

**Cases, (not before in this journal) of practice with Perkins's patent metallic tractors / [Benjamin Douglas Perkins].**

**Contributors**

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1801 CASES,  
(NOT BEFORE IN THIS JOURNAL)  
OF PRACTICE WITH  
PERKINS'S PATENT METALLIC TRACTORS.



BEFORE entering on these, it may be proper, through this medium, to give notice, that, from the immense number of Cases communicated to him since the publication of his last work, in February, 1800, the Patentee has selected a few hundreds for the public eye.—These he has committed to the press, and speedily intends publishing, and forming therewith AN ENTIRE NEW WORK, entitled, “A few Hundred Cases of successful Practice with Perkins's Patent Metallic Tractors, during the year 1800:” (fold, price 1s. by J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-yard; J. Wright, Piccadilly; and all other Booksellers.)

The purchasers, as well as the present possessors of the Tractors, are invited to apply and receive this work *gratis*; either of B. D. PERKINS, the PATENTEE in Leicester-Square, or of FREDERICK SMITH, Chemist and Druggist, in the Haymarket.

While the Patentee has to express his acknowledgments to those individually who have favored him with their communications, he has to solicit in a particular manner the indulgence of others whose Cases, contrary to the wishes of the writers, will of necessity not find a place in that work. No other apology, he trusts, will be thought necessary than merely the statement, that, to publish the whole he has received, would have required a moderate Folio Volume! Against his former Publications it has been complained, that either they were so bulky as to be unreasonably expensive, or, (with a view of comprising much matter in a little compass), so small a letter had been employed, as to render the printing hardly legible to that respectable class of readers whose sight, by reason of advanced years, must have become in some degree imperfect. With the work now in the Press, it will be in view to obviate both of these objections.

The Patentee believes also, that there will not be a want of concurrence with him in the propriety of limiting the admission of those favors into his Book which were rather severe, however just, in their animadversions on the disgraceful conduct of certain characters, who have so zealously entered the list in opposition to this Discovery; and especially such as have had recourse to the *masked* mode of attack which some venal Reviews and other Journals ever offer, for a trifling gratuity, to adventurers of that description. However imperfect may have been an exterior shew of contrition, there exists abundant reason for the supposition, that from the result of their attempts, this has been felt in more than one instance among the offenders. Forbearance, on most occasions, is highly commendable; and the Patentee trusts, that that honorable spirit among his correspondents which called forth their exertions in the detection of fraud and injustice, will derive equal interest in extending the hand of forgiveness, where such liberality becomes alike honorable.

In the selection of CASES, also, he has aimed to present them from different parts of Great Britain; so that most enquirers may meet with the names of vouchers in or near their own district, which must be more satisfactory.

As communications from his American Correspondents must be less interesting to the inhabitants of this kingdom, to whom his Book will be especially addressed, the Patentee intends adducing but one from that side of the Atlantic: this, coming from a gentleman, whose high reputation as a medical character is not unknown to many in this country, shall, though in an abbreviated state, be cited here; after which, shall be introduced abstracts of as many others as the present prescribed limits will admit.

DR. SAMUEL H. P. LEE, of New London, Connecticut, Fellow of the Connecticut Medical Society, &c. &c. to B. D. PERKINS, of Leicester-Square, London, communicates as follows:

DEAR SIR,

September 14th, 1800.

I am the more immediately induced to write to you at this moment, as I have just been reading an abstract of a Pamphlet, (in the New York Spectator), published in England by Dr. HAYGARTH, “on Imagination and fictitious Tractors.” I have not time to give you my opinion on the motives and disingenuous measures taken to render disreputable a Practice and Principle already established by the learned. To deny the influence of the Tractors on the bodies of animals is as futile and absurd as to deny the emetic properties of tartarized antimony, or the sedative properties of opium.—A discovery of my own, long since, removed every doubt, as it respects their action independant of imagination; and which was to me a sufficient proof that they act on the Galvanic influence of our bodies.



CASE.—*Severe Scald on an Infant.* My child, about six months old, at the tea-table, was scalded in the Forehead by the spouting of boiling water from the urn: There instantly arose a vesicle before there was time to apply any thing. Mrs. LEE, in my absence, endeavoured to use the Tractors, but the child cried so heartily, she could not apply them, until it fell asleep; when, on drawing the points lightly over the part, the child would start awake as often as they were applied. Observing this, on my return, I conjectured it might naturally arise from the irritation of the sharp points, similar to that of tickling the nerves with a feather or a pin. The idea, however, occurred to me to hold them about one eighth of an inch from the scalded part; when, I was not a little surprised to find the attraction so great, that the child immediately awoke and cried; but, on taking the Tractors away, it would sleep quietly; on approaching the part again, yet without touching, the child, as before, instantly awoke and cried!! I repeated the experiment with the same effect ten times, and which, you may well suppose, however sceptical I might before have been on the subject of your Father's discovery, abundantly satisfied my mind that the Tractors do possess an attractive influence on the matter of disease; and the evidence is nearly tantamount to a demonstration, that they take off the excess of animal electricity; or, if you please to term it, Galvanic Influence or Fluid, in the part affected. The Scald here described, healed in a remarkable manner: The whole redness disappeared under that one operation.

"*Phlegmonic Tumours.*—Among a variety of effects somewhat similar, though none in every respect so striking as the one here adduced, I have also been satisfied of their reduction of an accumulated quantity of the Galvanic fluid in Phlegmonic Tumours. The inflammation and swelling in these cases, have, perceptibly, lessened during the application of the Tractors.

"These are experiments which must put every doubt and intrigue at defiance.—Will Dr. Haygarth assert that Metals applied to living animals, have no influence, but an imaginary something; a negative sensation? Men of any candor or discernment will become profelytes to such effects; but while both of these requisites are wanting, your Father's discovery will also be wanting of a just and fair acknowledgment of its importance.—I remain with sincere esteem, Yours respectfully, "S. H. P. LEE."

THE REV. THOMAS EDMONDS, of *Upton on Severn, Worcestershire*;  
to B. D. PERKINS, the Patentee: "Upton, Dec. 19th, 1800.

"SIR, Had you been present when I opened the parcel, and saw, for the first time, your Metallic Tractors, you might, I doubt not, have seen disappointment and regret depicted in my countenance. But, as I had purchased them, I resolved to give them a fair trial before I condemned them for their apparent insignificance. Having now subjected them to that infallible test, I have no hesitation to say, that I believe them to be of great utility. As there are not wanting persons who take upon themselves to ridicule the use of the Tractors, before they have tried, nay, before they have seen them, I shall regard it as a point of duty, to speak what I *do know*, and testify to what I *have seen*. In doing this I shall fear no frowns, and ridicule, on such an occasion, I shall despise. I will venture, however, to say, that PERKINISM has very little to fear from those unreasonable beings, who substitute ridicule for argument, and oppose misrepresentation to stubborn facts."

[Here follows a learned and ingenious discussion of the merits of the pretensions of certain medical gentlemen, who would ascribe the influence of the Tractors to imagination; but its length forbids its insertion, as also a part of his Cases; they must, therefore, be reserved for the Book. After stating what the imagination may be expected to do, he proceeds:]

"But to the point in question:—After all that may be said, I have proved that the Metallic Tractors, like other remedies, will perform cures without the agency of imagination. This, I trust, will appear to an unprejudiced mind, from the following statement.

CASE I.—*Inflammation, with Acrid Humour in the Face of an Infant.* "I have a child fourteen month's old, who lately had a troublesome complaint in his nose and upper lip, which was highly inflamed, and exceedingly sore. It had been in this state about three weeks, and which, though we had endeavoured to heal, appeared to grow worse. One evening as he lay asleep in his sister's lap, I resolved to try the Tractors, which I did for about forty minutes, drawing them down each side of the face. Though the part bled when I began, and acrid humour issued from under the scab, yet, during the operation that discharge was evidently diminished, and the inflammation was nearly removed. To my surprise and pleasure on the next morning the scab came off, and the place was well! The circumstances of this Case, not only prove the great utility of the Tractors, but that they do not cure through the medium of imagination.

CASE II.—*Burn.* "One of my daughters lately had the misfortune, by taking up a mug carelessly, which stood by the fire till it was hot, to burn the inside of her arm, which produced a considerable inflammation, and much pain. I ordered one of her sisters



to use the Tractors, which she did about twenty minutes, when she said the pain was gone, and it really was quite well!

*Case III.—Lumbago.* “A friend of mine was afflicted with a lumbago, so that he could scarcely stand upright; and it was with great difficulty he could walk without a stick. The Tractors were applied twice on the first day, without any sensible effect; but on repeating them twice on the following day, he found so much relief, as to be able to attend to business. On the third day, without any other application, he was as well as usual. You have my liberty, Sir, to make public what I have written, and believe me to be, Your most obedient Servant,

THOMAS EDMONDS.”

THE REV AND LEARNED DR. MAC INTYRE, of *Glenurchay, Argyllshire*, to B. D. PERKINS, the Patentee: *Glenurchay Manse, Dec. 13th, 1800.*

“DEAR SIR, I would sooner have acknowledged the receipt of your kind favor, but I wished to know decidedly the efficacy of the Tractors, by a fair trial, before I gave you the trouble of a letter. I have now the pleasure to assure you, that the result has exceeded my warmest expectation.

*CASE I.—Violent Chronic Head-ach.* A day or two after I received the Tractors, I accidentally met Martha Gardner, one of my parishioners, a married woman, the mother of several children, of a spare habit of body, aged about 35. She complained of being, at the time, tormented with a most violent Head-ach, a complaint to which she had been subject for years. She declared that, with pain and want of sleep, she was afraid, not only of losing her sight, but her judgment. I drew the Tractors from her temples, and over her eyebrows, towards her shoulders, for the space of fifteen minutes; she cried, “I am gone,” and almost fainted; her head perspired most copiously. After drinking a little cold water, she gradually recovered her voice and strength, and declared that she felt no pain whatever. Since, she has had no recurrence of her complaint, excepting a small degree of pain during the late thunder-storms, which the application of the Tractors, for a few minutes, completely removed. I saw her yesterday, and she said the ease she has enjoyed for two months past, she had not experienced so long for many years.

*CASE II.—An Universal Rheumatism.* “Ann Mac Laurin, a young girl in good habit of body, healthy, aged about 24 years, was seized with an Universal Rheumatism, in consequence of a cold, contracted by washing without doors, about six weeks ago; she was confined in bed, and could not move a limb. The pains in her back, shoulders and arms, were excruciating and unremitting. The very opening of the doors made her cry out. Embrocations were used, but to no avail. I was sent for to visit her as in a dangerous way. After rubbing off every oily substance with care, the Tractors were applied from the shoulders to the fingers ends, and from the loins to the toes, by her mother, with my directions. After some time she felt a heat in the course of the Tractors, and in half an hour, to the great surprize of her relatives, was able to turn herself in bed with but little pain! The same application was continued for three days with such success, that a short time thereafter, she returned in health to her service! She lives at a distance from this place, but I have learned that she has had no recurrence of her complaint since.

*CASE III.—Violent Pain in the Temples.* “I have seen a triumph over no small degree of infidelity, as to the efficacy of the Tractors, in my own family: My daughter, who in the course of her reading had perused an abstract of Dr. Haygarth, and Mr. Smith's publication, before the arrival of the Tractors, had imbibed the impression, that their efficacy must be much owing to imagination. What she saw happen to Martha Gardner, staggered her philosophy a little; still she shook her head, and her infidelity in some degree remained. She herself was seized, without any known cause, with a Violent Pain in the Temples. She felt her head oppressed with giddiness, and an unusual weight; we applied the Tractors, the pain subsided in the course of a few minutes, and in this female infidel your Tractors have now one of their most zealous friends.

*Case IV.—A Severe Scald.* “A few weeks ago one of my servant men, by being close to the kitchen grate, had a tea-kettle of boiling water dashed on one of his thighs and knees, which produced a severe scald. The alarm reached the family room, in which there was a young clergyman, who had attended the medical classes at Edinburgh, and who, a little before the accident happened, had expressed his disbelief of the efficacy of the Tractors. I insisted that he should witness their application. The Tractors were drawn around and over the scalded thigh and knee. The inflammation was high, and there was a distinct appearance of vesication. In the space of 15 or 20 minutes the pain subsided, the inflammation and blister disappeared; and, without any other application whatever, the young man returned to his work, and never complained of pain. My guest returned to the room a convert.

*CASE V.—Rheumatic Head-ach.* “Nicol Mac Nicol, an old man, had long been troubled



with Rheumatic Complaints in his Head; I applied the Tractors with such success, that the grateful man has spread their fame so far and wide, that persons afflicted with dropsies, scurvy, &c. have been induced to expect a cure.

"Time will not allow me to add more. I hope I shall be able to add, in all truth and honor, without any aid from legerdemain or imagination, to your catalogue of real cures. The poor here desire me to convey their blessings to you; and, in all sincerity, lift up their hands and their hearts, with a prayer for a blessing on these means of relief to the distressed. You sent the Tractors for the behoof of the poor, and for their benefit shall they be principally employed.—I am, my dear Sir, your's faithfully,

"JOSEPH MAC INTYRE."

HENRY GRIMSTON, Esq. of Etton, near Beverley, Yorkshire, (then in London).  
to B. D. PERKINS, the Patentee.

[The observations of a character so distinguished for his philosophical talents as well as for his extensive concerns in measures of philanthropy, render this Communication interesting.—Its great length, however, compels the insertion of an abstract only.]

DEAR SIR,

"Pall-Mall, Oct. 1, 1800.

"At your invitation I here send a few of the cases, which I noted down in my minute book, of trials with your Patent Metallic Tractors. From the experience I have had of their efficacy in the cure of different disorders, I shall certainly continue the practice, as I can thereby administer relief, by an easy and simple method, to many of my fellow creatures. I shall not at present presume to say *how* the Tractors operate in performing a cure, any more than how the magnet attracts iron, but *shall content myself that they do so*. I am convinced, however, it is not to be imputed to imagination. [Twelve cases, describing important cures then follow, viz. four of severe rheumatism; three of violently inflamed eyes; a tooth-ach; a rheumatic tooth-ach; an ulcerated lip; a cramp; and a violent sprain. The limits admit of but one or two.]

CASE I.—*Rheumatism*. "Matthew Danby, of Etton, Farmer, had a violent rheumatic pain in his left shoulder and arm, which was much tumefied and inflamed, and which deprived him of rest night and day. He was Tracted twenty minutes, when the pain, the swelling and inflammation, were entirely removed.

CASE II.—*Ulcerated Lip*. "Dining at the Honourable Philip Leslie's, at Great Driffeld, on the 4th of March, he complained of suffering much pain from an ulcerated blister on the inside of his under lip, which was tumefied to the size of the end of his little finger. This came on the 28th of February, and was so painful as to prevent his sleep for three nights. By my advice he tried the Tractors forty minutes, when the swelling was totally repelled; in about three hours the pain also subsided, and all he could perceive of the complaint was a strong metallic taste in the mouth.

"The chief cause of failures of success in the use of the Tractors, which may sometimes have happened, I believe, is the impatience of the operator, who, expecting them to cure in a moment, like magic, will not use them the requisite time, nor persevere as often as is necessary in the repetition of the applications. Wishing all success to the Metallic Practice, I remain, Dear Sir, Your obedient, and humble servant,

HENRY GRIMSTON."

The TRACTORS are effectual in ACUTE and CHRONIC RHEUMATISM, including LUMBAGO and SCIATICA; GOUT, SPRAINS, CONTUSIONS, BURNS, SCALDS, INFLAMMATIONS of the EYES; also of the SKIN, as ERYSIPELAS and TETTERS; Painful INFLAMMATORY TUMOURS, as BILES and WHITLOWS; Violent SPASMODIC CONVULSIONS, as EPILEPTIC FITS, CRAMP and LOCKED JAW; PLEURISY; STINGS and BITES of Venomous INSECTS, FLUOR ALBUS; Pains in the HEAD, FACE, TEETH, EARS, BREAST, SIDE, BACK, LIMBS, and all analogous DISEASES of HORSES.

### A C A U T I O N.

SEVERAL INSTANCES have occurred during the present Year, where the Tractors have suffered discredit thro' illegal and dishonourable attempts to circulate spurious imitations.—To guard against Impositions, Applicants will please to observe, that every Genuine Set of Tractors is stamped with the words "PERKINS' PATENT TRACTORS;" and to the printed Directions accompanying them is subjoined a Receipt for the Five Guineas, signed in the Hand-writing of the Patentee.—To counterfeit this is Felony.

THE TRACTORS, so necessary in every Family, and among Horses, may be had, with new and improved Directions for using them; rendering the mode of Application perfectly intelligible to every Capacity, for FIVE GUINEAS the Set, of BENJAMIN DOUGLAS PERKINS, A. M. the Patentee, in Leicester Square; of FREDERICK SMITH, Chemist and Druggist, in the Haymarket, London; and of CHARLES WHITTALL, Chemist and Druggist, Bridge-Street, Chester.—Their portable Nature renders their Conveyance to any Part of Great Britain, by Coach, and even by Post, perfectly convenient. Letters (Post paid) enclosing their Amount in a Bill or Check, will be punctually attended to.

A liberal Allowance to Persons who purchase to sell again, especially if a number of Sets be taken.