

Method of using the chloride of soda, either for dressing ill-conditioned sores, or as a means of purifying unhealthy places, and of disinfecting animal substances / by A.G. Labarraque ... Translated by Jacob Porter.

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METHOD

OF

USING THE CHLORIDE OF SODA,

EITHER FOR DRESSING ILL-CONDITIONED SORES, OR AS

A MEANS OF PURIFYING UNHEALTHY PLACES,

AND OF

DISINFECTING ANIMAL SUBSTANCES:

BY A. G. LABARRAQUE,

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ACADEMY OF MEDICINE.

TRANSLATED BY JACOB PORTER.

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METHOD
OF
USING THE CHLORIDE OF SODA.

FROM the numerous applications made by the most distinguished physicians, and followed with uniform success, it results that the chloride of soda should be used in the following manner :

For ill-conditioned ulcers let a glass of the chlorated liquor be mixed with five times its quantity of pure water, and in this mixture dip the lint, with which the ulcers are to be dressed. The dressings should be applied twice a day. If the sore becomes red and inflamed, this mixture should be still further diluted ; if, on the contrary, the sore does not change its appearance, it should be dressed once or twice with some chloride diluted with only half its quantity of water, so as to bring on a slight inflammation, which is indispensable for causing atonic ulcers to pass to the state of simple sores. The healing will then go on rapidly. At the time when the chloride is applied to the ulcer, the fetid smell is destroyed.

Gangrene, hospital putrefaction, ill-conditioned burns and scalds, old syphilitic ulcers, corroding herpetic affections, and the like should be treated in the same manner.

Cancer in a state of suppuration may be disinfected with some lukewarm or cold water, containing a twentieth of the chloride of soda. The same mixture, or weakened still more with from five to ten parts of water, should be used for ulcer of the uterus ; the injections should be made two or three times a day. Boiling water should first be passed through the syringe, and this liquid be immediately replaced by the chlorated water ; the heat of the metal will be communicated to the chlorated water, the temperature of which will be sufficiently raised to answer for the injection.

For ulcerations of the nasal organs, the throat, the palate and the gums, the chloride should be diluted with from eight to ten parts of water ; it will, nevertheless, be necessary to touch these sores with a little lint moistened in some pure chloride.

For the scald head the chloride should be mixed with only an equal quantity of pure water, and the parts affected be moistened with this liquid twice a day.

The lint and cloths, that have been used in dressing fetid ulcers, instantly lose their smell on being dipped into water containing a thirtieth of the chloride.

Great advantages have been obtained from using the chloride very much diluted in water, for all the purposes of the toilet. In a dose of from twenty to twenty-five drops, it acts as a bracing and preserving wash, prevents the spread of herpetic eruptions, and cures certain diseases of the skin. Some lotions, made with the chloride diluted in from twenty to thirty parts of water, will prevent or cure the leucorrhœa. It must be used in injections, a physician prescribing, at the same time, the internal treatment adapted to destroy completely the cause of the disease.

For carbuncle the chloride of soda should be applied pure ; but, in this case, it will be necessary to have recourse to a physician, who will precede the use of this medicine with the means required by the rules of surgery. In order to determine the real nature of the sores, it will be prudent likewise to recur to his experience.

Every person affected with a severe disease, or with sores of a bad character, vitiates the air of the chamber where he is confined, both patient and attendants suffering from the unwholesome taints. This air may be purified by mixing a spoonful of the chloride with six spoonfuls of water in a plate, and setting it under the patient's bed : Indeed, several plates of the diluted chloride may be placed in the same apartment, if necessary. In this way, the exhalations will be destroyed as soon as they are produced. It will be necessary to renew daily the chlorated water contained in the plates, and turn it into the vessels where the cloths, that are used for the dressings, are soaked.

Whenever it is necessary to attend patients affected with contagious diseases, such as small pox and the like, it will be found very beneficial to wash the hands with water containing a twentieth of the chloride, and apply to the nose a bottle containing some of it in a concentrated state. After handling the sick, it will be proper to wash again with the chlorated water.

In all places where there is a crowd of men or animals, whether sick or healthy, the air becomes corrupted, and acquires deleterious properties, owing principally to the animal exhalations. These exhalations may be destroyed by sprinklings of the chloride diluted in from twenty-five to thirty parts of water; or by setting in these places, (and they may be out of sight,) some vessels containing the chlorated water, which can never be in the least injurious, whatever may be the quantity. This method of purifying the air is indispensably necessary in lazarettoes, hospitals, prisons, poor houses, manufactories, churches, seminaries, convents, halls of study, and dormitories in colleges and boarding houses, cabins of ships, court rooms, crowded theaters, saloons when filled to excess on great occasions, and the like

Sprinklings of the chlorated water will be more especially necessary whenever an epidemic or contagious disease prevails; they should be made in order to guard against the deleterious influence arising from the neighborhood of marshes, the rotting of flax, hemp and the like. They will likewise be serviceable in the diseases of domestic animals, (and for directions in this case, see the instructions in my larger pamphlet,) in places where silk-worms are raised; finally, in all places where the air becomes charged with exhalations, which, on being accumulated, produce fatal effects.

In cases of asphyxia, produced by the exhalations of vaults, sewers or any considerable masses of putrefying animal substances, it will be necessary for the patient to breathe the concentrated chloride; and his chamber should be sprinkled with the chlorated water, so as to subject him to the influence of the disinfecting agent.

It is often necessary, sometimes from a tender and pious feeling of regret, to preserve for a long time the bodies of deceased persons. A fetid odor appears more or less readily, according to the temperature of the air, the state of the patient's body at the time of his decease, or the disease, that terminated his life. This decomposition may be suddenly arrested; indeed, it may be prevented by sprinkling the body with some chloride of soda diluted in water. For this purpose, a bottle of chloride should be mixed with twelve liters or bottles of water; in this mixture a linen cloth should be wet, laid on the body, and sprinkled occasionally with the liquid. In this way, a corpse may be preserved indefinitely by a process, which I shall make known elsewhere.

By sprinklings of water containing a fortieth of the chloride, one may disinfect, in a moment, the filthiest kennels, sewers and drains, vaults, slaughter houses, markets for meat and for fish, manufactories for glue and for cat-gut, and, generally, all places, that are infected with animal exhalations.

Butchers' stalls should be sprinkled, in the hot season, with the chlorated water, and, by this means, the meat will be preserved for a long time unaltered.

In butteries, especially in the country, where it is often necessary to lay in provisions for a week, the meat may be preserved, if care is taken to set on the floor a vessel containing some of the chlorated water, which it will be necessary to renew daily. If the meat has become fetid, a simple immersion in water containing a fortieth of the chloride, will neutralize the smell, and, after being washed in pure water, it may be cooked and eaten without injury to the health.

NOTES.

1. Persons affected with the nervous asthma breathe more freely in apartments that contain the chlorated water; and it has been observed that attacks of this disease are less frequent with such as take care to keep in their sleeping rooms, during the night, vessels of the chloride diluted in eight parts of water.

2. The Council of Health of the lazaretto of Marseilles resolved, in December, 1825, that the chlorides should be substituted for fumigations in the lazarettoes, for purifying passengers and their baggage, also patients attacked with the plague, and other suspected persons, as well as for the daily cleansing of ships at quarantine. In May and August, 1826, the quarantine physician and health officers, who attended the patients attacked with the sea typhus, were preserved from the disease, simply by the use of the chlorides; while, in 1818, in the same place and under the same circumstances, the typhus was communicated to the health officers and quarantine physician, notwithstanding the daily use of the Guiton fumigations.

3. Official reports, sent to the French government by the consul general of the king at Aleppo, who was provided with some bottles of my chlorides, certify, that by the use of them, a great number of

persons were preserved from the plague during that dreadful epidemic, which cost Aleppo no less than twenty-five thousand lives in the space of four months. His excellency, the minister of the interior, has had the kindness to transmit me, by his letter of December 31, 1827, a copy of these valuable documents, which I shall consign to the pages of my next publication.

4. By immersion in chlorated water anatomical pieces can be preserved for a long time in very hot climates.

REMARK.

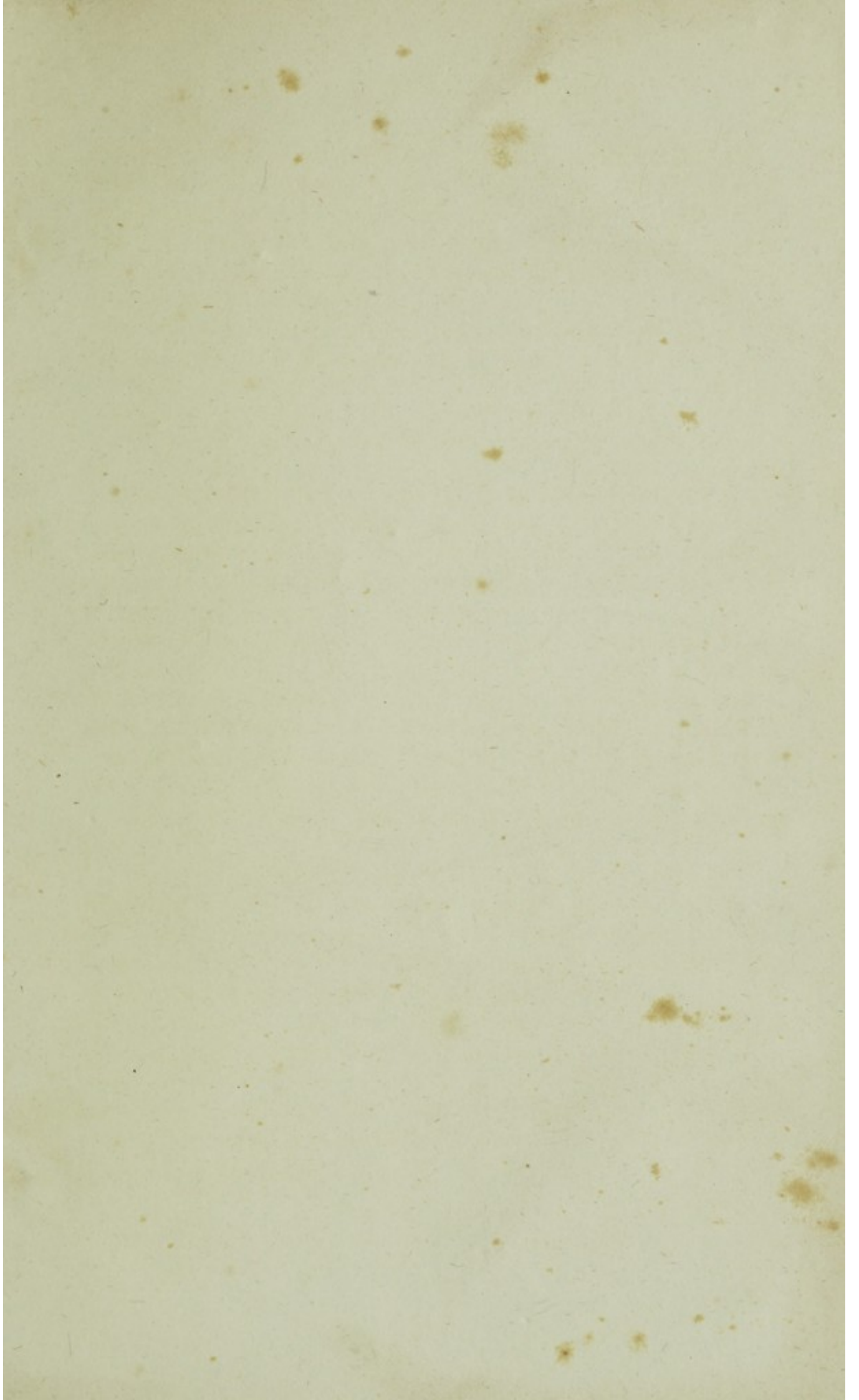
It may, perhaps, appear surprising that I attribute so many properties to the chloride; but they have all been substantiated by facts, and it is on the authority of these facts that I publish these instructions, for the sole purpose of preventing the evils, that might result from an unskilful use of it. I hope soon to lay before the public a number of other uses, not less important than those I have already published, and thus to justify the honorable suffrage of the Society for the Encouragement of National Industry, which, at its general sitting of October 30, 1822, decreed me a prize, which was followed by a resolve of the counselor of state, prefect of police, under date of October 19, 1823, directing the establishment of my process of disinfection at la Morgue, and with the police agents of the metropolis.


I hope likewise to justify the no less honorable testimony of the Royal Institute of France, which awarded me a prize of three thousand francs at its public sitting of June 20, 1825. Adopting the instructions of this illustrious body, the minister of the interior, by his circular to all the prefects, dated October 17, 1825, was pleased to direct the use of the chlorides as disinfecting agents, and as means of cleansing the lazarettoes, prisons and other unhealthy places. The counselor of state, director general of the public works at Paris, has likewise ordered the use of the same disinfecting agents in the numerous establishments subject to his direction. The authentic results, when obtained, will be presented to the public.

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