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PROPOSALS

For Printing by Subscription

An ORIGINAL WORK, Intitled,

The Every no vall na minute

FAMILY PHYSICIAN.

Highly necessary for all Persons who wish to preserve their own HEALTH, or are desirous to assist their Neighbours in Distress.

In SIX PARTS.

By WILLIAM BUCHAN, M. D.

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General HEADS of the WORK.

PART I.

Contains an Essay on preserving Health, or preventing Diseases, with Rules and Directions for that purpose suited to the various Constitutions, Stations, Situations, &c. of Mankind, and adapted to the common Causes of Disorders at this Day.

PART II.

-Observations on the Diseases of Manusacturers, Labourers, &c. wherein the various Disorders peculiar to that useful Set of People, arising from their particular Employments, &c. are carefully pointed out, their Causes assigned, and the Means of preventing or removing them clearly demonstrated.

PART III.

-An Essay on Nursing, wherein is plainly shewn how most of the Diseases of Children may be prevented by right Management, or removed by the help of a few easy, sase, and simple Medicines prudently applied.

PART IV.

Treats of the Diseases incident to the human Body, points out their different Causes, Symptoms, Progress, &c.; and shews how far it is in the Power of every Person to remove or mitigate the same by proper Nursing and the use of such simple Medicines as any one may purchase at a small Expence, and apply with the greatest Safety.

PART V.

Treats of Surgery and Pharmacy, fo far as it is in the Power of every man to practife them. Points out the Method of curing flight Wounds, Bruifes, Strains, Imposhumes, &c.; and teaches the Manner of preparing fuch Salves, Ointments, and Plasters as are necessary for these Purposes.

PART VI.

Will contain friendly Cautions and Advice to all Persons who are so foolish as to trust their Lives in the Hands of Quacks, Conjuners, Mountebanks, and such like: Wherein the low cunning, gross ignorance, and consummate Villany of these Pretenders to Physic are evidently pointed out, and the prodigious Hazard every Person runs of losing his Life who trusts to their Medicines plainly demonstrated.

A short Account of the PLAN and DESIGN of the WORK.

or put ignorant people upon the use of medicines which they do not understand; but to shew how far it is in the power of every man to preserve his own health by proper conduct, or restore it when lost by the help of such simple medicines as any person may procure with the greatest ease and apply with the utmost safety.

Nothing is more remote from the Author's design than to represent the office of a physician, in attending the sick, as unnecessary. He is too well convinced of the propriety of this practice, to wish that it should ever be neglected. But, at the same time, he cannot help being of opinion, that it is in the power of every prudent man to do more towards the preservation of his own health than all the physicians in the world can do for him.

It will be allowed on all hands, that difeases seldom come by accident, but are the effect of improper conduct in one shape or other; consequently the most rational method of preventing or removing them must be, to avoid those

errors by which they are occasioned.

'Tis great pity that mankind in general are so infatuated as to believe that a physician can do them no service unless he plies them with medicine; as this ridiculous notion makes them often despise wholesome advice, and trust to unwholesome drugs, merely because they understand the former, and are ignorant of the latter. But it always has and ever will be the soible of the multitude to admire that most which they understand least.

This high opinion of the wonderful virtue of unknown compositions is the very support of quackery, ignorance, and imposition, the great cause why the healing art has been converted into a mere trade, and that science prostituted to the most vile and mercenary purposes which was originally designed for the preservation of health and relief of the numerous calamities incident to human nature.

I have long thought, that the most singular piece of service which a physician could do for mankind would be to show them what is in their own power, with respect both to the Preservation and Recovery of Health;

as I am fully perfuaded that more mischief is done by trusting too much to medicine than medicine does good. Doubtless this will seem a strange paradox to those who do not consider that many dangerous disorders may be prevented by due care, and others, which no medicine can cure, may be removed by proper conduct. In these two consists the great secret of preserving and restoring health. As this alone can make men useful or happy in life, I shall spare no pains in pointing out the road to obtain it.

It is furprifing, in an age when fo much pains has been taken, both by physicians and others, to preserve the lives of our brave soldiers and hardy sailors, that none have thought it worth while to bestow a little labour on that no less useful part of the nation, viz. those employed in our Domestick Manufactures. It is most certain, that the latter are subject to a variety of disorders, arising from their particular situations, employments, &c. as well as the former; and it is equally certain, that numbers perish daily by such disorders, whose lives might be prolonged for many years, did they use proper means for that purpose.

A great part of my practice having lain amongst manufacturers, I have made it my particular study to find out those diseases to which they are most liable; and I am abundantly satisfied, from a series of observations, that, not only every business, but even different branches of the same business, subject those who are employed in them to peculiar disorders, which neither so frequently happen nor

are fo fatal to others.

I shall illustrate this by an example taken from the iron manufacture, which is at present one of the most flourishing in Britain. Of the many thousands employed in this way, I have generally found those who forge or work by the fire most subject to pleurisies, peripneumonies, phthiscal coughs, and consumptions of the lungs. Whereas those who sit at work stooping or leaning over their stomachs, such as sile-cutters, grinders, polishers, &c. are most liable to pains of the stomach, slatulencies, indigestions, glanduler obstructions, and the like.

As the same observation will hold with respect to various other occupations, the Author thinks he cannot do a

greater piece of service to the publick than to point out the different disorders to which they respectively dispose those who are employed in them; and at the same time show how such disorders may be prevented, mitigated, or removed.

As the foundations of a good or bad conftitution are generally laid in infancy, I have bestowed a great deal of pains in giving proper directions with respect to the Nursing or Management of Children.

It is a melancholy truth, that one half the human species perish in the state of nonage. Nor is it possible to account for this great and growing evil from any other cause but that of wrong management. Doubtless the luxury, esseminacy, and irregular lives of parents lay the foundation of many calamities which their unhappy offspring suffer. But I am fully satisfied, that these missfortunes might be greatly mitigated, if not removed, by managing children in a proper manner while the body is tender, and consequently susceptible of any impression.

The great loss which the commonwealth sustains by the death of children, and the numberless advantages which arise from proper nursing, have determined me to dedicate a large part of this work to that particular subject. This I do the more readily, as I believe few have had an equal opportunity of acquainting themselves with the diseases

peculiar to that state.

It was early my opinion, that by far the greater part of those who die in infancy owe their premature end to errors committed in nursing: and an occasion, seldom to be met with, of having some hundreds of children under my particular care for several years, gave me an opportunity of putting this opinion to the test; when I found so little reason to change my mind, that the most accurate observations which I could make served only to consirm me in the belief of this sad truth, That mismanagement in childhood is the very bane of the human offspring.

It is but of late that any attempts have been made in these parts, to set the sex right with regard to the management of their young; nor is it to be expected that they will quit their old track, till time and experience have established a better plan. This I hope will soon be the case, as both physicians and philosophers now begin to look upon the medical education of children as an ob-

ject worthy of their attention.

So great is the importance of good nursing to the health and growth of children, that if this be duly regarded, they feldom stand in need of medicine; but when it is neglected, all the medicines in nature cannot supply its place. I have known above fourscore pounds bestowed on medicines for a hundred children in one year, notwithstanding which, one half of them died, within the above time, by the nurses trusting to the medicines and neglecting their own care. This was evident from the following experiment: That out of an equal number of children properly managed, without taking one pound's worth of medicine, not above three died within the year.

I must beg leave to recommend this part of the work to the serious attention of all parents who wish to rear a hardy and healthy race; as the directions contained in it will not only save them a great deal of unnecessary expence for medicine, but will likewise enable them to render their children sooner sit for the necessary employments of life, and consequently more useful both to them-

felves and their country.

An inclination to relieve the poor in diffress, first led me to try what could be done by the use of such cheap and simple Medicines as they could afford to purchase; and, to my great surprise, I often sound them recover, when the rich, who were plied with pompous prescriptions and costly compositions, sunk under the same disorders. This determined me to commit to writing an account of such simple medicines as I had observed to be of the greatest service in common diseases; and if they are found, upon trial, to contribute to the ease and happiness of my fellow-creatures, I shall esteem it a sufficient reward.

One thing I have been particularly careful of, viz. Not to recommend any medicine which I thought would be attended with the smallest danger; as I always esteemed it a proper maxim in physic, Where no good can be done, to do

no harm.

It is certainly true, that no perfon who is unskilled in physic ought to meddle with any other than simple medi-

the best; and if these were applied in due time, they would often do what the most pompous cannot effect asterwards, when the disorder has gathered strength by de-

lay.

When I recommend simple medicines, I mean chiefly such as are taken from the vegetable kingdom, of which indeed there is a very great variety; as bountiful nature hath supplied us with antidotes to most diseases in almost every field; and while we are paying high prices for the produce of the Indies, we daily trample under foot what would answer the purpose equally well, and often much better, did we know their real virtues. But these are neglected, whilst we ransack foreign regions for things of less value, and torture every ore which the earth affords to extract poisons, and arm the daring empyrick for the deftruction of his fellow-creatures.

I am very fensible of the great difficulty which must attend the execution of a medical work designed for the perusal of mankind in general, especially that part of it which treats of the knowledge of diseases. But in order to render this easy, I have endeavoured to give a full and clear description of such symptoms as are in a manner essential to every particular disorder; and at the same time pointed out those that are only accidental, or in common to it with others, as these often mislead the unwary, and occasion innumerable errors.

I have likewise avoided all abstruse or mystical terms of art; as this appearance of learning, tho' it may amuse fools, serves only to render the profession ridiculous to men of sense. Physic does not need to be concealed behind a vail in order to enhance its value. Its own intrinsic worth is sufficient to recommend it to the wise; and it matters little what opinion others have of it.

Difeases are so plainly described in this work, that I think no person of the least penetration can be at a loss to find them out, unless in very difficult or complicated cases; and when these happen, I have all along advised the patient, or those about him, to call a physician immediately.

By this means, instead of people being induced to tamper with their own lives, they will have by them at all times a sure guide to inform them when further help is

necessary.

This I take to be a thing very much needed; as many, for want of fuch a directory, trifle with the most dangerous disorders, till they become incurable; while others, frighted at the very shadow of a disease, sly to the use of drugs on the slightest ailment, which might easily have been carried off with a little care, and possibly better without medicine than with it.

Tho' it is certain, that many difeases are hard to be found out; it is equally certain, that many others may be known almost at first fight. And tho' some medicines require the greatest care and skill in the application; yet there are many others, and valuable ones too, which require only common prudence and a few plain directions, in order to their being administered with fafety and fuccefs. For example, An ague or intermittent fever may be known by any person almost as soon as it makes its attack; and tho' any one may prepare the medicine which I have prescribed for that disorder, yet I never knew it fail of fuccess when properly taken; nor did I ever obferve the least danger arise from the application of it. I might fay the same with regard to many other diseases and their remedies; but must refer the reader to the work itfelf.

But it is by no means the fole design of this performance to recommend medicines. Warning people against the use of such things as would be sure to do hurt, is of no less importance than recommending what will do good. Men are naturally forward enough to seek relief in distress, and this prompts them often to make use of such things as greatly aggravate, instead of lessening their complaints. Their impatience disposes them to listen to every idle tale which their ignorant, credulous, or officious neighbours may suggest. This conduct I well know to be productive of numberless evils; and, for this reason, have spared no pains to point out the mistakes which are daily committed in this way.

When people will act right or wrong, it is certainly a wifer part to endeavour to rectify their conduct than strive to root out a principle which seems so deeply rooted in human nature; tho' this has been too much the aim of the Faculty in all ages. Had one half the pains that has been taken by physicians, in framing and supporting sine theories,

been bestowed on instructing mankind how to make the best use of their own abilities, both for preventing and removing diseases, much good might have been done, a great deal of mischief prevented, and a world of useless labour saved.

There always will remain enough to be done by the learned and skilful physician, notwithstanding every attempt of this kind that can be made. But it is high time that the benefits of physic were more generally extended, and that people were taught how to improve to their own advantage an art which is fraught with so many blessings to mankind.

The plan which I have made choice of as the most likely for rendering the medical art more generally useful, is as follows:

1. To give a plain and accurate description of every particular disease, pointing out its various causes, symptoms, changes, &c. from its first invasion, till it terminates in health or otherwise.

2. Point out fuch remedies as may be used with the greatest fasety, and which are most likely either to remove or mitigate the disorder, together with their proper doses, the method of preparing them, and the manner in which

they ought to be applied.

3. Lay down proper directions with respect to the nursing or management of the sick; show the fatal mistakes which are daily committed in this article, and point out the proper method of treating the patient under every particular disorder, with regard to his diet, drink, air,

exercife, &c.

This last article, I will venture to affirm, is of equal, if not greater importance than even medicine itself; notwithstanding which it is most shamefully neglected both by physicians and surgeons. These, while they are plying their patients with compositions from the shop, often leave the management of them in all other respects to the sole direction of some ignorant old woman, by whose means the most laudable attempts of physic are often defeated, and the patient's life wantonly thrown away.

It is certainly true, that every particular difease requires a method of nursing, as well as medicines, peculiar to itfelf; and this ought to be regarded in a special manner by all concerned about the fick. For example, in one diforder, the patient ought to be kept very warm; in another, cool; in a third, he ought to live upon low diet; and in a fourth, to be supported with the most nourishing diet and generous cordials, &c.

As these, and many other cases which daily happen, may be considered as direct opposites, can it be doubted that many patients lose their lives for want of a due regard to

these circumstances?

So many and great are the benefits arifing from proper nurfing and a right regimen in all diforders, that I have generally made it a rule to begin with my patients where most physicians end, viz. By shewing them how far it is in their own power to remove or mitigate their complaints by proper conduct, and the use of what are called the nonnaturals. This practice is always safer, more agreeable to the patient, and often more successful than medicine itself.

Can any thing be more ridiculous, than to fee a physician cramming his patient with drugs, so long as the one has either resolution to take them, or the other a face to prescribe? And after both parties are tired, or rather when the medical farce has been acted, the doctor sits down, and very gravely tells the patient what he must do himself in order to get well. Then, and not before, does he point out the vast advantages which the patient may expect to reap from change of air, restorative diet, proper exercise, mineral waters, &c. Now, if this be the best course, it ought certainly to be recommended at first; and if otherwise, it cannot be supposed to succeed after medicine has failed.

It is this confideration which makes the patient generally despife such advice, and look upon it only as a genteel dismission by the doctor, when he can do no more for him; and so he despairs and dies. Whereas, if these things had been proposed at first, and the stress of the cure rested upon them, the patient would have set about them with alacrity, and have reaped the benefit accordingly.

How often have I feen wonderful cures brought about by change of air, a due course of exercise, and a proper diet, after all forts of medicine had been tried in vain? And surely much more might be done, if such a course was generally recommended in due time, before the patient's strength is exhausted by a tedious disorder, and his

spirits funk by disappointments from medicine.

There are many diseases in which medicines can do no good, and others in which they do much harm. But in all cases that possibly can happen, proper nursing and a right regimen are certainly necessary; and happy would it be for patients if this were often all that was done. If we consider the ignorance, forwardness, and inattention of many who practice the medical art, we need not hesitate to affert, that at least as much mischief as good is done by the exhibition of medicine; and if proper nursing were universally substituted in its room, I am persuaded that we might save some millions sterling per annum, and not lose one life more than we do at present.

This however no one must imagine to be the fault of the medical art. It is owing to the abuse, and not to the use of physic, and to the encouragement that ignorance, impu-

dence, and quackery every where meet with.

It is hard that villains of any profession should be allowed to prey upon the ignorant and unwary; but more especially in a matter where their lives are concerned; as this is not only hurting individuals, but doing the greatest injury to the public. I have long been forry to see the labouring and industrious part of mankind made the daily prey of every ignorant PRETENDER to the medical art. What a pity it is, that those who gain their money by labour, sweat, and toil, should throw it away in purchasing medicines which never were intended for any other purpose but picking their pockets? and greatly were it to be wished that this were the only bad consequence of those baneful compositions.

The credulous rustick no sooner hears of a wonderful medicine, to be obtained for a little money, which he is told will cure all manner of diseases, and is the invention of some great Doctor, than immediately he snatches the bait, which he greedily swallows, tho' often to his own destruction.

Did those egregious cheaters of the public deal only in innocent compositions, the purse alone would suffer by their practice: But this, to my certain knowledge, is so

far from being the case, that they seldom exhibite any thing without a mixture of mercury, antimony, or some of the strongest chymical preparations along with it; well knowing that these are the most proper for a bold stroke: And if a wonderful cure be at any time produced, that establishes the character of the medicine; no matter if a hundred die for one that does well; these are quite forgot, or their death is imputed to some incurable malady, or, what solves all difficulties, an inevitable destiny.

I can folemnly declare, that I have feen patients die, in the greatest agonies imaginable, with all the symptoms of being poisoned, by only taking one dose of those quackmedicines which are daily dispersed amongst the populace in England, with as little ceremony as if they were common

water.

It is a shocking reflection, that any of the human species should be such monsters as to make a trade of preparing or vending what they know must prove destructive to their fellow-creatures. I don't know any punishment too severe for this more specious kind of murder, nor can I pretend to say what laws are in being against it: But one thing I am certain of, that there is no abuse which calls more loudly for redress.

All that I can do in order to discourage this destructive and pernicious practice is, to warn people of their danger; and at the same time to direct them to the use of such safe and simple medicines as may relieve their complaints with-

out hazarding their lives.

The wife and good in all ages have endeavoured to leffen the number of human miferies; nor can a benevolent mind enjoy a more refined pleafure than that which arises

from relieving the distressed.

But, alas! who is equal to the important task? What human power can support the endless labour? One cannot open his eyes without beholding objects of distress, which loudly call for the helping hand of the physician. But how seldom is this to be obtained? The most indefatigable of the Faculty generally finds his necessary employments too much both for his time and strength; so that he cannot, if he would, afford that assistance to the poor which their exigencies require.

But what is impossible to a few may become easy to ma-

ny; and what physicians cannot effect of themselves, may be brought about by the assistance of others, provided

they were properly instructed for this purpose.

Nor is this fo difficult a task as many will at first imagine. If one half the time and pains which is generally spent in copying receipts and collecting nostrums were bestowed on reading plain, full, and accurate descriptions of diseases and their various symptoms, the same persons who now deal out receipts at random might be enabled to suit their prescriptions to the nature of the disease; by which means they might be the instruments of doing much good, and prove real blessings to society.

Bad as the world is, I am perfuaded there are every where some who only want to know how to relieve the distressed, in order to set about it with alacrity. What pity it is that these should be often inactive for want of proper instructions, especially as they are frequently present in cases which require immediate assistance, where no

medical help can be obtained!

Can any thing be more shocking to a person possessed of real humanity, than to stand by and see a beloved child, a near relation, or an intimate friend, expire by some accident, without so much as attempting to save their lives? Tho' this is often in the power of the meanest person present, provided they would take care to inform themselves of what is proper to be done upon such occasions.

Who would not chuse to be the happy instrument of rescuing a fellow-creature from the jaws of death? or wish to have the same kind office, if necessary, done for himself?

Is it possible that men can be too wise in the important article of preserving health? or be too well instructed in

the art of faving their own or neighbours lives?

What tender parent does not wish to be taught how to manage his infant-offspring in such a manner as to prevent most of the disorders which commonly prove fatal to children?

Can the master or mistress of a family possess a more useful qualification than to be able, by their own skill, to remove many of those slight disorders which daily happen

to themselves, their children, servants? &c.

These are a few of the benefits which it is hoped mankind will reap from this undertaking, provided the directions therein contained be duly observed. But for this purpose, I must beg leave to implore the assistance of the better few, whose example is the great pattern which the

multitude always will follow.

Those well disposed Ladies and Gentlemen who live in the country are the most likely persons to be useful in this respect. To them the poor naturally apply for relief and assistance in distress; and it is not to be imagined how much good they might do by a little wholesome advice and

fimple medicine feafonably administered.

There is not a parish, nor almost a village in Great Britain where some of these benevolent people do not reside, who are always ready and willing to relieve the distressed. However the low retainers to physic may enveigh against this practice, I have been too often a witness of its happy consequences not to do all that lies in my power in order to promote the exertion of such a noble and God-like virtue.

I have often heard those good people regret the want of a plain directory to guide them in their endeavours this way, as most books wrote on the practice of physic are only calculated for the perusal of physicians; which, by the bye, is as absurd as if every thing wrote on religion were calculated only for the perusal of divines.

The work here mentioned, it is hoped, will supply that deficiency. And as the Author has spared no pains in order to make it easy and intelligible, he flatters himself, that such as do him the honour to peruse it, will omit no opportunity of rendering the precepts it contains exten-

fively useful.

Tho' I am certain, that by far the greater part of this laudable employment must fall to the share of the Ladies; yet I think it quite unnecessary to make use of any arguments, in order to recommend an office to them for which they seem, as it were, designed by nature, and to which, I will venture to affirm, the better fort find themselves universally inclined. The British Ladies are generally allowed to excel in charity and readiness to relieve the distressed; and I shall be extremely happy if the directions contained in this work are found, in any measure, to promote their success.

There is no fet of men who have it fo much in their

power to promote the fuccess of this undertaking as the CLERGY, especially those who reside in the country. Nor do I make the least doubt of their hearty concurrence with

me in forwarding fo laudable a defign.

The boundless confidence which the common people place in the Gentlemen of this character, puts it in their power to do good, even in cases where the physician can be of no service. I have known hundreds who dreaded the very name of a Doctor, and chose rather to die than take any thing prescribed by him. But the same persons would, with the greatest chearfulness, follow the advice of their pastor, and would take any thing that he was pleased to order.

Another great advantage which the Gentlemen of this order enjoy is, that they are generally men of letters, and may, by the help of a little reading and observation in the medical way, be doubly useful to their flocks. I must do them the justice to acknowledge, that I have met with sundry Clergymen who knew more of the medical art than many of those who make a profession of it; and who, by their timely advice and assistance, were instrumental in saving many lives; and were real blessings to the country

where they refided.

Tho' I mention the Country Gentlemen, the Ladies, and the Clergy as the most likely persons for extending the salutary effects of this performance; yet I would by no means have it imagined that the work is calculated for them only. The meanest rustick, if he can read, may reap benefit from it. Its contents are adapted to every capacity, and its precepts suited to people of all the different stations and conditions in life.

I must beg leave, before I conclude these remarks, to recommend a general knowledge of physic to all who pretend to a liberal education; as no part of the study of nature is more curious, entertaining, or useful. This would prevent men of letters from being obliged to pay an implicit obedience to the dictates of every person of the medical profession, or being the dupes of those who are often their inferiors in every other branch of science.

This would be fo far from encouraging quackery, that it is the only plan which can utterly deftroy it. It is well known, that every art or science has become, not only more extensively useful, but likewise more perfect, in proportion as it has been freed of its myftical jargon, and brought down to the capacities of mankind in general.

We may venture to affirm that, till physick is more generally understood, we shall never want villains who will have art enough to impose their pretended secrets upon the world; for this reason, that men are easily induced to believe any thing in a science of which they understand nothing.

I cannot omit recommending this work to every person who has a family, especially such as live at a distance from physicians; as many diforders happen so suddenly that patients are often dead or past relief before proper affistance can be had: whereas a little help administred in due time?

might have faved their lives.

For example, the Gout in the stomack, Apoplexies, Palfies, Gripes, Cholicks, Quinfies, Convultion-fits, Poifons, Violent Bleedings, &c. often prove fatal unless something is done immediately; and the poor patient lofes his life while the means of preferving it are in the power of those about him.

I do not chuse to boast of superior abilities for the execution of this work; but one thing I will venture to fay, that no one could have taken greater pains to lay in proper materials. As I have made it a rule for feveral years past to give my advice to every person who desired it, whether able to pay for it or not; being thoroughly fatisfied, that an attempt of this nature could not be conducted to advantage, without a particular knowledge of the difeafes incident to people of all ranks and conditions in life.

I have likewife been careful to add to my own observations, every thing that I could collect, either from the ancients or moderns, which feemed fuitable to the defign of my undertaking. And these I am determined to communicate to the public without the fmallest referve or hesitation; as I look upon that man to be unworthy the name of a Phyfician who would conceal any thing that might contribute to the EASE or HAPPINESS of his fellow-crea-

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would be to fin reom encouraging



