

Directions for preparing and administering Peruvian bark gingerbread : as a preventive and cure of tertian and remitting fever / extracted from Dr. Robertson's Synopsis morborum.

Contributors

Robertson, Robert, 1742-1829.

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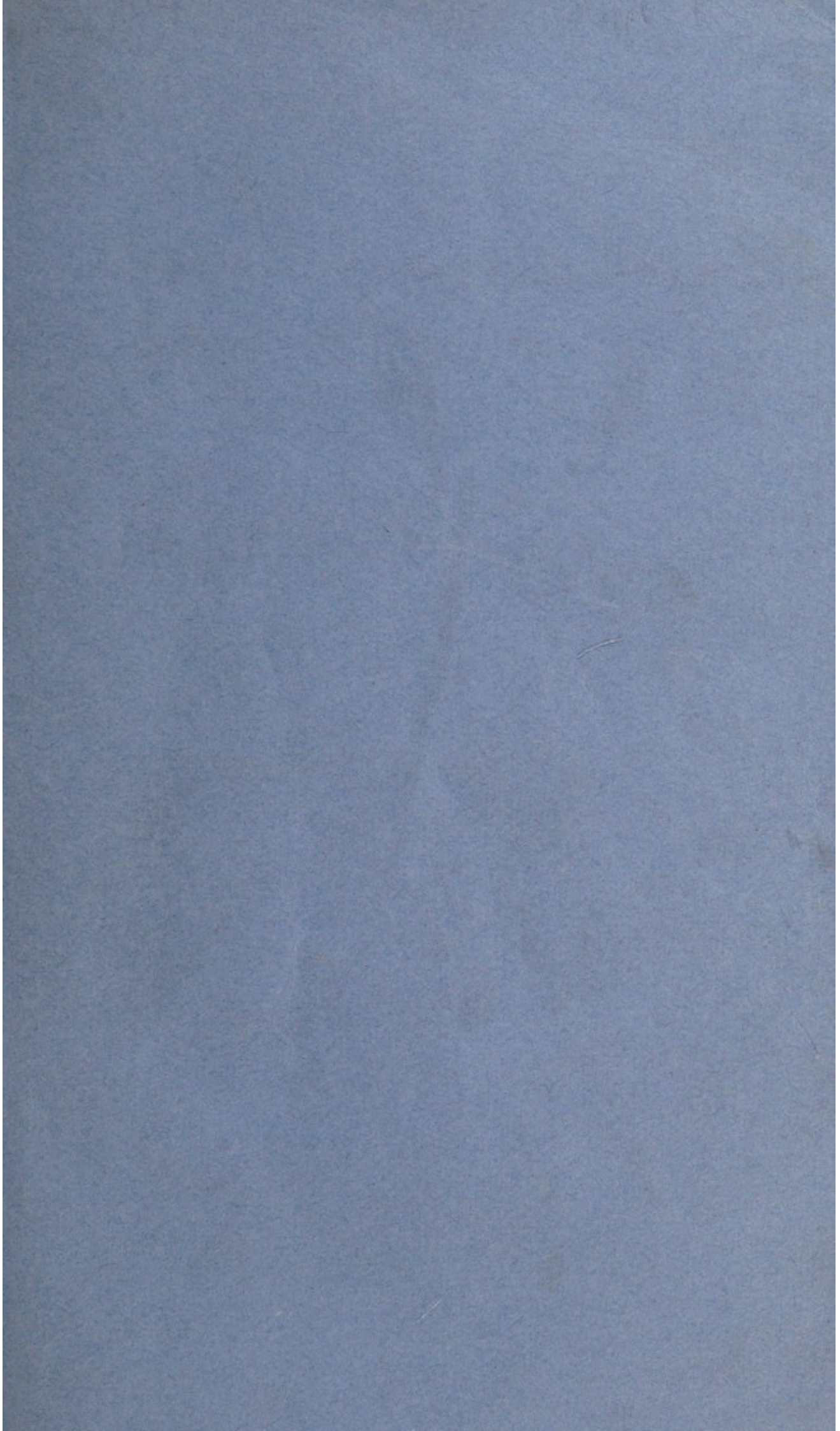
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DIRECTIONS

FOR

PREPARING AND ADMINISTERING

Peruvian Bark Gingerbread,

AS A

PREVENTIVE AND CURE

OF

TERTIAN AND REMITTING FEVER,

EXTRACTED FROM

DR. ROBERTSON'S


SYNOPSIS MORBORUM.


LONDON :

PRINTED BY D. N. SHURY, BERWICK-STREET, SOHO.

30th JANUARY, 1812.

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DIRECTIONS, &c.

BUT a faint idea can be conceived, and *that* only by the few professional men who have been employed in somewhat similar situations, what difficulties must occur, to baffle the skill and impede the exertions of medical officers employed on such service as that of the expedition to Walcheren. And of these difficulties the preparation of, and faithful administration of the means of relief, admitting they possess those means of relief in great abundance, are not the least.

The means for the prevention of sickness which were introduced by me, and still are, so successfully employed on a small scale on the coast of Africa, it was impossible to have applied with effect at Walcheren—equally impossible must it have been to have administered bark in a fermenting state to such numbers; though both these *my inventions* of administering the bark will be found of great efficacy and utility, especially in hospitals and similar situations, on a smaller scale of practice:

Perceiving, therefore, with the deepest concern, that a mode of prevention of sickness applicable to armaments on so extensive a scale as that at Walcheren, was still wanting, I resolved to make trial of the Peruvian bark in different forms of bread,—an idea which had long floated on my mind.—And if the bread is provi-

dentially administered in a proper manner, I have no doubt it will prove to be a preventive and a great national benefit. The quantity of the dose, and the repetition thereof, may be easily regulated by the practitioner, (as the quantity of bark is specified in each form, and in each cake of the gingerbread is contained four ounces of cinchona,) according to the intention with which it is given, whether as a preventive of Fever, or as a cure thereof, the mould being subdivided into sixteen equal parts.

Upon these reflections I determined to put my ideas into practice; being forcibly prepossessed that the bread form would be the most appropriate or commodious form, for the purpose, that can be devised. This form is found the most agreeable to young or old, whether given to prevent fever, or a relapse. Besides, it is a form the most *aeconomical*, and most portable for carrying, or sending out on any expedition whatever; and being ready made, is fit to be issued immediately by the medical departments, as a preventive, to such men as they may wish to prescribe it, or to parties, when commanding officers think fit, from time to time to order on particular services; who may be supplied with certain proportions thereof, as the medical officers shall direct. A non-commissioned officer may dispense it.

Many trials having ascertained that Peruvian Bark Gingerbread will cure remittent fever, the inference that it will prevent it *follows*.

I would however recommend the bread being made under the eye of a professional person, and when baked, that it should be aired, especially in summer, for a day or two before it is put away, or packed up in tin canisters in a little dry straw.

When it is to be sent abroad, it should be put up into the canisters, to preserve it from vermin and wet; and immediately on its arrival *any where*, it will be ready to be dispensed or disposed of, either as a preventive *, or cure of remittent fever, as medical officers may see proper; or when commanders in chief order and direct men to be sent on piquet or other service.

This form of the Peruvian bark being esteemed unexceptionable, the benefit which the public will ultimately derive from it, or from the other means of prevention and cure of *fever* that I first suggested, must depend on various circumstances; but chiefly on the fidelity of their preparation, liberal administration, and on their being swallowed by the men.

I must acknowledge, that administering the Peruvian Bark Gingerbread as a cure for remitting fever, or for tertian ague, to patients of any age, as now has been successfully made trial of in various countries, is an extension of its utility beyond the limits in practice, that I first designed it. *Which were only as a preventive of fever in the first place; and as a preventive and cure of relapses.* It therefore, in children's cases of ague, is a valuable acquisition to society, as well as to the public in being a preventive of fever, which I have no doubt it will be found in the former—and on the largest expeditions—if liberally administered and eaten.

I accordingly made the following specimens of the Peruvian bark bread.

1st. I ordered one ounce of Peruvian bark to be

* Not less than half an ounce of the Gingerbread for a dose, which should be repeated every four, six, or eight hours, while exposed to the marsh effluvia; but it may be administered in much larger doses.

kneaded into a pound of the fermented dough prepared to be baked into the pound loaves of bread that is baked for our pensioners.

2d. Into a loaf made of the dough before mentioned that weighed lbijss, I ordered four ounces of Peruvian bark to be kneaded.

Both specimens—especially the last, were blacker than—and had not risen quite so much as—the other loaves of bread.

3d. Of dough ready prepared to make the white biscuit, called captains' biscuit, I ordered one ounce of the Peruvian Bark to be kneaded into one pound; and the mass to be divided into eight biscuits; *which would keep for any length of time.*

But although the 1st and 2d specimens would be found highly beneficial in an hospital, made use of as medicines, administered under the eye of professional men; and although the 3d would be found of still more extensive utility, as it would keep any time at sea; it was suggested to me, by a very eminent practitioner, *Dr. Baillie*, to whose consideration I submitted all the three specimens, that men would not be prevailed on to eat them; I therefore made and submitted to his inspection and opinion the specimen

4th. As follows: Peruvian bark in powder, eight ounces; ginger root in powder, and caraway seeds, of each one ounce; of treacle from eight to more ounces, and of wheat flour enough to make the whole into a mass fit to be baked—into Peruvian Bark Gingerbread. This specimen the Doctor acknowledged was unexceptionable; as no person he thought need refuse to eat it; but he also suggested the propriety of giving it, on trial, as a

cure for remittent fever; which was accordingly, by my directions, made trial of by the apothecary, which, besides many cases and reports on the efficacy of the Peruvian Bark Gingerbread in various parts, might be inserted; but it is thought unnecessary to do it at present.

Observing, since I made the preceding experiments, that the baker extends far beyond my intention, the permission of using flour in No. 4, thereby increasing the weight of the cake nearly one half beyond what is absolutely necessary—which in the army, on service, becomes an inconvenience of great importance—I adopted specimen

5th. By mixing the cinchona and spices, *only*, with as much treacle as will make a mass of proper consistence (to make pills, or) to be put into a mould, to form, before it is baked, on tin plates, the bread will contain nothing more than the medicines and treacle; so that flour is not essentially necessary. Each cake loses in weight about ζ ii of the aqueous part of the treacle in baking.

So that the flour may be omitted without any detriment to the medicines, which may be also administered in any case where the bark is proper; and calomel or any other medicine occasionally joined with it.

from Dr. Robertson

Dear Mr. Archibald

