

The effects of injection into the urethra, and the use and abuse of those remedies in the cure and prevention of the virulent gonorrhoea, briefly considered : With occasional remarks on the nature of that disorder, in answer to some modern doctrines / By Thomas Bayford.

Contributors

Bayford, Thomas.

Publication/Creation

London : Printed for J. Whiston, 1773.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/c6fk43wt>

License and attribution

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

52905/p

THE
EFFECTS
OF
INJECTIONS

INTO THE
URETHRA,
AND

The Use and Abuse of those Remedies
in the Cure and Prevention of the
VIRULENT GONORRHOEA,
BRIEFLY CONSIDERED.

With Occasional Remarks on the Nature of
that Disorder,
In Answer to some modern Doctrines.

By THOMAS BAYFORD, SURGEON.

L O N D O N:
Printed for J. WHISTON, in FLEET-STREET.
M D C C L X X I I I.



TH E following Sheets are intended, chiefly, as an Introduction to some Experiments now making, in order to ascertain the various Injuries sustained by the URETHRA from an improper Use of Injections. And the Author will think himself very much obliged to those Gentlemen of the Faculty, who are in Possession of any morbid Parts, respecting the present subject, if they will favor him with a Sight of such Preparations,

North-Street,
Red Lion Square,
May 15, 1773.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

I AM led to believe, as well from my own observations, as from the concurring testimony of my medical friends, that disorders of the URETHRA are growing every day more and more common. To what cause the frequency of such complaints may owe its origin, has seemed to me an inquiry of no little importance; I have therefore ventured to lay my thoughts on that subject before the public, who will at least regard the design with

B

candor,

candor, however they may see occasion to condemn the execution of it.

Much has been said, both for and against the use of injections in the cure of the virulent Gonorrhœa. Many of the advocates for this mode of practice declaring it, on the one hand, to be the only rational one; whilst others have pronounced it as positively to be pernicious in all cases, and likely to be productive of the most dreadful consequences.

Prejudices, of whatsoever kind they may be, are not easily removed. I have often thought, and the inquiries which I have taken some pains to make have now corroborated that opinion, that very much mischief has been produced, by a too free use of injections; whether exhibited with a
pre-

preventive or curative intention: but that I should therefore say, every liquor thrown up the Urethra must produce mischief, would be absurd indeed.

Three fourths of the good old women of this kingdom have, for ages back, been in possession of some infallible remedy for sore eyes; or some wonderful charms for the ague and tooth-ach. Injections for the Gonorrhœa are now-a-days almost as plentiful, and perhaps, I may add, almost as infallible: but the *charms* of the old ladies had this at least to recommend them, that, if they did their patients no good, they were not likely to do much hurt: not so the *collyria*; but these have generally been applied with some small degree of fear and caution, under the belief that the eye was a tender part,

and one that would not bear to be tampered with. Oculists may possibly deem this an unprofitable doctrine; but the blindest of their patients will see the justness of the observation. I sincerely wish the same notion had always prevailed with respect to the Urethra. I think it might have been entertained with equal propriety in both cases.

An injection, well timed, and judiciously adapted, may often have its use; but I am fully persuaded, that a frequent repetition, or long continuance, of almost any injection whatsoever will be hurtful to the Urethra.

General positions, without proofs, ought to carry but little weight with them. In the present case such proofs seemed particularly necessary, to support
an

an opinion, which, as it opposed a favorite and fashionable practice, was the less likely to be heard with any degree of attention.

Every one, who has been at the trouble of looking much into the subject, must know, what an infinite variety of injections have been recommended as specific cures for the Gonorrhœa; and many of them too, in such terms of assurance, that, until repeated trials had proved the fallacy of them, they might seem to deserve the character they bore.

Prophylactic remedies also, though not nearly so numerous at the therapeutic, have at different times had their warmest advocates. If we were really in possession of any such remedies as would prevent the disease, it would supersede

perfede the necessity of speaking as to its cure, but this I fear is by no means the case.

Amongst the preventive remedies of a more modern date, the *lixivium saponarium* has been very highly spoken of; and is still vended in this town, I am told, under different forms, as an infallible nostrum for the purpose above-mentioned. *Sed caveat Emptor.* What degree of prophylactic virtue might reside in the caustic Alkali, I could not pretend to determine; but that it did not deserve the character given of it, I had very soon occasion to observe: that it was not an effectual preventive against the venereal poison, I had soon sufficient proof; and I could not help thinking it a very improper medicine to be injected into the urinary canal.

I en-

I entertained the same suspicions with regard to many other injections which I had reason to believe were in daily use for the cure of the Gonorrhoea. Among these, a very principal one was a solution of the *mercurius corrosivus sublimatus*. A solution of the *ærugeo æris* has by different persons been recommended as an excellent injection for the speedy cure of a Gonorrhoea: I am told, it is at this time a favorite remedy with a physician of this town, who uses it rubbed down with *ol. oliv.* The same medicine, dissolved *sp. salis ammon. cum calce*, and afterwards diluted, was long handed about as a precious secret for the same purpose; and was made public some months since, in a little essay on the cure of the venereal Gonorrhoea; though

6 the

the *aqua sapphirina*, recommended by Quincy more than half a century ago, must surely be just as efficacious.

It would be endless to enumerate the very many remedies of this sort, that have been held in high esteem by particular practitioners : a work as tedious as unnecessary. Suffice it to say, that out of the number which have come to my knowledge, I selected a few, of what I judged to be the principal ones ; and was desirous of making myself acquainted with their effects upon the Urethra, by fair experiments. I hope, I shall stand excused to my friends, that I have not made them the subjects of such trials. Dogs have been my principal patients in this way, and a most unruly set I have found them. The *penis caninus* is by no means so
fa-

favorable in its structure for making experiments upon, as the human : in what respects they differ from each other, I shall take occasion to remark when I lay the result of my experiments before the public ; which I am not at present prepared to do, as I find I have cut out a much larger work for myself, than I had formed any idea of. It is one however, though attended with very much trouble, that I propose to prosecute with all the attention that is consistent with my other avocations.

At a time when the use of injections is so much in vogue, a word against them may be dangerous ; but I am of opinion, that I shall produce, at a proper season, such proofs of the mischiefs occasioned by many of them, that it

C

will

will not be said I have been merely reviving the old cry against them, without sufficient reason; but that the following observations on the subject have been founded upon facts. In making these experiments, I hardly need observe, that my attention has been directed solely to the effects produced by the injected liquors upon the Urethra itself, and the neighbouring parts. How far the constitution may at any time suffer from the use of them, is quite another consideration. This idea may possibly occasion some modern writers upon the subject of the virulent Gonorrhœa to smile: I shall however take the liberty of offering a word or two on that head presently.

There

There is no one disease, I believe, which has employed so great a number of pens, as the venereal. Various modes of cure have been instituted by various authors, according to the particular ideas they have formed of the disease; of the nature and qualities of the venereal poison.—When the power of mercury had been sufficiently proved in the cure of the Lues venerea, it was not unnatural at first to imagine, that its salutary effects might be equally great in that of the Gonorrhœa: how long such practice has been continued, and with what success, it is unnecessary for me to say.

Sydenham, and, since his time, many others have regarded the running of the Gonorrhœa as a critical discharge. Boerhaave also thought his patients free

from any danger of the Lues, so long as the running of a clap was kept up. The methods they took to effect this are sufficiently known. Astruc, speaking of the venereal poison, says, it is of an inflammatory, corrosive, coagulating, fixed, and probably of an acid or falso-acid nature. Cockburn endeavours to prove it an acid * by chemical experiments: others have declared the poison to be a lixivious volatile Alkali. Some have esteemed the discharge to be purulent; others have affirmed that it possesses none of the properties of Pus; and some have con-

* From hence, I should have imagined the thought first arose of trying the *lixivium* for the prevention of the disease, but that I am informed the gentleman who lays claim to the invention recommends the medicine with a different design.

tented

tented themselves, without inquiring any further into its nature, with calling it a *virus sui generis*, against which perhaps they were possessed of some specific remedy : but, however the numerous authors upon this subject may have differed in other respects, they have for the most part agreed in this particular ; that the virus of the Gonorrhœa and Lues were so far of the same kind, as that an improper management of the former would be likely to produce the latter disease. This point however has of late been disputed ; and it now seems a fashionable doctrine, that the two diseases are so distinct from, so independent upon each other, that a *pox* can never be induced from the suppression of a Gonorrhœa. I know several of the faculty who entertain

certain this opinion; though I confess
 I have never discovered the least shadow
 of reason in any argument they have
 brought in support of it: a principal
 one that has been made use of on this
 occasion, is, that mercury, though a
 specific in the *lues venerea*, or confirmed
 pox, is never required in the cure of
 the virulent Gonorrhœa; but that, on
 the contrary, it is prejudicial. What
 is this saying, but that mercury, though
 absolutely necessary in the advanced
 stage of the disease, may be improper in
 the early, or inflammatory state of it?
 But even in the confirmed pox; how
 often do we find, that mercury itself
 increases the complaint; and we are
 obliged to refrain from the use of it
 for a time, calling in the assistance of
 other remedies? Indeed it is found
 to

to be the case with almost all the more powerful medicines ; that the mis-timing them has produced much mischief ; in none perhaps has this appeared more manifest, than in that sovereign drug the *Bark*. How serviceable, nay how indispensably necessary has it been found, in the declension of the same fever, in the earlier stage of which, the exhibition of it might have proved fatal ! and numberless instances of the same kind, might, I doubt not, be produced in the practice of physic.

We are told again, that it is one grand characteristic property of the *Lues venerea*, that after its first appearance it will be continually growing worse ; that on the contrary, a Gonorrhoea will frequently run off, discharge itself without any assistance from medicine,

dicine, and without causing any disturbance to the constitution.

The first observation relative to the pox, though it will not I think hold true universally, must be nevertheless allowed to be so in the general; but I much fear that any running from the Urethra, which may have terminated so happily as they mention, has had nothing venereal in its nature. Mr. Cheselden was of opinion (as he told a very worthy friend of mine) that not above three out of five of what were usually termed claps, had any thing infectious in them. How far this might be true, I shall not pretend to say; but it certainly is not every discharge which puts on even suspicious appearances that is venereal: it every now and then happens that men, married

as

as well as unmarried, shall by an over-exertion of the parts bring on a temporary running; numbers of such complaints have been cured under the denomination of venereal, which by no means deserved the name, and some nostrum-mongers have gained the credit of performing in a few hours, what nature's self would have accomplished in the same space of time. Such a discharge as this, I think, better deserves the appellation of *Gonorrhœa spuria* than that commonly so called, which proceeds from the *Corona Glandis*, from what are named the *sebaceous glands

* We are not able to discover, by the most minute injections, assisted by the best glasses, any glandular structure in this part; the small protuberances round the *Corona Glandis* being merely clusters of the same villi with which the *Glans Penis* itself is overspread.

D

or

or *Glandulæ odoriferæ*. But supposing we admit the fact, that the true venereal *Gonorrhœa* will sometimes pass off without the habit sustaining any injury; what does it prove? Little more, I should think, than that nature, unassisted, and uninterrupted, is able to rid herself of an offending burthen; and, in this case, will carry off a venereal complaint in the form of a clap, which these gentlemen, with a little trouble, would have converted into a pox. The venereal running can never appear more strongly in the light of a critical discharge, than under such circumstances, and ought therefore to be a lesson against what Turner calls the post-haste methods of cure.

But

But though the symptoms of a *Gonorrhœa* have been ever so mild, and though they should have gone off, and disappeared gradually; which I can readily admit they sometimes may, with little or no medical assistance; even under these circumstances, which are the most favorable we can think of, the patient ought not to look upon himself as safe from the danger of a future attack. A very intimate friend of mine was exactly in this predicament. His discharge from the Urethra continued about six weeks; but during the whole time it was attended with so little inconvenience or uneasiness, that he did not apply a single remedy, either external or internal: the running abated by degrees, and at length totally left him. The consequence however

was, his being attacked about four months after with venereal sores upon the tonsils. This may serve to convince us too, that the doctrine generally received, of the pocky virus first attacking the glands nearest to the part where the infection is received, does not always hold true. Astruc speaks of a disorder of the eyes, which he calls the gonorrhœal *Ophthalmia*, as being sometimes the consequence of a suppressed Gonorrhœa, though by no means a common disease.

In a little essay on the cure of the venereal Gonorrhœa published some time since, the author, after giving it as his own opinion that the poisons of the pox and clap are very different in their natures, tells us, that Mr. Hales seems to have imbibed the same notion.

That

That gentleman says, indeed, that he does not truly know that any thing more than injection is necessary for the cure of the *Gonorrhœa*: yet it should seem that he thinks so; else why does he give mercurial alteratives, in almost every case of the *Gonorrhœa*? Mercury is surely a medicine that ought not wantonly to be administered, even in an alterative way.

The same author, in support of his opinion, that the virus of the two diseases is very different, says, that the matter from a *Gonorrhœa* applied to an excoriated part will not produce a chancre. What kind of experiment may have proved this position to him, I know not; for I am fully satisfied that I have seen the discharge of a *Gonorrhœa* sufficiently acrimonious and
corrosive

corrosive to produce this effect, even upon a sound part. He adds, that such fores will heal, with a little styptic wash. I confess it is an application I should never think of using; for if they would not heal without it, my suspicions would be much raised concerning the nature of them.

I have no more doubt that a styptic remedy would often heal them, than I have, that a styptic injection would stop a *Gonorrhœa*; but my doubts concerning the safety of such practice are very many. But let alone this styptic wash, and leave the excoriations to themselves: will this author pretend to say that these fores, these *Gonorrhœal Chancres* (if I may be allowed the expression) would not degenerate and require more than styptics to heal them

them afterwards? How often do we see the discharge so virulent as to corrode the parts very considerably, producing chancres, and those often troublesome ones, when confined by the prepuce in the case of a phymosis. He will not surely say, that the mere confinement of the matter (if I may so call it) alters its nature. It may, and I suppose will, render it more acrid; but it can never be supposed to change so harmless a fluid as he seems to think the running of a *Gonorrhæa* into so dreadful a poison as we know that of the pox to be. But, in answer to this, we are told, that such chancres will not produce the Lues; that the constitution never suffers in consequence of them; that no mercury is required, &c.

When

When the inflammation in a Gonorrhœa runs so high as to produce the symptoms I have mentioned; the quantity of the running usually bears a proportion to its quality; it is generally as plentiful as it is acrimonious: now how far so copious a discharge may at any time prove effectual in diverting the infection from the habit, I shall not pretend to determine. I will not say that it can, and I believe no one will say that it may not, for we are daily meeting with circumstances in the various stages of the venereal disease, that are much more unaccountable; but this I will venture to pronounce, that if the discharge of so virulent a clap as I have described is suddenly checked by astringent injections, and the chancres healed by styptic washes, more than fifteen

times

times out of twenty a pox will be the consequence.

In speaking of the venereal poison, I would be understood in general terms to mean that of the *Lues* as well as of the *Gonorrhæa*; for in what respects they differ, except in degree, I confess myself ignorant: this I know, that a pox has been contracted from a woman upon whom no pocky symptoms could be discovered; and a woman has been attacked by a virulent *Gonorrhæa* in consequence of her connexion with a man who never had any discharge *per Urethram*, no sort of complaint in the passage, nor any excoriation upon the *Penis*.

I was desired by Mr. *Sparke*, apothecary, in *Titchfield-street*, to look upon a woman who had been under his care for some days. She had a very

E

copious,

copious, most virulent, and foetid discharge *per vaginam*, considerable *ardor urinæ*, the *labia pudendi* swoln to an enormous size, and much excoriated, as well as the parts all round. I had no doubt, from appearances, but that her complaint was venereal. The woman had been married only a few weeks ; there was no reason for suspicion of her having had any improper connexion, and the husband declared himself absolutely ignorant of the cause of his wife's disorder. I desired permission to examine the man, when I found in his groin an enlarged gland, which (as he said) had escaped his own notice, not having given him any uneasiness. It was a tumor of the indolent kind ; but as it was pretty deeply seated, and firmly attached to the neighbouring

bouring parts, I had no doubt but that it would advance to suppuration, which it accordingly did in a short time. The account this person gave, was, that he had had no commerce with any woman for near three months before his marriage, and that he never had a clap in his life. It may be necessary to observe, that the cure of the wife was effected without the use of mercury; whether it would have been prudent to attempt that of the husband in the same way, I leave others to determine. I have mentioned the foregoing case (in other respects perhaps one of little consequence) just to prove, that there is really a nearer affinity between the two diseases than some people affect to believe.

It is no great wonder that those particular persons, who boast of their ex-

peditious methods of curing the *Gonorrhæa*, should take some pains to convince their patients of the impossibility of poxing them by the use of injections. That pocky symptoms can never arise in consequence of a suppressed *Gonorrhæa*, is a doctrine admirably well calculated for their mode of practice; it affords them an excellent salvo in case of accidents: the old and stale story of the double infection being ever ready for their purpose, they are seldom backward in availing themselves of it. Would these men take upon them to pronounce *primâ facie* when the pocky virus was united with the gonorrhœal, and when not (according to their own theory); and could they determine the point with any degree of precision, they would then deserve

serve our thanks ; but the discovery is in the general unfortunately made by the patient himself, and that too at a time when perhaps he may be congratulating himself upon a supposed cure. The author of the pamphlet I have had occasion to mention, thinks it probable that there is something in the venereal particles of matter in a *Gonorrhœa* which is very different in its nature and figure from that of the pox, being neither so easily taken up by the absorbents, or, if taken up, that it is of no kind of consequence. In answer to this I can venture to assert, that there is no sort of difference whatever to be discovered between them, as far at least as a microscopic observation may be depended upon. I wished to satisfy myself in this particular as soon as the

the

the opinion was given out; and for that purpose I carefully examined the matter from venereal ulcers, as well as the discharge from the *urethra*, by means of a microscope. They both afforded exactly the same appearance. The particles are of a spherical form, and just such as we see in common *pus*. In their figure I have never known them to vary, in their size they sometimes do; owing merely, as I apprehend, to the state the *pus* is in at the time. I viewed these particles at first diluted with simple distilled water, where I had a very fine sight of them. In this fluid they retained their figure better, and afforded me a more perfect view of them, than in any other liquor I tried. I could not get the matter to mix so intimately with fluids of an astringent kind;

kind: in such therefore I had not altogether so fair a view. When mixed with astringents, the venereal particles seemed to be somewhat diminished in their size, and rather flattened. As the degree of astringency was increased, this appeared more manifest, till the matter became a confused * coagulated mass, the globules being quite broke down.

A diluted preparation of the *lixivium saponarium* and a solution of the *merc. corros. sublim.* produced no other effect. Mere curiosity led me to make the experiment; I mean to draw no conclusion from it. Trials such as these must of necessity be fallacious in some degree, and the deductions

* This was not effected till the mixtures were so strong that no man in his senses would think of injecting them into the Urethra.

made

made from them, of course, vague and inconclusive. Should any one contend therefore that these medicines have a power of rendering the venereal particles of matter inert, even without altering the form of them, I will not controvert the point.

I have already observed, that it has been brought as an argument against the poison of the *Lues* and *Gonorrhœa* having any affinity in their natures, that the former disease, in the slightest degree, was never known to be cured without mercury *, whereas the most virulent of the latter has been repeatedly

* There are some in this town who are ready to contest that point: yet I wish not to have myself reckoned amongst the number. If venereal buboes may be ranked in the list of pocky symptoms; there are, I am told, who insist, that such disorders are curable without the help of mercury.

so without the use of one grain. The author who advances this asks, " will mercury alone, in a recent case, abate any one symptom concomitant with the disease (the Gonorrhœa) ? nay even if carried to a salivation ? " To a question put in so vague a manner, the author has hardly a right to expect a direct answer : however, to what has been already said upon that subject, I beg leave to add, that I have seen small doses of mercury alter the complexion of a very ill-conditioned running much for the better ; and that a very obstinate chordee, which would not yield to the common methods, such as bathing, bleeding, opiates, &c. has given way, when a small dose or two of the same medicine has been added. I mention the fact only, without recommending the

F practice.

practice. I am moreover informed by a surgeon to an hospital in this town, where there are a great many venereal patients, that such patients frequently get rid of their *Gonorrhæas* during a mercurial course; but that, if the discharge does not intirely stop, gentle astringents seldom fail to compleat the work: and after a course of mercury, we need be under no apprehensions in having recourse to such medicines.

Dr. *Saunders*, in his translation of *Plenck's* book upon the use of mercury triturated with gum arabic, says, “there
 “ is no internal preparation of mercury
 “ so well adapted for the cure of the
 “ *Gonorrhæa* as this (viz. the gummy
 “ mercurial); and when injections are
 “ employed, its internal use should con-
 “ stantly accompany them; it very ef-
 “ fectually

“fectually abates the *ardor urinæ*;
 “which it does, partly from its acting
 “as a mercurial, without inducing in-
 “flammation, and partly from the *gum*
 “*arabic* accompanying it.” I can rea-
 dily believe this; yet if we can do with-
 out mercury at all (which for the most
 part we undoubtedly may), so much the
 better.

In a very perverse gleet, which had
 long withstood the attempts of an in-
 genious surgeon, and particular friend
 of mine, the assistance of mercury was
 found to be absolutely necessary. *Bou-*
gies had repeatedly afforded a temporary
 relief, but the point was not carried till
 mercurial frictions had been used. A
 modern writer upon the venereal disease
 has observed* (speaking of obstinate

* Fordyce's Review, p. 55.

gleets) that, “were we disposed to *speculate*, we should say in these cases an internal chancre had kept up the discharge, &c.” For my own part, I have no sort of doubt but that in most of such complaints the *urethra* is in some degree ulcerated. The greater part of the earlier writers upon the *gonorrhœa virulenta* spoke with so much confidence, so familiarly upon the subject of ulcers in the *urethra*, that it was supposed the urinary canal was seldom or never free from them in that disease. Few doubted the existence of them. many profess to have seen repeated instances upon dissection after death: amongst whom are *Bartholine*, *Severinus*, *Virfungius*, *Hildanus*, *Sydenham*, *de la Faye*, *M. Littre*, &c. &c. Why so little credit has been given to their testimonies

testimonies I cannot pretend to determine; the doctrine of ulcers however has of late been much exploded; and it has been asserted in the other extreme, that ulcerations of the urethra very seldom or never occur. Upon a strict inquiry it will I believe be found, that the matter has been exaggerated on both sides; and, though we do not every day meet with such cases, yet they are by no means uncommon. I think I have met with repeated instances, as far as there has been a possibility of determining without actual ocular demonstration. I remember a patient of the late * *Mr. Gataker*, whose *urethra*, af-

* This gentleman, in a little publication upon the venereal disease, some years before his death, wrote against the existence of ulcers in the urethra.

ter death, was found to be full of sores. I saw since that time a considerable ulcer at the beginning of the *urethra*, where it joins to the *glans penis*, in the navicular *fossula*, as *Winslow* calls it; and which *Astruc* says is the most common seat of a *Gonorrhœa*: the orifice of the *urethra* was much enlarged, and the *frænum* destroyed by a chancre externally, which afforded me a view of the internal ulcer. I have likewise at this time in my possession, part of a *penis*, where there are several small erosions of the membrane which lines the *urethra*; and on one part of it a considerable ulcer. I am unacquainted with the history of the disease; the body from which it was taken, having been brought to my brother's house, for the purpose of dissection, during
the

the time of his reading Lectures in Anatomy. Several authors have mentioned the little filaments which are sometimes seen to float in the urine, as indications of an approaching cure of the *Gonorrhœa*; but I am inclined to believe we have nearly, if not exactly, the same appearances in an ulcerated state of the passage.

There being seldom any vestiges of ulceration, any cicatrices to be found in the Urethra after death, is by no means an argument against them. We might with just as much reason, upon the inspection of a prepuce whereon no scar appeared, pronounce, that there never had been a chancre upon it. We know that, unless such sores have been very bad indeed, and attended with much loss of substance, they seldom
leave

leave any marks behind ; and I cannot see why they may not, with proper care, heal as smoothly within the Urethra as upon the prepuce ; indeed, I think they are more likely to do it, if we call a *Bougie* to our assistance.

Although I have mentioned to have seen some very stubborn symptoms in a Gonorrhœa yield to a proper administration of mercury, which could not be conquered by the methods commonly made use of ; yet I would by no means have it inferred from thence, that I think mercurials often necessary : on the contrary, I am sure they may for the most part be dispensed with : and happy it is for those persons who frequently have such complaints that they may so. So much am I of this opinion, that I do not regard the practice

6

of

of the nostrum-monger, who professes to cure a virulent *Gonorrhœa* in a few hours, as one jot more preposterous than of him who calls in the aid of mercury upon every the most trifling occasion. The practice of neither of these men is well calculated, I fear, for the meridian of London, where the disease is so frequent: for no *urethra* can long remain unhurt under the treatment of the one; few constitutions undestroyed under that of the other.

The martyrs to mercury (as excellent a medicine as it is) have certainly been very many. It will perhaps be going too far to say with *Boerhaave*, (speaking of the *corrosive sublimate* and some other preparations of mercury) *Certissima sunt venena, et corpori humano nunquam separanda*: but his cautions concerning

G

the

the use of them ought not to be slighted.

The expeditious doctor is but a retail dealer in the ways of death. We must do him the justice to allow, that he maims oftener than he kills; though a little attention to the matter will convince us, that he is not absolutely without a share in that particular also.

After a certain time (sooner or later according to circumstances), some of the many evils so constantly attendant on the practice of him who solely relies on the use of injections (and of which I shall take occasion to speak particularly hereafter) attack his patient. His first complaint, the first however that he may think worth attending to, will possibly be, that he finds his stream of urine diminished, and that he cannot void it without

without some difficulty; particularly the last drops of it, which continue to come away involuntarily, for some little time after micturition. He generally complains of a difficulty in his first attempt to urine; by exerting some little force with the abdominal muscles, the resistance is overcome for a time; but the difficulty increases again as the bladder collapses, insomuch that it cannot be emptied beyond a certain point; and the last drops of the urine which have passed into the *urethra*, wanting a sufficient impulse from behind, ooze out and produce the dribbling I have mentioned: a complaint, disagreeable and troublesome in itself, yet of little consequence perhaps, when compared with another so constantly attendant upon it; for under these circumstances the *semen* is

never expelled as it ought to be: though this fluid perhaps may be secreted in a proper quantity, and thrown into the urethra, yet it is there soon arrested in its course. This last symptom is, I fear, but little attended to, though certainly one of infinite importance. I am persuaded there is not a more common cause of impotency than it is: perhaps it does not come under the cognizance of a surgeon so often as it ought, being suppressed by the patient through pride or modesty.

An obstruction to the free passage of the urine or *semen* may be owing to a variety of causes; but if in this case a bougie was passed for discovering the cause, and the instrument met with little or no resistance (which if properly lubricated perhaps it would not) the
 surgeon

surgeon might be at a loss to account for it. It would perhaps be attributed (I know however that it has been so) to a defect in some of the muscles appropriated for the expulsion of these fluids, the *erectores penis*, *acceleratores urinæ*, &c. and be said, that they had been made too free with, and were become almost or altogether paralytic: for the relief of which complaint, volatile embrocations and topical remedies of a more stimulating nature would be applied; together with the assistance of corroborants, perhaps *cantharides* internally.

From repeated inquiries into this matter, I have found, that the *semen* has always been better discharged, expelled with more force, in proportion to the time the *penis* has continued erect

erect ante coitum, and *vice versá*; also that micturition has been performed with greater ease *post erectionem*: from which I cannot help concluding, that the complaint in those cases has been owing to a want of lubricity in the *urethra*, from a paucity of mucus, a much larger quantity of that fluid being pressed into the passage, when the *penis* is in an erect, than when in a flaccid state. If the fault lay in the muscles of the part, they, one would imagine, should rather be weakened than acquire strength by a continued state of erection: indeed their power of keeping the member in that state for any time contradicts the idea that the defect could lie in them.

Injectiions of an acrid, astringent, or even subastringent nature, used for any
length

length of time, will reduce the *urethra* to the condition I have mentioned. On this account it is, that preventive remedies against the venereal infection are particularly hurtful ; for, to be of any service to those who have much commerce in a certain way, they must be in almost continual use. Indeed I know some men of pleasure, who make their syringe a constant *vade-mecum*.

The manner in which most of such medicines are supposed to act (I have often heard this opinion given with respect to the *lixivium*, and have been informed it was the idea of the inventor of that remedy) they are supposed, I say, to act by bringing off the mucus from the *urethra*, and together with it the *virus* imbibed in *coitu*. The uses of this fluid are sufficiently

ficiently understood, and the inconveniencies arising from the want of it many have found to their sorrow; but it is said by the advocates for this preventive plan, that as the secretion of this mucus is continually going on, the loss of it is very soon supplied again.

It may, and I can readily believe that it is so, after using the remedy for a few times; but I have not a doubt, from what I have seen, but that a frequent repetition of it will prevent the secretion very considerably, by gradually shutting up the *lacunæ* which furnish it: and in a certain time (sooner or later according to the frequency of using it, and the strength of the medicine) the passage will have sustained such injury, that all our endeavours
to

to set it right again may prove ineffectual. I know a gentleman, who, for these two years past, has had a tenderness in the *urethra*, and during the whole time some small degree of *ardor urinæ*. There is no obstruction to the passing of a bougie of a middle size (the passage indeed will not admit a large one), nor is there a stricture at any particular part; but rather a general straightness or contraction. He used formerly to boast of a prophylactic, and I cannot help attributing his complaint to the repeated scowerings his *urethra* has undergone.

That the *lixivium saponarium* properly diluted, and thrown up the *Urethra post coitum*, may sometimes prevent the venereal infection from taking effect, I can readily believe (and

H

I be-

I believe also that I could think of fifty other injections that would do the same); but that it will always do it, or nearly so, I know to be false. Yet suppose this to be the case, would any man in his senses be content with even a seven years respite from disease, on condition of taking upon him a very bad, perhaps an incurable one, at the end of that term? I have said a seven years respite: let the modern men of pleasure judge of the allowance. I fancy it will be acknowledged too large a one by many of them; but even on such terms, the bargain must surely appear too bad for any but a madman to make.

They who have recommended this medicine, have directed that it should be made just so strong as to leave a
 little

little pungency behind it when applied to the tongue; and have laid down as a rule, that if it did not give much pain to the eye, it would then do the *urethra* no harm. All I shall say to this is, that, if the mixture be strong enough to produce the effect wished for, it is then strong enough to do much mischief. But, say they, let us be careful not to make it too strong; and then, if it should do no good, it certainly can do no hurt, and it will probably be of some service, at least by washing the *urethra*; but this I deny. The venereal poison is so very subtle, that the mere washing the canal *post coitum* is not likely to have much efficacy in preventing its taking place; but if washing the *urethra* was often found to be effec-

tual, this surely could not be so well performed as by our own urine, certainly by no method so safely; for by this means, the canal will be washed from within outwards, and the water may possibly drive before it and expel the infectious particles: whereas by an injection (howsoever mild and innocent in its nature) the morbid matter may be forced on nearer to the bladder, and the seat of the disease be thereby changed much for the worse.

With respect to prophylactic remedies, I have already given it as my opinion, that we are not acquainted with any which may be depended upon; and if we were, it is possible they might be such, as no prudent man would think of using. Many medicines of this kind, internal as well as
external,

external, are quoted from different authors, by *Astruc*, *Turner*, &c. but treated with the contempt they seem to have deserved.

Cleanliness *post coitum* (particularly in women) may tend in some measure, perhaps, if not to prevent the disease, to render it more mild. *Astruc* seems to think this of little consequence; but till we are much better acquainted with the nature of the venereal poison than I believe we are at present, it is mere guessing in the dark. Thus much is very certain, that this virus does not always act, either according to its quantity or quality, any more than the variolous poison; for each of them, being conveyed from one body to another, under the most favorable circumstances, often seem by being trans-

transplanted, to alter their natures, and to degenerate from the mildest to the most malignant species.

I shall dismiss the subject of prophylactics for the present, after observing, that, if the *lixivium* has any virtue of such a kind, it does not reside in its alkaline property; for acids have been made use of for the same purpose, and I believe with just as good an effect. I heard a gentleman boast, “ se impune
 “ peccâsse per annos triginta, usu succi
 “ limonum aquâ tepidâ diluti. In hanc
 “ misturam, semper post coïtum, penem
 “ suum immerfit et abluit;” and that he had recommended the same precaution to many of his friends, who had found the like good effects from it. Yet what are we to collect from this, when we know, that there are numbers who have
 been

been just as fortunate without using any preventive means at all; but, setting the disease at defiance, have always escaped unhurt?

That very much mischief has been produced occasionally by an improper use of injections, whether exhibited with a preventive or curative intention, I have before observed; but till I produce such proofs as I have engaged to do, I beg leave to offer a few general remarks on the subject.

I would not pin my faith even upon the sleeve of a *Sydenham*, or believe him, when he says, that injections usually produce much more mischief than good, were I not convinced he has reason on his side: much less do I mean to quarrel with those nostrum-mongers who throw out their lures *ad captandum*

vulgus, and boast of their speedy methods of curing the *Gonorrhœa*, because perhaps I myself am not possessed of means equally expeditious. I wish not to enter the lists with them, but most readily yield up to them all the reputation they can possibly derive from their manœuvres in that way; though I may be allowed to add, that, when my patients have been particularly solicitous for a speedy cure, I have not often failed to conquer the running in a week or ten days. But, as I wish to make no more haste than good speed, it is a mode of cure I can by no means approve; for, in the first place, I am inclined to believe, that the injections, which are likely to produce the desired effect in the shortest space of time, are such as it is not an adviseable thing to
make

make frequent use of ; and because, under these circumstances, I always esteem the use of mercurials in some degree necessary ; the calling in of which medicines repeatedly (as we may certainly do without them in general) is by no means a warrantable practice. The climate of this country, and the constitution of its inhabitants, loudly proclaim against it.

A weak solution of the *mercurius corrosivus sublimatus* possesses the power of suppressing a recent *Gonorrhœa* as quickly perhaps as any injection that can be named ; and I have some reason to believe, that it is in daily use at this time with some of those persons who build their credit more upon the expedition than the safety of their cures. By the bye, it may be worth remarking,

I

that

that this preparation of Mercury is particularly quick in its operation (when used internally) in palliating different symptoms of the *lues*, though Dr. *Saunders* observes it is no easy matter to introduce so active and acrid a preparation of Mercury into the habit in a sufficient quantity to eradicate a confirmed pox. So likewise upon chancres (setting aside the propriety or impropriety of applying mercurials to venereal sores) I say upon chancres, we cannot use any preparation of this medicine that acts so speedily as a proper solution of the *mercur. sublimat.* A mercurial solution, so very weak as this must be made for injecting into the *urethra*, can never be supposed to act from its stypticity; as we know that vitriolic and other styptic solutions of greater strength will not act
so

so effectually ; but rather from some specific antidotal property, and that it acts upon the matter of the virulent *Gonorrhœa* in the same manner as upon that of an external venereal sore ; which, if true, is one more argument for the affinity between the two diseases, if any more seem to be wanting.

The mode of cure by injection has been adopted by different people with different intentions. Some have administered injections with a design of promoting the discharge, as critical and salutary ; for which purpose they have employed those of a stimulating kind ; others, with a full assurance of the existence of ulcers in the passage, have gone through the whole process of detarging, incarning, and cicatrizing : for these purposes, the *ærugo æris*, the tur-

pentines, *bals. capivæ*, with many other of the gummy and refinous bodies, differently prepared, have been made use of.

Whilst some have wished to suppress the discharge as soon as they were able, by means of astringents or desiccatives; such as the vitriols, alum, barks of many different sorts, lead in its several preparations, starch, lime-water, dragon's blood, with boles and earths of various kinds; others, more cautious, have ventured only on injections of an emollient or sedative kind; such as fresh animal or vegetable oils, mucilages of different sorts, warm milk and water, opium dissolved, &c. &c. Some, relying on the grand specific, have used the crude mercury in a multitude of different vehicles, *merc. dulcis*,
merc.

merc. corros. subl. præcipitates of mercury, with many other preparations of the same medicine; some or other of which, it is more than probable, have entered the composition of most of the secret, antivenereal injections, we have heard so much boasted of.

Others have racked their brains to discover some precious chemical secret, that should put a stop to the fermentation they conceived to be going forward within the *urethra*, and thereby remove the disease.

With regard to injections for promoting the discharge of a *Gonorrhæa*, they never can be required: as we are able to supply their place by so many and so much better methods: and perhaps the use of emollient or sedative injections may be dispensed with also:

for when the symptoms of inflammation run at all high, when the discharge is great, the *ardor urinæ* violent, &c. under which circumstances injections of this class seem to be particularly indicated; I say at this time so very irritable and tender is the passage, that the introduction of a syringe in the most delicate manner, will always be likely to do more hurt, than the medicine itself can ever do good; the attempt therefore ought not to be made.

Injections of the astringent or mercurial kind, or both together, for there are few of the mercurial compositions but what have some degree of astringency when externally applied; these I believe are what are usually employed for the speedy cure of a *Gonorrhœa*.

Astring-

Astringent injections, considered merely as astringents, are at all times, and without any exception, improper, when any degree of venereal infection exists.

In the very early state of the disease injections may perhaps be used *impunè*, at least as far as the constitution is concerned ; but those injections should always be of the mercurial kind.

The variolous matter, when intended for inoculation, is usually preferred in its most crude state ; being supposed to have less virulency in it at that time, than when the disease is farther advanced. The venereal virus in the same condition, I can readily believe may be subdued by the topical application of mercury alone ; but it
does

does not often happen that the surgeon fees his patient till the disorder has made some progress: and indeed it is no very easy matter to draw the line; to say, when the complaint is so absolutely local, and the discharge so little virulent, as that a speedy suppression of it shall not produce mischief or otherwise.

We know that immoderate exercise, excess in drinking, the taking cold, &c. &c. will frequently stop the discharge of a *Gonorrhœa*: so will an astringent injection very often. A suppression of the running from any of the former causes, is almost always attended with future mischief: why that is less so which is produced by astringents, I cannot see; as I know of none which are possessed of any specific antivenereal powers.

powers. In both cases, the effect is for the most part produced suddenly ; and a sudden check to a *Gonorrhœa* is unnatural, and always prejudicial.

Some persons have denied (and one* of them lately in print) that a swelled testicle is ever produced by the suppression of a *Gonorrhœa*. They make it the cause, instead of the effect ; and say, that the stopping of the discharge is occasioned by the affection of the *testis*. This may sometimes be the case ; but I am thoroughly satisfied it is in the general otherwise †. An inflammation attacking the *testis* in consequence of any external violence, &c. may, and probably will, stop the running of a *Gonorrhœa* ; but in this case,

* Mr. Hales's Letter, p. 50.

† Cockburn, p. 280.

an uneasiness at least will be felt in the part, some time before the discharge is affected by it; whereas we frequently find that this complaint, the swelling of the *testis*, does not appear till two or three days after the running has disappeared: again, we every now and then see a *hernia humoralis* come on, and the discharge shall be little or not at all affected by it. The lymphatic glands in the groin also are liable to swell upon the sudden stopping of a *Gonorrhœa*; but such tumors seldom fail to subside as soon as a plentiful discharge from the *urethra* is brought on again.

When the seat of a clap is far back in the *urethra*, the danger of affecting the *testes* by astringent injections is much increased; when therefore the patient complains of a pain or weight *in perinæo*

we

we ought particularly to refrain from the use of any such remedies; indeed, when we can plainly trace the disease farther back into the *urethra* than to the part which *Astruc* says is the most common seat of it, I cannot help thinking but that the above caution should be well attended to; notwithstanding a late writer makes no difference in his mode of cure; declaring it to be a matter of trifling consequence, “ whether
 “ the patient has a very little running
 “ or scalding, or the *Gonorrhœa* affects
 “ only a small way down the *urethra*,
 “ or it hath even reached the ducts of
 “ the *prostate gland*, with scalding,
 “ *chordeé*, and all the virulent symptoms of the disease.”

It every now and then happens, that an injection, intended for stopping the

running, shall produce just the contrary effect; at other times, though the running shall cease from the use of astringents, every the least excess shall bring it on again and again: nay it shall repeatedly recur upon discontinuing the medicine, without any apparent cause whatever.

Under such circumstances, it is highly imprudent that the use of injections should be pushed any further: nature, that unerring guide, plainly points out to us that something more is wanting: yet in such a case, astringents have, I know, been persevered in to the last, and their degree of astringency increased, till the violent pain they have occasioned, has obliged the patient to desist from using them.

A

A practice of this sort renders the final stopping of the discharge no easy matter; and it is from such treatment, that many very obstinate gleets have taken their rise. It is very difficult to restore the parts to a proper tone, after such violence has been once done to them; for the fibres lose their elasticity, their contractile power is destroyed.

We are frequently obliged to have recourse to the use of astringents in the healing of sores, and find them of the greatest service: but if from any internal cause, &c. these sores should break out repeatedly, the difficulty in healing them is every time increased, and it becomes at last a very hard task to heal them at all, or to keep them well
when

when healed, so much are the parts weakened by repeated attacks.

It is no uncommon thing for a patient to find his *ardor urinæ* increased, rather than abated, upon the suppression of a *Gonorrhœa*, by means of astringent injections; nay a heat of urine may be brought upon a person unaffected with a *Gonorrhœa* by an astringent injection continued for some days, of no greater strength than that recommended in a* pamphlet published some months since, viz. *vitriol. alb. ℥j. extract. saturn. ʒj. aqu. pur. ʒiij.* undoubtedly from its lessening the quantity of mucus necessary for defending the passage from the acrimonious salts of the urine. By way of experiment, I

* Ellis, p. 17.

washed

washed a *præputium* and *glans penis* with this mixture thrice a day for two or three days; and the parts were thereby so corrugated and contracted, that it was not without some difficulty and pain, I could denude the *glans*. As the mixture produced such an effect here, I could not have a doubt remaining as to the impropriety of injecting it into the *urethra*: yet this is recommended, and to be used at a time too, when it is impossible that the virulence of the *Gonorrhœa* can have been corrected, or the inflammatory symptoms in the least subdued.

That considerable inflammation, adhesions consequent thereon, that strictures, ulcerations, fungi, &c. are occasionally produced in the *urethra* from the use of injections, is most certain; but

but it is as certain, I believe, that such disorders may, and do sometimes arise from other causes, and where no injections have been employed. Though this is a part of my subject which I had intended to have reserved intirely for a future occasion, yet I cannot help observing at the present, that I am not a little surprized to find Mr. *Hales* quoting the cases, as published by Monsieur *Daran*, concerning the cures of different complaints in the *urethra*, as proofs that such disorders are not produced by injections.

“ * I should be glad to know, says this
 “ gentleman, the causes assigned for that
 “ immense number of alarming and
 “ amazing instances of gleets, carun-
 “ cles, carnosities, excrescences, stric-

* Letter, p. 36.

“ tures,

“ tures, fistulas, &c. ?” for (says he)
 “ THEY USE NO INJECTIONS THERE,”
 (meaning I suppose in *France*.) But I
 think if Mr. *Hales* had really read those
 alarming and amazing cases, he would
 have learnt that THEY DID USE IN-
 JECTIONS THERE ; and what is more,
 that a great number of those alarming
 cases were intirely owing to those very
 injections. *Monf. Daran* himself men-
 tions them as being clearly of that opi-
 nion. For the truth of this I beg leave
 to refer Mr. *H*—— to the following
 cases ; viz. in the first part of M. *Da-*
ran's book, to N^o 50, 65, 67, 68, 72,
 86, 88, 92 ; in part the second to N^o
 3, and 6 ; in the third part of the
 same treatise, to N^o 5, 14, 17, 20, 21,
 23, 24, 26, 28, 30, 34, 35, 36, 40, 41,
 51, 53, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63,
 L 69,

69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, 78, 79, 92, 98, 106; and in the Appendix, to N° 1, and 4.

In every one of these cases mention is made of injections having been used; and in several of them the bad effects of those remedies are immediately pointed out. In some of them it appears, that violent inflammation was brought on: in others the parts were so corrugated, the *urethra* so contracted, that, the author says, he had much difficulty to restore it to a proper state again; in others a swelled testicle was the consequence. *Monf. Daran* in short speaks as strongly as he well can against injections, and enumerates them among the causes of suppression of urine, &c. Nay, he goes so far as to

to say in a later publication, which he calls * *Precis*, that “ ninety-nine times
 “ in every hundred, obstructions in the
 “ *urethra*, whether strictures, caruncles,
 “ &c. &c. are originally owing to styptic
 “ injections, employed to stop the
 “ running of a *Gonorrhœa*, or clap ;”
 and adds, “ I seriously and strenuously
 “ caution all patients with claps from
 “ using such prejudicial remedies,
 “ which, by their immediate effects in
 “ stopping the running, flatter them
 “ with the appearance of a perfect cure ;
 “ but in fact lay the foundation of a
 “ disease, which will shew itself in some
 “ future period of their life infinitely
 “ more troublesome and dangerous
 “ than the symptom they relieved.” I
 cannot agree with *Monf. Daran*, that

* Appendix, page 27.

so great a proportion of the disorders in the *urethra* are owing to injections ; but I will venture to say, that gentleman would never have found it worth his while to pay us a second visit, but for the very extravagant use of such medicines in this kingdom.

Col. *de Villars* calls the method of cure by injection as dangerous as it is speedy ; and * Dr. *Astruc* reckons the use of injections as one cause of impotency, though he does not account for it in the same manner as I have done.

Such remedies as stop the discharge suddenly, never fail to produce bad symptoms, which for the most part are only to be relieved by bringing on the running afresh. It seems indeed to be *Monf. Daran's* constant intention in

* Vol. II. 4to. p. 118. Eng. Translation.

the use of his bougies to produce this effect. A late author laughs at the idea of mischiefs arising from the *locking-up of matter*; but there needs not, I think, a stronger proof of it, than that the discharge brought on by the use of a bougie, shall ever have virulence enough in it to infect a sound person, which Mons. *Daran* has affirmed for a truth.

Notwithstanding all that has been said, I mean not to deny that injections may sometimes be of considerable service; but not, I fear, as they are made use of in the general.

When properly chosen, and well-timed, they become good auxiliaries; but the surgeon who depends on them alone, will heap misery on his employers, and disgrace upon himself.

If

If the disease has made any considerable progress before we see our patient; if the inflammatory symptoms have advanced in any degree, it is madness to think of injections till these are subdued. It has very lately been asserted in print, by a gentleman of great eminence in the profession of surgery, that the eye will bear an application which the Urethra will not. How far this may be true, I shall not take upon me to determine; but certain it is, that the Urethra in its most healthy state, is a part endued with a very high degree of sensibility; and we can hardly suppose it to be less so, when in a state of inflammation; so that, putting the virulence of the disease, or the chance of infecting the habit out of the question, the danger of injections
at

at such a time is evidently much increased.

What man could think of applying to an eye highly inflamed the vitriolic solution mentioned in p. 70, by way of *collyrium*? I confess, was I ever inclined to try the effects of such an application, even upon a sound and healthy eye; my own would be the last I should think of making the experiment upon.

We have been told lately, that it is of no sort of consequence what color the discharge of a *Gonorrhœa* bears; that the degree of virulency is not to be estimated from any such sign, &c. For my own part, I am fully of opinion, that, where the discoloration of such running is at all great; and more especially if it tends to the green or bloody

ap-

appearance, astringents are without any exception whatever highly improper. The nature of the discharge must be altered much for the better, before such remedies can be used with advantage, or even with safety; and such alteration is to be effected only by internal means.

Many people I know are inclined to estimate the degree of virulence in the disorder, from the time which passes between the receiving the infection, and the appearance of the Gonorrhœa: and say, the longer the clap is before it appears, the worse it will be, and *vice versa*; but I believe this a vulgar error, having in several instances remarked the very contrary.

It frequently happens that on the third or fourth day after the infection,

a sensation rather of pleasure than pain is felt towards the extremity of the Urethra, an itching towards the *glans penis*, which perhaps may continue for some days without the symptoms getting materially worse; the inflammation advancing by very slow degrees. If we are so fortunate as to see our patient at this period, when the discharge is very trifling, of a glary, and almost colorless fluid (a mere increase in the quantity of mucus, without its quality being perceptibly altered; perhaps indeed somewhat inspissated) and before the *ardor urinæ* is worth speaking of; this is the time, and, I think, this only, when we are to avail ourselves of injections, if we mean to rely upon them for a cure. At this time, a mercurial injection, joined with such medi-

M

cines

quam might be coming still nearer to the truth.

“ * A virulent *Gonorrhœa* (says a late writer) will oftentimes prove very obstinate, under the management of the most skilful surgeon, particularly in scorbutic habits, &c.”

† Another modern author, upon the same subject, says, “ It is but fair to acknowledge, that where there is virulence in the *Gonorrhœa*, our art cannot cure it speedily and effectually at the same time.” Now, tho’ I am inclined to the same opinion with this gentleman, I cannot agree with him when he adds, “ unless the severest regimen be observed, the disease will often run out to two or three

* Mr. Bromfield’s Obs. Vol. II. p. 290.

† Fordyce’s Review, p. 28.

“ months ;

“ months ; and, in some cases, to five
 “ or six.” If such cases have frequently
 occurred to him, I should be inclined
 to believe, that mercurials may often
 have had a considerable share in pro-
 tracting the disorder ; in which, as we
 may collect from his writings, he uses
 mercury very freely ; and indeed the
 severity of regimen itself, which he en-
 joins, may every now and then produce
 the same effect.

Though the *Gonorrhœa* is a complaint
 which every, the meanest dabbler in
 medicine, thinks himself able to en-
 counter, it will undoubtedly, un-
 der particular circumstances, give an
 able practitioner much trouble.

It is too common an error, I fear, in
 surgeons to lay down one general mode
 of cure for the *Gonorrhœa*, and to per-
 severe

severe too obstinately therein; whereas, there are few diseases perhaps, where it can be done with less propriety.

I have before had occasion to observe, that I have known an obstinate chordée yield to small doses of mercury, which had withstood the force of opiates, evacuations, &c. ; so lately have I seen the happiest effects from the use of the *cortex* in the same complaint. But should I therefore say, that the bark was an excellent remedy for a chordée? Certainly not: but rather, that this, as well as mercury, must usually, in such cases, do much more hurt than good.

A gentleman applied to me lately for relief in a very troublesome *chordée*, which had plagued him long. He had lost blood repeatedly, and in a very considerable quantity, for it: but neither
 evacua-

evacuations nor opiates (which he had taken freely) had produced any good effect. He was much reduced; and, from the state of his pulse, I judged the bark might be of service, if not for the *chordée*, for his general health at least: he began therefore taking it immediately, and had not continued the use of it three days, before the complaint intirely left him.

In this case, as well as in those where mercury had been used, the treatment of the patients, previous to their taking those medicines, must have contributed in no small degree to their success, and have paved a way towards a cure, tho' it would not do alone. One person will not bear evacuations; balsamics disagree as much with another; and so on.

Whilst

Whilst I am mentioning balsamics, I cannot omit to observe (though I may seem to be departing from my purpose, which was, not to have entered into any examination of the internal methods of curing the *Gonorrhœa*) that I believe very much mischief is produced every day by medicines of this class.

The author of *A Review of the Venereal Disease* laments that we have not a certain rule for determining, when astringents and balsamics may be used with safety; but the *balsamum copaibæ* is recommended, as not only a safe, but almost a specific remedy in the clap, by a late writer, who directs it to be given in the early, or inflammatory state of the disease (“ a purge and bleeding be-
“ ing

“ing premised in strong plethoric habits
 “habits with costiveness.”)

Balsamic medicines have hitherto been administered in the virulent *Gonorrhœa* with a good deal of care, for the most part; many of the writers on that disease have mentioned the inconvenience and danger attending the use of them; and every one, who has been much conversant in venereal practice, must be convinced, that the observations of *Astruc*, *Sydenham*, &c. on this subject, have been founded on truth.

That eminent Physician * Doctor *Fothergill*, speaking of balsamic medicines, says; “all the balsamics, strictly
 “so called, are pungent and acrimo-
 “nious.” The Doctor enumerates many of them, and places the *bals. co-*

* Medical Observat. and Inquiries, Vol. IV.

paibæ at the head of the list. “ An opi-
 “ nion (says this author) seems to have
 “ prevailed universally, that these
 “ gummy, refinous substances, exter-
 “ nally applied, promoted the healing
 “ of wounds and ulcers without excep-
 “ tion ; from hence they were soon ap-
 “ prehended : to have similar effects in
 “ diseases attended with internal ulcer-
 “ ations, &c.” The Doctor proceeds
 to examine how far these ideas are con-
 sistent with reason and experience, and
 plainly proves, “ that a free use of such
 “ medicines in *young and vigorous con-*
 “ *stitutions*” (which, by the bye, are
 such as we for the most part have to
 deal with in venereal matters) “ is ex-
 “ ceedingly pernicious ; and that,
 “ where there is *a tendency to inflam-*
 “ *mation, medicines so powerfully sti-*
 “ *mulant,*

“*mulant, and which constantly have the*
 “*effect of quickening the pulse, ought*
 “*by all means to be avoided.*” It may
 possibly be urged, that what this ingenious gentleman has said upon the subject of balsamic medicines, can have no reference to the present business; for that the Doctor is speaking only of disorders of the lungs: but I am inclined to think, the case will hold, with this difference alone; that in pulmonary complaints, the life of the patient, the health of the *whole* man, is at stake; whereas in the *Gonorrhœa* that of a *part* only is concerned; but it is certainly of a most important part, a part, without the full possession of which, the life of the man is scarcely worth the having.

Hildanus, in a letter to *Theod. Mayerne*, of Geneva, (consulting him upon a

venereal case) asks, *an spiritus terebinthinæ in hocce corpore valde bilioso tuto exhiberi possit?* In old persons, and in cold phlegmatic constitutions, advantage will be often derived from the use of the balsams; but these are not the most likely people to become our patients.

The author who recommends the *bals. copaibæ*, confesses, that the use of it is sometimes attended with inconveniences; for it will “bring over the
 “surface of the body, red, inflammatory
 “spots, a kind of spurious erysipelas,
 “accompanied with great heat, thirst,
 “and uneasiness.” How improper must any medicine, capable of producing such symptoms as these, be in the inflammatory stage of a *Gonorrhœa virulenta*! but every physician knows, that
 such

such symptoms are frequently attendant on the use of most of the natural balsams and turpentine, when given to patients of a sanguine habit of body, even in moderate doses.

It might have been added, that a dysuria is as frequently the consequence of balsamics given in this disorder. In one of Mr. Ellis's cases indeed the circumstance does occur; the relation of which * case, I think, is a much stronger recommendation of the author's candor and ingenuity, than of his method of practice. A few months since, I was sent for to a patient, labouring under a suppression of urine, which had very nearly proved fatal. I was informed, that about a fortnight before I saw him, he had been attacked with a *Gonorrh-*

* Ellis, p. 35. Case I.

hæa, for which he had lost blood once, and had taken three doses of purging physic on three succeeding days. He was directed to dilute plentifully, and to suspend the scrotum, which he had done, by means of an handkerchief. He had then a bottle of * drops given him, of which he was told to take eighty, three times in a day; the running, which had been in a very considerable quantity, almost disappeared in a few days; but he was still troubled with an *ardor urinæ*, which increased upon him, rather than grew better. At the end of a week from his first taking the drops, he was seized with a strangury; for which, he had an emulsion sent him, and a pill to be taken at going to bed; which,

* Which I examined, and found to be composed of *Bals. Copaibæ* and *Spir. Lavendulæ*.

from the patient's account, I suppose to have been an opiate. It was recommended to him to increase the dose of his drops to 100; but he grew so very sick of them, that he could not be prevailed upon. He had frequent returns of his strangury, which ended in an obstinate suppression of urine.

In this condition I found him; he was in violent pain, had a great heat and thirst upon him, a considerable tension about the *regio pubis*, and indeed the greater part of the abdomen (not having voided any urine for three days); and he had vomited two or three times: his pulse was quick and strong; I bled him freely, gave him an opiate, ordered the abdomen to be fomented, and a clyster to be given. I attempted likewise to introduce a Bougie, but without

out success. I saw my patient again a few hours after, and found it necessary to take away more blood. I staid with him about an hour, and then made a second attempt to procure a passage into the bladder, which proving successful, a large quantity of urine (I believe not less than a gallon) was evacuated, and the man recovered. I should not omit to mention, that the discharge of the *Gonorrhœa* returned again on the following day. Can any one doubt of the mischiefs having been produced by the balsam in this case?

I have mentioned the having ordered this manaclyster. Now in inflammations of the bladder, or the neighbouring parts, and in suppressions of urine consequent thereon, when we cannot readily procure an evacuation of the fluid, *Ene-*
mata

mata, amongst other remedies, are usually recommended, and I believe as generally employed; but a proper regard perhaps is not always paid to the degree of distension the bladder is in at the time; which ought to be a material consideration with us. The want of due attention to this circumstance, in the case I have just recited, was the occasion of much additional and unnecessary pain to my patient; and might have been attended with very disagreeable consequences.

A neighbour of mine (a surgeon) has lately told me, that he once tried the *bals. copaibæ* in the manner prescribed; but that he had made a patient pay dearly for his curiosity; having treated (as he expressed himself) a poor fellow with a couple of *buboes*.

In this case, I learned, that the running disappeared in a few days, and both surgeon and patient imagined a perfect cure was effected: the latter however was soon convinced of the contrary to his cost, by the appearance of a tumor in each groin, both of which advanced to suppuration.

* Swelled testicles are likewise frequently occasioned by an imprudent use of balsamic medicines.

But though the constitution should suffer no injury from the use of them, in the cure of the *Gonorrhœa*, it too frequently happens, that they lay the foundation of complaints in the *urethra*; for at the same time that they suppress the discharge of a *Gonorrhœa*,

* Turner, p. 245. Hist. VI. Cockburn, p. 239.
they

they also prevent a proper secretion of the mucus. Hence it is, that a dribbling of the urine so often follows an improper use of such medicines; accompanied very frequently with an *ardor urinæ* in some degree.—But I mean not here, to enter further into the subject; or to enumerate all the inconveniences and mischiefs that may arise from an imprudent use of balsamic remedies. In as much as the *urethra* itself is often very materially affected by them, I hope the digression I have made will not be deemed impertinent.

I shall here take leave of my readers for the present; deferring a more clear and satisfactory illustration of the subject to a further day; but before I lay down my pen, I would just beg

leave

3

leave to observe, with respect to injections; that they may be employed with much greater advantage, and (as far as the parts themselves are concerned) with infinitely less hazard, upon women than upon men.—Liquors which no prudent man would think of injecting into the *urethra* may be thrown up the *vagina* without any degree of danger. I have repeatedly used *sublimate* injections here with great success: but what I have said in the general as to the *Gonorrhœa* in men, must be allowed to hold as to the same disease in women; so that if the inflammation runs high, or any other symptoms occur, that may forbid the use of injections; it will be necessary to keep an eye upon all the cautions before given on that head.

F I N I S.