its natural consistence, and he should, for that reason, avoid taking much fluid, and more especially warm ones, which increase the disposition to dropsy. It is plain that health cannot subsist without a dense and red blood; if its quantity be too much diminished, a stagnation of the juices takes place; the surface of the body becomes pale, cold, and contracted. Nor can health or life subsist without a suffi-

ciency of the thinner juices intermixed with the red particles ; for if they were deprived of the watery part, they would congeal and obstruct the smallest passages of the vessels. The stomach suffers very materially from the effects produced by warm fluids ; for the great quantity which is frequently taken distends the muscular fibres, and it is well known that when they are distended for any length of time, or in a violent degree, they lose the power of contracting. It is not by the quantity only, but also by the quality that they prove injurious to the stomach, which, by being relaxed, is rendered unfit for the performance of its functions ; the food resting a long time in the stomach causes a disagreeable sense of weight, for the removal of which recourse is often had to the drinking a great quantity of fluid (not unfrequently warm water), which carries with it the food but half digested ; and though it may possibly

for the time relieve the oppressive load, it in reality augments the cause of the disorder.

Another bad effect produced by the introduction of warm water into the stomach is its diluting the different secretions subservient to digestion, which no other fluid has the power of rectifying.

I have heard it asserted that the quantity of fluid taken into the stomach, and more especially of water, cannot prove injurious; but I should rather doubt if such persons were well acquainted with the laws of the animal economy. Loss of tone of the stomach, want of power in the juices to act on the aliment, and debility caused by the food being carried off without being digested, are the certain effects produced by this abuse, and which are more or less increased by the quantity which is taken: besides the mucus which lines the interior of the stomach and intestines, and preserves the nerves which expand on the surface from receiving too

strong an impression from the food, or whatever they may give passage to, is washed off, and the nerves become exposed, and are irritated by any thing received into the stomach, causing excruciating pain; and though this may not occur till the food has remained half an hour or more, yet the pain is sometimes so intolerable that it will be returned very little changed by the operation of digestion, and generally accompanied by a sympathetic head-ache. The intestines are likewise irritated: hence arise violent cholic pains, and oftentimes ulceration takes place; at length every nerve in the body participates and occasions insupportable irritability. The effects of hot water are sometimes greatly aggravated by the different extraneous substances it contains.

With respect to the good or bad effects produced upon the constitution by the use of tea, there are, no doubt, many inconsistencies advanced by different authors

who have written on the subject. It must, however, be acknowledged that it will be found hurtful to persons of lax habits or when taken to excess. Tea drank too hot will enervate, and if very strong it may prove pernicious by affecting the head and stomach. Upon the whole it must be esteemed either beneficial or hurtful according to the temperament of the person using it; to determine which every one should consult his own feelings, which will best inform him whether he does right or the contrary. It should not, however, be taken either too strong or too warm, and should always be mixed with a large portion of milk.

Coffee must be looked upon as a stimulant: it is composed of an aromatic oil combined with a farinaceous substance of easy digestion, and affording nourishment: nor is it less entitled to the appellation of a stomachic; for it is one of the most grateful, and certainly possesses great

powers ; but the daily use of it should be abandoned as being really detrimental to health ; for the frequent irritation which it produces in the stomach must in the end destroy its powers, and the whole nervous system frequently participates. Percival says, “ In delicate habits it often occasions watchfulness, tremors, and many other complaints which are denominated nervous. It has even been suspected to produce palsy, and, from my own observation, I should apprehend not entirely without foundation.” Slare affirms that he became paralytic by the too liberal use of coffee, and that his disorder was removed by abstinence from that liquor. When taken occasionally, and in moderation, it invigorates the whole body, stimulates the stomach, increases the secretions, and enlivens the ideas. If a cup of strong coffee be drank within an hour after dinner, it is very efficacious in relieving that drowsiness and head-ache arising from indiges-

tion, attendant on a debilitated state of the stomach, produced by sedentary habits or accidental inebriation. Persons affected with sick head-ache are also much benefited by the use of it in some instances, though its effects are by no means certain. It is found by experience to counteract the effects of opium, and is therefore taken in large quantities by the Turks and Arabians. Milk diminishes the irritation caused by the too liberal use of it; but it cannot entirely prevent its bad effects. Sedentary men will do well to reserve it as one of their favourite remedies, and not make it a part of their daily food.

The extremes of cold, but more especially of heat (for its effects cannot be so readily guarded against), are hurtful.—Moderate cold produces first debilitating, and eventually bracing effects on the human frame; but when the weather is intensely cold, the external air, from its increased density, compresses that within,

and frequently occasions stupor, apoplexy, and death. The coldness of the feet which many persons who do not take sufficient exercise continually complain of, is very injurious to those of weak temperament, occasioning violent cholic pains, hindering sleep, and suppressing the perspiration. Many persons have been relieved from this after having taken different narcotic medicines without the least effect, upon using exercise before going to bed ; in some cases it would be advisable for them to apply a warm stimulating plaister to the soles of the feet.

As an undue determination of blood to the head is of so frequent occurrence in the persons to whom these pages are addressed, nothing should be neglected which can reasonably afford the prospect of diminishing or guarding against this circumstance. Many persons after having been many hours engaged, on finding the head become hot, have enveloped it with cloths

dipped in cold water, which practice cannot be too much reprobated as replete with danger. As a preventive of this disagreeable sensation I would recommend them to wash the head every morning in cold water; but if this does not produce the effect, on the first intimation of increased heat in the part, a glass of cold water may be drank, and a cessation for some hours of the pursuit in which they are engaged is the only means that can be had recourse to with safety.

The use of tobacco is injurious in various ways: the first time that any person smokes, precisely the same effects are produced as though they had taken wine, spirituous liquors, or opium; and if in the course of time they do not experience its intoxicating effects it is because they are habituated to it. This pernicious custom was originally derived from savage nations, who had recourse to it to pass away that time, which civilized persons know how to employ so

much better. Although it does not prove hurtful to every one, yet it most certainly does to a great many, and it is equally certain it is not necessary for any. In smoking, the fumes induce a kind of insensibility not easily described, which equally infatuates the ignorant savage and the intelligent philosopher; but by the large secretion of saliva which it occasions, it causes many diseases, both of the head and stomach. The injury sustained by the use of tobacco is always proportionate to the loss of saliva which it occasions, and to the narcotic effects it produces on the sensorium.

The salivary glands being accustomed to this irritation, cease to act when they are not stimulated; by the loss of saliva the force of the stomach and intestines is diminished, the appetite fails, and digestion is suspended. By its narcotic effects it greatly augments the diseases of the stomach, it causes head-ache, giddiness,

and apoplexy, and many instances may be adduced of men having died of this latter disease induced by this cause. Two brothers, wishing to try which could smoke the greatest quantity of tobacco, fell sacrifices to their imprudence, and both died of this disease, one while smoking his seventeenth and the other his eighteenth pipe. In some diseases and under certain circumstances, smoking produces beneficial effects; for a part of the smoke taken in at the mouth must necessarily enter the lungs, and its narcotic power being applied there frequently affords relief in some cases of asthma, and by its stimulating quality it promotes expectoration, and thereby proves useful in colds, &c. According to Hoffman, it is sometimes of use in diminishing cholic pains. Tobacco has been stated as efficacious in guarding against contagion; but I should question if it possesses any power superior to other narcotics; it may pos-

sibly, by diminishing sensibility, and rendering the mind less liable to fear in some measure be of service.

To adopt what is pleasurable to our feelings or subservient to use, cannot be thought strange ; but that tobacco, which is disagreeable to the taste and hurtful to the constitution, should by habit become desirable, is a most extraordinary circumstance, and affords a striking instance of the folly and infatuation of the human mind opposed to sense and nature. When powdered and applied to the nose the moisture is dried up, and those fine and delicate nerves, the organs of smelling, are rendered callous and insensible.

To this self evident bad effect may be added its narcotic and stupifying power, by which not only the brain and nerves are injured, but the eyes which depend on their influence are also affected, and from the force with which snuff is usually drawn up the nose, its passage will be obstructed

and the voice lose its clearness and distinct articulation. The only advantage of taking snuff is that of sneezing, which in the sluggish and phlegmatic habit will give universal concussion to the body, and promote a more free circulation of the blood ; but of this benefit professed snuff-takers are deprived, from being too familiar with its use ; when they take it to excess, it produces the same giddiness as when first employed ; and in some cases the effects are more violent, as appears not only by its action on the brain, but as may be observed in other parts of the system, particularly in the stomach, occasioning loss of appetite, and other symptoms of a weakened state of that organ.

Although persons taking a considerable quantity of snuff appear not to suffer any inconvenience, still it may and frequently does operate in an insensible manner, producing loss of memory, fatuity, and a state of torpor in all the nervous system. Dr.

Cullen says he has known excess in snuff-taking to produce indigestion and pain in the stomach, which upon accidental interruption of the practice for some days did not occur ; but again upon a return to snuff recurred as at first. He likewise adds, he knew a lady who had been for more than twenty years in the habit of taking snuff, and that at every time of the day ; but she at length observed, that snuffing a good deal before dinner took away her appetite ; and she at last found that a single pinch taken any time before dinner had the same effect ; when however she abstained entirely from snuff before dinner, her appetite continued as usual, and after dinner for the rest of the day she took it pretty freely without any inconvenience. One invariable consequence of snuff-taking is its exciting a considerable discharge of mucus from the nose ; I have seen several instances of head-ache and inflammation of the eyes relieved by

this means; but it should be particularly observed, that when the discharge of mucus is considerable, the ceasing or suppression of it by abstaining from snuff is apt to occasion the very disorders it has before relieved.

Such are the principal observations which can be made on the causes producing disease, and upon the best means of guarding against them; but when they have arrived to that state requiring medical aid, they must be treated according to symptoms. I shall however mention such means in conjunction with medicine as will afford the most rational prospect of re-establishing the healthy and natural functions of the body.

The most important advice which can be given, by inattention to which every other means will prove unavailing, is absolute relaxtion from those employments causing mental anxiety; however severe this may appear, it is still indis-

pensably necessary. As a proof of the benefit to be derived from it, I shall mention a curious anecdote of a gentleman who for a long time consulted Dr. Sydenham ; but was little relieved : the Dr. told him he really could do no more for him ; but there was a Dr. Robinson, of Inverness, who was wonderfully clever in such complaints as his ; that he would give him a letter of introduction to him, and he was confident he would come back cured. The patient was a gentleman of fortune, therefore he was soon able to begin his journey. When he arrived at Inverness he found there was no physician of that name, nor ever had been in the memory of any person there. The gentleman returned, vowing vengeance to the peace of Dr. Sydenham. When he arrived he was in a very ill humour, and told him he thought he had used him unkindly to send him a journey of so many hundred miles for nothing. “ Well,” says he,

“are you better in health?” “Yes I am well now, but no thanks to you.” “No,” says Dr. S. “but you may thank Dr. Robinson for curing you. I wanted to send you a journey with an object in view ; I knew it would do you good ; in going you had Dr. Robinson in contemplation ; and in returning you were equally busy in thinking of scolding me.” Business of every kind should be totally forgotten, and the time should be passed in walking or riding about the country in agreeable company ; for,

There is a charm, a power, that sways the breast,
Bids ev'ry passion revel or be still,
Inspires with rage, or all your cares dissolves,
Can sooth distraction, and almost despair—
That power is music.

When the constitution is much reduced and debilitated, a milk diet is frequently of much service, provided it does not cause constipation, in which case salep

will be found very beneficial ; it contains the greatest quantity of vegetable nourishment under the smallest bulk, and is possessed of great restorative mucilaginous and demulcient qualities ; it is therefore well adapted for invalids. At other times light diet and a little wine may be taken if there is neither pain in the chest nor fever.

The cold bath is of essential service to those persons whose bodily strength has been exhausted by mental fatigue, for it strengthens the stomach, and indeed every function. But it should not be had recourse to when the body is much debilitated, as it would then be likely to produce some very hurtful consequences. It is by the suddenness of the shock that the cold bath is beneficial in strengthening the system, the humours leaving the external parts of the body are determined to the internal ; this sudden impetus stimulates these parts, and the blood is returned ; it

is on this re-action that its efficacy depends, for should the internal parts be deficient in the power to send the blood back in its natural course, the chilliness and head-ache which succeeds its use, would clearly indicate the impropriety of its use.

Let this, therefore, be laid down as a general rule.—When immersion is succeeded by a genial glow over the whole surface of the body, and the patient feels cheerful and has a keen appetite, we may conclude that the cold bath is of service : if, on the contrary, he shivers on coming out of the water, continues chilly, and becomes drowsy, we may be assured that it does no good, and had better be omitted. Under such circumstances, the tepid bath, about 96 or 98 degrees of heat, will be found more efficacious, as it stimulates and communicates heat to the system.—The use of the flesh brush should not be neglected ; it should be used every morning and night,

as it increases the circulation of the blood, prevents the bowels from being loaded with fæces, and facilitates every secretion. The ancients knowing the advantages which were derived from this practice, employed it not only as a remedy in disease, but as one of the most powerful means of preserving health.

Mineral Waters are deserving of attention ; the Author of Nature has given them many powerful and salutary properties, and there are few countries in which they do not exist. Those most in vogue are Bath, Buxton, Seltzer, Tonbridge, Pyrmont, Spa, and Cheltenham ; the most usual effects of which are relieving flatulence and sickness, and if persevered in will increase the appetite, render the secretions regular, and improve the general health and spirits. However useful they may be of themselves, their efficacy is much increased by their being taken at the spring, for the mind being amused by the

company and a variety of entertainments, they are sure to produce greater benefit. The advantages of air, exercise, the regular mode of living generally adopted at those places, and the agreeable prospects which present themselves, admirably coincide with the general curative effect of the spring itself.—They should not be taken without first consulting a medical attendant, for though they are extremely proper in some cases, there are others in which they are diametrically the reverse.

The costive habit of body of which sedentary persons so generally complain is often greatly increased by their taking irritating purgative medicines ; these by being frequently repeated render the bowels tender and cause colic pains, especially after taking cold, errors in diet, or other accidental causes, which in their sound state would not have produced such effects ; besides by their long continuance of them, they deprive the body of nourishment,

the blood is greatly impoverished, and dropsy or consumption is not unfrequently the consequence. When the bowels are weak and inactive, early rising, exercise, the flesh brush, and the cold bath, with the occasional use of some mild laxative medicine, or even roasted apples, prunes, &c. will be found beneficial. An habitual attention to the removal of costiveness by instituting a regular custom of periodically soliciting an evacuation by voluntary and persevering efforts, will powerfully aid the effects of the other means here pointed out.

The morning is the most proper period for the attempt, and the trial should be prosecuted for at least a quarter of an hour, if the evacuation be not earlier excited. Perhaps a week may be unavailingly employed in this endeavour ; but the proposed effect will generally be attained within a month : one month has, indeed, in a number of instances, fully established

an habitual call to intestinal evacuation, under circumstances that previously required the almost daily use of aperient medicine.—The health is recovered slowly and the return of strength is tedious ; the mind is so materially affected by disease that many will for ever after remain in a state of imbecility. Convalescents should not imprudently return too soon to their employments ; for they will by such thoughtlessness bring upon themselves many new diseases in addition to their other sufferings. From a want of attention during the progress of recovery they are liable to repeated attacks of disease, the body not having regained sufficient strength to resist the consequences of their indiscretion.

Having now endeavoured to designate the causes, symptoms, and preventives of the diseases to which literary and sedentary men are subject, and the influence of the passions in producing many baneful effects

on the system, I shall only observe in addition, that those who sacrifice their health at the shrine of fortune, whose minds are solely engaged in the acquirements of wealth will be the greatest martyrs to these disorders.

Far be it from my wishes, however, to create a disrelish for study, or to promote inattention to the necessary avocations of life—it is merely the excess I would guard against. An enlightened and cultivated mind is a great and honourable distinction ; but if health is sacrificed to its attainment, we destroy the very object we are most anxious to obtain.

FINIS.

