

Encomium argenti vivi: a treatise upon the use and properties of quicksilver ... With some remarks upon the animadversions of Dr. Turner upon Belloste / By a gentleman of Trinity College, Cambridge [i.e. T. Dover].

Contributors

Dover, Thomas, 1660-1742.
Belloste, Augustin, 1654-1730.
Turner, Daniel, 1667-1741.
Trinity College (University of Cambridge)

Publication/Creation

London : S. Austen, [1733]

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/d4ubj3rc>

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>

The and Properties
of
Quicksilver

Mercurius

20264/8/1

by Thomas Dover

20864/p

DOVER, T.

20864 / ~~21~~ p

Encomium Argenti Vivi:
A
T R E A T I S E
U P O N T H E
U S E and P R O P E R T I E S
O F
Q U I C K S I L V E R ;
O R,

The Natural, Chymical, and Physicall History of that surprising MINERAL, extracted from the Writings of the best Naturalists, Chymists, and Physicians.

Wherein its various Operations are accounted for, and the Use of it recommended.

W I T H
Some REMARKS upon the Animadversions of
Dr. TURNER upon BELLOSTE.

By a Gentleman of *Trinity College Cambridge.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for STEPHEN AUSTEN in *St. Paul's Church
Tard*, and sold by *J. Roberts in Warwick-Lane.*

[1733]

THE
 TREATISE
 UPON THE
 USE AND PROPERTIES
 OF
 QUICKSILVER
 OR



The Natural, Chymical, and Physiological
 History of that surprising
 from the Writings of
 Chymists, and Physicians
 Whence its various Operations are accounted
 for, and the Use of it recommended.
 WITH
 Some Remarks upon the Antiquities of
 Dr. Turner upon Mercury.

By a Gentleman of Great College, Cambridge.
 LONDON:
 Printed for STEPHEN AUSTIN, in Pall-mall, near
 the Theatre, and for J. BARNARD, in Strand, near
 the Theatre.



THE
PREFACE.

QUICKSILVER is now much in Use, and seems to be growing every Day into greater Reputation: What Numbers in Town are now daily heaping the most extravagant Commendations upon it, as if it were a *Pampharmacon*, and every Disease fled at its Approach.

FORMERLY People were afraid to take it; the common Apprehensions of its dire Effects, its poisonous Qualities, had rendered it a Terror to all.

Now, strange Alteration ! These Fears are fled ; its taken in every little Disorder, by Children too, without Disguise, without

ii *The Preface.*

Mixture, crude and in Substance; and 'tis as usual to meet with it in Families, as Snuff or Tobacco.

AND really, if it does but half the Service it is said to do, and is not attended with the ill Consequences some charge it with, I cannot but approve of those who make so free with it: Neither do I wonder that People like that Physic best, which answers the Design with the least Appearance of Physic. This is so far from being disagreeable, that it is inviting, it looks like a finer Jelly, is tasteless on the Tongue, and hardly felt in going down, or in the Stomach.

THIS Article weighs not a little with Numbers of People: for I have seen several take their Remedies in such a Manner, as if they thought them the worst of their Diseases.

IT is endued with such Qualities as would before-hand make us think very favourably of it; and from these one might conclude it

The *Preface*. iii

it to be a very valuable Medicine; because its Properties seem to point it out as very Efficacious in a great Variety of Diseases.

A UNIVERSAL Medicine is Nonsense; no one can be alike good in all Cases; the Bark is an acknowledged Specific. But Mercury is not only confessed to be Specifically good in all Venereal Complaints; it has been known also to perform surprising Cures in a Multitude of Cases.

I NEED not therefore say, I question whether there is such another Medicine in the World; no one will affirm there is.

QUICKSILVER is a metallic fluid Substance specifically heavier than all other, except Gold; it is therefore the greatest Deobstruent, by its Weight bearing down all Obstructions before it: This, no doubt, is its chief Quality, and this evidently flows from its specific Gravity.

It consists likewise of Parts perfectly smooth and polite, free from all Manner of Sharpness or Acrimony, which scarce co-

here together at all, by the smallest Force divisible, and that almost *ad Infinitum*. Thus its Fluidity and Divisibility render it capable of entering the finest Vessels, Glands, &c. of the Body.

WHEREVER it insinuates, it still maintains its Prerogative, being still specifically heavier than the Fluids it mixes with, and preserving its Smoothness, and Globular Formation of its Particles: What infinite Disorders arise from improper Consistencies of the Blood and Juices, from the Thickness, Tenacity, and Viscousness of their Parts! Secretions are stopp'd, Coagulations form'd, and the Evils apparent in a vast Variety of terrible Consequences.

THIS nimble active Messenger quickly penetrates the Seat of these Disorders, by its Motion and Weight, thins, refines, and subtilizes those heterogeneous Mixtures, reducing them to a proper Fluidity, and having done his Errand, passes out the Way he was determined.

ITS

The *Preface*.

v

ITS next great Excellence is, to be the greatest Blunter of Acids that is known: This Property evidently follows from the Nature of its Particles, which are smooth and round; so that whenever it comes in Contact with any such, it breaks, rubs off, and destroys all those Spiculæ, those sharp Points or Darts with which they do such Mischief in the Body: Mercury therefore is, without Dispute, an extraordinary Cleanser of the Blood, freeing it from every Thing that is salt, sharp, and acrimonious, and rendering it pure and balsamic.

THE greatest Objection that I know against it is, that several Dabblers in Physic have done harm with it: But with what Medicine have they not! Hath not the Bark itself, by the unskilful Use of it, been unhappily directed to do the same?

EVERY Medicine in such Hands is like a Sword in a Madman's: And who can wonder, that a Wretch, as bold as ignorant, perpetually in the dark, and yet perpetually pretending to great Light, who knows nei-
ther

vi *The Preface.*

ther the Strength of his Patient, the Nature of his Disease, nor the proper Dose to be administred, should do Mischief, with, otherwise, the most innocent Remedy : What can possibly be safe with such !

BUT with the Skilful and Understanding, who know how to make a proper Use of it, it has been found to do surprising Things :

THOSE who call it a Poison, have never given themselves Time to reflect what the Properties of Quicksilver are, or what it is that constitutes a Poison : The latter consists of cutting and acute Particles ; the former of the smoothest and roundest, which Figure it always keeps, unless altered by Force or Fire. In itself it is no way noxious ; by Accident, by Carelessness, by Mismanagement, by Alteration, by Mixtures, it may become so, as well as any other.

TAKEN crude, it is perfectly harmless, but not so considerable in its Efficacy as when given in a proper Menstruum to determine its Action for the Purposes designed ; when it lies long enough in the Stomach, mixes
with

The *Preface*. vii

with the Chyle, enters the Lacteals, and circulates with the Blood and Lymph, it is then put in a Condition to exert itself more powerfully, and becomes the greatest Alterative without Exception.

IT is well known what great Quantities of crude Mercury are now taken in at the Mouth, about an Ounce at a Time, for several Distempers, particularly Asthma's: Some have swallowed in this Manner to the Weight of twenty, thirty, forty Pounds of it. In Substance it cannot possibly do the least Harm, being as innocent as any Thing in Nature taken this Way: In this Case the Action of it seems to be determin'd to the *Prima Via*, and the Sphere of it to reach no further, and the Advantages received, in Proportion, as it opens, cleanses and frees the grand Passage.

IT exerts itself vastly more powerfully, and with greater Benefit, when its Particles are broken minutely small, and incorporated with any proper Vehicle; and hath long been given thus in Leprosies, Gout, Dropsies, and several other stubborn and inveterate

viii *The Preface.*

veterate Diseases, in which nothing but itself hath been known to be of any considerable Service.

WHAT follows will open more at large, the Nature, Use, and Properties of this Wonderful Fluid, under these three Denominations, its NATURAL STATE, CHYMICAL PREPARATIONS, and PHYSICAL HISTORY.



THE

THE
NATURAL HISTORY
OF
QUICKSILVER.

CHAP. I.

Containing the natural History of Quicksilver. The Manner in which it is got out of the Earth. The true State of the Case of such as suffer by remaining and working in the mercurial Mines. An Account of the Ore of Quicksilver, called Cinabar. The Properties of this strange Fluid described.

THERE is something so surprising in the Nature and Effects of Mercury, as may well excuse me for tracing this Fluid to its Spring Head. The Manner of its Birth, the Kind and Sort of Earth it is found in, may be just observed, and I believe will scarce fail of giving Entertainment. Sometimes it is not to be got without Labour; and sometimes it flows profusely of itself, and

offers itself ready, mature, and ripe at once to the Hand that will scoop it up.

WHAT I have to say here will be chiefly owing to the Light which our Philosophical Transactions, and the great *Boerhaave*, have given on this Subject.

MERCURY is either found in its own proper Mines, or in those of other Metals, wherewith it is intermixed. Besides the Mines of *Friuli*, there are considerable ones in *Hungary* and *Spain*. The Earth, or Matter it is found in, is different in the different Places: In the *Spanish* Mines 'tis ruddy, streak'd with black, and so hard, that there is no digging it without Gunpowder: That of the *Hungarian* Mines, is sometimes a pretty hard Stone, but more usually a dark-coloured Earth, inclining to red: In the Mines of *Friuli* there is a softish Earth, in which Virgin Mercury is found in little Drops; and a hard Stone that yields the common Mercury. The greatest Part is brought from *Friuli*, a Province of *Italy*, where there are abundance of Mines belonging to the Emperor. It is here found under three several Forms. First, in ruddy Glebes, or mineral Clods, called *Cinnabar*. Secondly, in hard stony Glebes, or Substances, of a Saffron and sometimes a blackish Colour. Thirdly, it is also found pure; for upon opening Holes in the Beds of Stone, there sometimes gushes forth a Vein or Stream of
pure

pure Mercury, called *Virgin Mercury*. This last Sort is the most valued.

IN the Philosophical Transactions there is an Account of these Mines in *Friuli*, communicated to the Royal Society by Dr. *Walter Pope*. The most material Part of it I shall transcribe.

“ The Mines of Mercury in *Friuli*, a Territo-
 “ ry belonging to the *Venetians*, are about a
 “ Day’s Journey and an half distant from *Goritra*
 “ Northwards, at a Place called *Idria*, situated in
 “ a Valley on the *Julian Alps*. They have been,
 “ as I am informed, one hundred and sixty Years
 “ in the Possession of the Emperor; and all the
 “ Inhabitants speak the *Slavonian* Tongue. The
 “ Country abounds with the finest Oaks, Firs,
 “ and Beeches. When I was there, in *August*
 “ 1664. the Valley, and Mountains too, out
 “ of which the Mercury was dug, were of as
 “ pleasant a Verdure as if it had been in the
 “ midst of Spring, which they there attribute
 “ to the Moistness of the Mercury. That Mine
 “ which we went into, the best and greatest of
 “ them all, was dedicated to *St. Barbara*, as the
 “ other Mines are to other Saints. They dig
 “ the Mineral with Pick-axes, following the
 “ Veins. ’Tis for the most Part hard as Stone,
 “ but more weighty; of a Liver Colour, or that
 “ of *Crocus Metallorum*. There is also some soft
 “ Earth, in which you plainly see the Mercury
 “ in little Particles. Besides, there are often-
 “ times

“ times found in the Mines round Stones like
“ Flints, some of them very ponderous, and
“ well impregnated with Mercury.

“ THE Manner of getting the Mercury is
“ this: They take of the Earth, brought up in
“ Buckets, and put it into a Sieve, whose Bot-
“ tom is made of Wire at so great a Distance,
“ that you may put your Finger between them;
“ 'tis carried to a Stream of running Water,
“ and washed as long as any Thing will pass
“ through the Sieve. That Earth which passeth
“ not, is laid aside upon a Heap; that which pas-
“ seth, is reserved in a Hole, and is taken up again,
“ and put into a second Sieve; and so on to a-
“ bout ten or twelve Sieves proportionably less.
“ It often happens in the first Hole, that there
“ is Mercury at the Bottom; but towards the
“ farther End, where the Intervals of the Wire
“ are less, it is found in very great Proportion.
“ The waste Water is so much impregnated with
“ Mercury, that it cureth Itches, and other for-
“ did Ulcers. The Earth laid aside, is pounded,
“ and the same Operation repeated. The fine
“ small Earth that remains after this, and out
“ of which they can wash no more Mercury, is
“ put into Iron Retorts, and the Fire forces the
“ Mercury into Receivers.

“ ALL the Mercury got without the Use of
“ Fire, whether by washing, or found in the
“ Mines, (for in digging some the Particles get
“ toge-

“ together, so that in some Places you might
 “ take up two or three Spoonfuls of pure Mer-
 “ cury) is called by them pure Mercury, and
 “ esteemed above the rest. The Labourers (be-
 “ ing two hundred and eighty always employ-
 “ ed) work for a Julio a Day, which is not a-
 “ bove six or seven Pence, and endure not long;
 “ for although none stay under Ground above
 “ six Hours, all of them in Time, (some later,
 “ some sooner,) become Paralytick, and die Hec-
 “ tick. We saw a Man, who had not been in
 “ the Mines for above half a Year before, so
 “ full of Mercury, that putting a Piece of Brass
 “ into his Mouth, or rubbing it in his Fingers,
 “ it immediately became as white as if he had
 “ rubbed Mercury upon it. Those also that
 “ work upon the Backside of Looking-glasses,
 “ are very subject to the Palsy.

“ THESE Mines heretofore cost the Emperor
 “ 70,000, or 80,000 Florins yearly; but now
 “ they cost him not above 28,000. They pro-
 “ duced,

	Anno 1661.	An. 1662.	An. 1663.
	l.	l.	l.
“ Ordinary Mercury,	199,481.	225,066.	244,119
“ Virgin Mercury	6194.	9612.	11862.
	<hr/>		
In all	204,675.	234,678.	255,981.
	<hr/>		

To this Account I shall add a Passage from Mr. *le Duc*, a Physician, who had visited the *Hungarian* Mines, who laughs at those who thinks it a Poison; “ For (says he) the Workers
 “ in the Mines have gotten a Trick of swallow-
 “ ing some Pounds of it, just as they are leaving
 “ off Work; which as soon as they get home
 “ they discharge and sell; to prevent which Ro-
 “ guery, ’tis usual to shut them up for some
 “ Hours after they have done Work, and so
 “ they’ll be constrained to let go what they have
 “ swallowed.”

THERE is a Circumstance or two in Dr. *Pope’s* Account aforecited, which deserves a little Consideration: One seems favourable enough on the Side of Mercury, and the other may as much prejudice us against it; as nothing on either Part should be suppressed, I shall mention them both. He observes, “ That the Workmen in the
 “ *Friulian* Mines, though they do not stay above
 “ six Hours under Ground, yet all of them,
 “ (some sooner, some later,) become Paralytick,
 “ and die Hectick.” These Accidents which attend the Workers in mercurial Mines, have made some entertain no very favourable Opinion of it. But Mr. *Limery* accounts for these Effects, not from the Mercury, but from the Sulphurs which continually steam from it; “ which Sul-
 “ phur (says he) consisting of gross Parts, do en-
 “ ter through the Pores of the Body, and fixing
 “ them-

“ themselves rather in the Nerves by reason of
 “ their Coldness, than in the other Vessels, do
 “ stop the Passage of the Spirits, and hinder their
 “ Course.”

THE other Circumstance, is the Face and Appearance of the Country, which Dr. *Pope* assures
 “ was of as pleasant a Verdure, as if it had
 “ been in the midst of Spring, though he was
 “ there in *August*, which the People there at-
 “ tribute to the Moistness of the Mercury, and
 “ abounding in Firs, Oaks, and Beeches of
 “ an extraordinary Thickness, Straitness, and
 “ Height.” These are not the Effects of poison-
 ous Vapours.

THE Ore of Quicksilver, which is called *Cin-
 bar*, is of great Use and Service in many Cases : It
 is very heavy, and of a beautiful red Colour, and
 certainly hath much Quicksilver in its Composi-
 tion, which the *Hungarian* and *German* Peasants
 know full well to draw from it. It is taken out
 of the Mines as it comes to us: It is given in E-
 pilepsies ; its Subtilty and Solidity together en-
 abling it to pass through the little Obstructions
 which in the Fibres and nervous Meanders,
 are the Occasion of such Disorders. It is
 admirable likewise in Venereal Cases, in Foulness
 of Skin, as in Itch and Leprosy ; and is given in
 considerable Doses without any Danger.

THE Manner of separating Mercury is by grinding the mineral Glebe into Powder, then pouring a great Quantity of Water upon it, and stirring the whole about till the Water becomes thick; which, when settled, they pour off, and put fresh in its Room, which they stir as before; this Method is repeated till the Water comes away perfectly clear. All remaining at the Bottom is Mercury and other metalline Matter. To this Mass is added the Scorta of Iron, and the whole is distilled, by which Means the heterogeneous, metallic and stony Part is separated therefrom, and the Mercury brought over pure.

VIRGIN Mercury needs nothing but a Lotion of common Water to purify it: Though, sometimes it is so full of an arsenical Matter, that it must be strained through a Skin; and sometimes there is an Earth united with it so strongly, that Recourse must be had to Distillation.

It is not worth while to get the Mercury out of the pure *Cinnabar*, it selling for a better Price than Mercury itself.

By this we see the Methods by which this precious Jelly is obtained; the next Thing to be done, is to lay down the Groundwork of all that follows, by bringing in one View the several Properties of this wonderful Fluid, which, whoever attentively considers, will find its Effects reducible to one or other of them.

CHAP. II.

The Properties of Quicksilver.

THE first Property of Mercury is, That it is the heaviest of all Bodies except Gold: The ordinary Proportion is as 14 to 19; if any be found to weigh more, it hath Gold in it.

THE second Property is to be the most Fluid of all Fluids, its Parts separate and recede from each other by the smallest Force; consequently of all Bodies, it is that whose Parts cohere the least, or are the least tenacious; and therefore of all others the least ductile or malleable.

THE Parts of Water do not divide so readily as those of Quicksilver; the Parts of Oil much less; there is a certain Tenacity even in the Parts of Spirit of Wine, which resist a Separation; but there is scarce any Cohesion at all in the Parts of Mercury.

TAKE, for instance, a single Grain of it, lay it on a Looking-Glass in dry Weather, and in a Place not dusty, and apply a Lens thereto which only touches it in one Point, the Grain of Mercury will fly into 1000 Globules; each of which

upon the least touch of the Lens, will again fly into 1000 lesser Globules; and so on past Comprehension. And yet all these Globules, tho' infinitely reduced, remain unchanged as to Weight, Opacity, and Separability.

THE Particles of Mercury view'd with a Microscope, appear perfectly smooth and polite, and reflect Objects; so that looking in them, you see all the circumjacent Bodies as in a Mirror.

Mr. *Boyle* proposes the applying a Microscope to the minute Particles of Mercury, by Means whereof a Globule, insensible to the best Eye, will afford a pleasant and distinct Prospect of all the neighbouring Objects

THE third Property of Mercury, which indeed depends on the second, is, that of all Bodies it is divisible into the minutest Parts.

THUS being exposed to Fire, it resolves into a Fume scarce perceivable to the Eye; but in whatever Manner it is divided, it still retains its Nature, and is the same specific Fluid; for the Vapours of distilled or volatiliz'd Mercury received in Water, or moist Leather, or the like, become pure Mercury. And if Mercury be mixed with other Bodies, in order to fix it, (for it is scarce fixable of itself,) it is easily separable from them again by Fire, and reducible into as pure Mercury as before.

THE fourth Character is to be extremely volatile, being convertible into Fumes, even by a Sand-heat. The Gilders are but too well acquainted with these Fumes of Mercury, which frequently render them Epileptick and Paralytick, and sometimes salivate them.

THE fifth Property is, That it incorporates with all Metals except Iron, and adheres to none but metalline Bodies, unless driven thereto by Force of Attrition; as in Æthiops Mineral, where by a long incessant rubbing, Mercury and Sulphur are made to mix and stick together.

ITS sixth Character is, That of all Fluids it is the coldest and hottest, supposing the Circumstances alike. This Property depends on the great Weight of Mercury; for the Heat and Cold of all Bodies, is, *ceteris paribus*, as their Weight: Now Mercury being fourteen Times heavier than Water, if both of them be exposed in a Winter's Night to the same cold, the Mercury must be so much colder than the Water as it is heavier. (Nevertheless it never can be brought to freeze. Mr. Boyle tried several Times, by making an extreme Cold, and exposing an exceeding thin Skin of Mercury thereto, but without Effect; its great Separability and Fluidity prevent its congealing.) So if they both be applied to the same Degree of Heat, whilst the Water is barely

ly warm, the Mercury will be hot enough to burn the Hands.

THE seventh Property is, That it dissolves almost in all Acids, and unites itself with them; at least with all mineral Acids. It will dissolve in Oil of Vitriol, Spirit of Sulphur, Spirit of Nitre; will unite with Oil of Vitriol into *Turbith Mineral*; with Spirit of Sulphur into *Cinnabar*; with *Aqua Regia*, or Spirit of Sea-Salt, into corrosive Sublimate; yet Vinegar does not dissolve it.

THE eighth Property is, That it is the most simple of all Bodies after Gold.

ACCORDINGLY we find that it is the same in all its Parts so far as Observation goes: If a single Grain of it be dissolved in Spirit of Nitre, a proportionable Part of that Grain will be distributed into every Part of the Spirit, and by diluting the whole with an Ounce of *Aqua Stygia*, the whole Grain of Mercury will be recovered.

THE ninth Property of Mercury is to be free from all Sharpness or Acrimony. It shews no Acrimony to the Taste; nor does it corrode any Body; and if a Carcass was to be buried in Quicksilver, it might there remain for Ages without being any ways hurt.

THE extraordinary Effects it hath produced in the Body have given People a Notion of its being acid; but the Case is quite otherwise; for when received into the Blood, it only acts by its Weight and Velocity.

Its medicinal Operations are to be accounted for from these Qualities here enumerated; we shall make that use of them when we come to treat of it in that Light.

I SHALL conclude this short Natural History of Quicksilver with a fine poetical Description of some of its Properties, from Mr. Addison's *Latin Verses on the Barometer*, to which, what hath been said may serve as a Commentary.

*Qua penetrat fessor terræ cæca antra, metallo
Fœcunda informi, rudibusq; nitentia venis;
Dum stupet occultas gazas, nummosq; futuros,
Eruit argenti latices, nitidumq; liquorem;
Qui nullo effusus prodit Vestigia tractu,
Nec terram signo revolubilis imprimit udo,
Sed fractus sparsim in globulos, formam usque rotundam*

*Servat, & in teretes lapsans se colligit Orbes
Incertum qua sit natura, an negligat ultra
Percipier, jubar & maturus inutile temnat;
An potius solis vis imperfecta relinquat
Argentum male coctum, divitiasq; fluentes;
Quicquid erit, magno se jactat nobilis usu.*

THE
CHYMICAL HISTORY
OF
QUICKSILVER.

CHEMISTRY is an Art we are chiefly indebted to the *Arabians* for; the antient Adepts are a Set of Gentlemen not a little addicted to Boasting; most of them, like *Van Helmont*, talk of nothing less than a universal Medicine to cure all manner of Diseases. “A Physician, says he, who cannot cure the *Lepra* radically, is not worthy the Name of a Physician.—“A Physician who cannot cure all Fevers by one Potion of a simple Diaphoretic, does not deserve the Appellation.—Let every one who cannot cure all Diseases with the Alcaest of *Paracelsus*, be expell’d the Faculty, — and the like.—” These Expressions may suffice to give us an Idea of the Enthusiasm of some of this Profession.

ABOUT

ABOUT the Beginning of the thirteenth Century this Art began to make some Figure in *Europe*. It was known before only to the *Arabians* of *Asia* and *Afric*; this Propagation of it was chiefly owing to our great Countryman *Roger Bacon*, who was one of the first that cultivated this Art in our western Climates, and to his, and our Country's Honour, he is allowed by most Writers on this Subject, at once to have begun and almost perfected this Science. From this Period, for some Ages, every Practitioner was Surgeon, Chymist, and Physician altogether. Indeed the Design of this Gentleman, to find out the universal Remedy, is confessedly Ostentatious and Enthusiastic enough. For, as another Countryman of our own, an Ornament to *England*, and the Faculty too, justly observes, “ that, a
“ Man who hath the least Acquaintance with
“ Physic, must be sensible that any universal Remedy must be a Cheat; and though it be never
“ so good and valuable a Medicine itself, yet it
“ is utterly impossible it can be equally applicable
“ to all Persons, in all Cases, and at all Junctures;
“ and therefore it must be determined by the
“ Skill of some discerning Physician, who is
“ well apprized of the Nature and Symptoms of
“ the Disease, when to give it, and when to forbear. We need not go far for a Proof of this;
“ we have a convincing one in that great, and
“ perhaps only specific one, the Bark, which,
“ if us'd indifferently, and without Judgment, even
“ in

“ in intermitting Cafes, has a Chance to do as much Hurt as Good.” *Friend's Hist. of Physic. Vol. I. p. 78.*

THERE is his usual Justness in this Remark. Nevertheless it cannot be denied but that Chymistry hath been of some Service to Physic.

WITH the Chymists Mercury and Sulphur are the chief Principles of all Metals and Minerals. Upon the Beginning of the sixteenth Century a new Disease appeared in *Europe*, the *Lues Venerea*. In this the common Galenical Medicines proved absolutely ineffectual: Bleeding, Purg- ing, and cleansing Medicines were vain, and the Physicians were at their Wits End; when *Jac. Carpus* arose; he was a celebrated Anatomist and Chirurgeon at *Boulogne*, but in his Travels thro' *Italy* and *Spain*, had picked up, some how or other, the Secret of the Cure, which was by Mercury administred to raise a Salivation.

THIS he practised for some Years with such Success and Applause, that it is incredible what immense Riches this one *Nostrum* had brought him in: He owns himself that he did not know the End of his own Wealth. (Dr. *Friend* says, he got an immense Fortune, so as to leave 40 or 50,000 Crowns to the Duke of *Ferrara*, besides a great Quantity of Plate.) For the Merchants, Governors, Commanders, &c. who had brought that filthy Disease from *America*, were content

to give him what Sums he pleased to free them from it. *Paracelsus*, who hath left at least but a doubtful Character behind him, is notwithstanding acknowledged to have improved upon his Master *Carpus*, in the Cure of this Disease: *Carpus* did all by Salivation; *Paracelsus* perfected the Cure more gently, made up his Preparations in Pills: We are told likewise, that by the same Medicine he cured the Itch, *Lepra*, Ulcers, and even the Gout; all which were incurable on the Foot of the popular Practice. Thus, though the *European* World was visited with a new, a nauseous, and frequently fatal Disease, yet within a while it was comforted with the Prospect of a certain Remedy; several of whose salutary Preparations had remained unknown but for the Chymist's Fire. The principal of which we shall exhibit from the great *Boerhaave*, and his Commentators, *Dr. Shaw* and *Mr. Chambers*, premising only an Observation or two of the Manner of distinguishing good from bad, and purifying that which is foul.

MERCURY found near Gold Mines is the best, richest, and fittest for chymical Uses, as being impregnated with golden Sulphur. In the Earth it is often mixed with arsenical and other heterogeneous Matters; which, though imperceptible to the Senses, may render it noxious to the Body, without due Purification. The clean, wholesome Mercury, 'tis said, may be distinguished from the foul or adulterate Kind, by the fine

white Lustre, and polite or glossy Surface of the former, and by evaporating it over a naked Fire in a Silver Vessel ; for if it leaves no considerable Tarnish behind, 'tis commonly thought to be pure. But it appears unsafe to depend upon any Mercury for medicinal Uses that is not revived from *Cinnabar*, or fixed Alkalies, or particularly from a double Weight of the Mixture of equal Parts of Quick Lime, and Salt of Tartar. The grinding and washing it with Salt and Vinegar being by some thought only to dissolve the Body of the Mercury, itself black, and not to free it from arsenical, or other noxious Particles ; and as it is not a little to be feared, that the Druggists, &c. do frequently make a Practice of sophisticating Quicksilver with Lead, the Profit arising from this Adulteration being exceeding great, for a Pound of Lead costs but two Pence, and a Pound of Quicksilver eight or ten Shillings. To detect such base Frauds, take and pound the Mercury in a Mortar, with Vinegar therein, the only acid Liquor it will not dissolve in, and if the Vinegar grows sweetish, 'tis a Proof the Mercury is mixed with Lead ; if it hath been adulterated with Copper, it will turn greenish, or bluish ; but if pure, the Mercury and Vinegar will both remain without Alteration.

WE now come to the several chymical Solutions of Mercury, and the Uses thereof.

FIRST,

FIRST, The Solution of Mercury in *Aqua Fortis*, is a violent Corrosive, and will turn any Part of the Body it touches of a purple Colour, which cannot easily be removed again; it is sometimes used successfully as a Caustic, to callous or tumefied venereal Ulcers; it instantly takes away Warts, small Cancers, and other Excrescences, if cautiously and properly used. A few Drops of it diluted with a large Proportion of Water, make an admirable, safe, and mild Cosmetic for red and pimpled Faces, which are to be washed with this Lotion twice or thrice a Day, and what is thus used suffered to dry upon the Skin. It is an excellent Wash likewise, thus managed, in case of the Itch, and all cutaneous Foulness or Ulcers.

THE Process of the Solution is thus:

To a proper Quantity of pure Quicksilver, strained through Leather, and well ground in a Mortar with Sea Salt and Vinegar, till the Blackness is deposited, pour a double or triple Proportion of *Aqua Fortis*, and the Mercury will immediately begin to dissolve with a strong Ebullition and copious red Fumes, (which avoid, for they are noxious,) and by Degrees the whole Body will be taken up, and with the Menstruum appear as one homogeneous and transparent Liquor.

SECONDLY, The Vitriol or Chrystals of Mercury, are the most violent Corrosive we know, and will instantly eat through the Flesh to the very Bone. The tenth Part of a Grain given internally, would cause strange Disorders in the Intestines; act both as a strong Emetic and Cathartic, and raise a Salivation in a few Hours Time. But no prudent Physician will venture to administer it in this Manner, as being violently poisonous.

THIS Process is thus: Let the last Solution be exhal'd over a soft Fire, to one half or less, and then set in a cool Place, and it will shoot out into white Glebes, or Chrystals, called the Salt Vitriol, being in Reality the Body of the Mercury, so united with the Acid, that it becomes a most violent Caustic. The saline Particles adhering to the Globules of the Quicksilver are made thereby to act so powerfully upon every thing wherewith it comes in Contact.

THIRDLY, White Precipitate is more powerful in its Operation than crude Mercury, but more languid than the Chrystals or Vitriol thereof. It may safely be given internally from three to ten Grains, with some proper Purgative to determine its Operation to the Intestines, taken in the Quantity of two or three Grains, and repeated at proper Distances for some Days successively, it raises a Salivation very well; and
if

if given in something warm, to determine its Virtue to the Surface of the Body, it becomes a Sudorific; upon which Accounts it is held under a Disguise by many Physicians, as an excellent *Panacea* of Mercury. It is an excellent Cathartic in Venereal Complaints; good against Phlegm, Worms; in the Itch, or Leprous Cases, mix a moderate Proportion with Pomatum, or Ointment of Roses, and an admirable Unguent is made for those Purposes. Mixed in a less Quantity therewith, a twentieth or thirtieth Part, and it becomes an excellent Cosmetic.

THIS Precipitate is found an extraordinary Medicine for external Uses, and may be managed to all the desirable Advantages of Cleanliness, Inoffensiveness, and Efficacy, either by Lotion or Unguent, and is the grand Secret of some, when dissolved in Water, for curing the Itch or Leprosy, and destroying all kinds of Vermin.

THE Process is in the Manner following: To the Solution of the first Process made with *Aqua Fortis*, add thrice its Quantity of fair Water, then pour thereto about thrice as much strong Lixivium of common Salt as there was of the Solution of Mercury, and the Mixture will precipitate a white Powder to the Bottom of the Vessel; pour the whole Mixture, the Powder precipitate, and all together, into a Filtre, and wash it with warm Water, till what runs from it becomes quite insipid, and there will remain
in

in the Filtre a pure white Powder, which, when dried before the Fire, is called the White Precipitate of Mercury.

If in making the Solution of Mercury for this Medicine, a little Copper be added, the Precipitate will be of a green Colour, and have much the same Virtues, and is called the Green Precipitate of Mercury; by some the green Lizard.

FOURTHLY, The Red Precipitate is stronger and more corrosive than the white, and purges violently, both upwards and downwards, in half the Dose of the other; but it is apt by its Corrosiveness to exulcerate the Stomach and Intestines, and therefore not so safely taken internally; tho' several have been cured by this Medicine in desperate Venereal Cases, when given over by the Physicians, by a famous Woman at *Paris*. 'Tis highly valued by the Chirurgeons for taking down fungous Flesh, cleansing foul Ulcers, drying up their Moisture, and disposing them to heal.

THE Process is thus: Let the Vitriol or Crystals of Mercury, as in the second, be exposed to a soft Fire, and as it dries, it will change from white to yellow, and keeping constantly stirring it over a strong Fire, it will become shining red.

FIFTHLY,

FIFTHLY, Mercury, when dissolved with Oil of Vitriol, is turned into a grey Powder, and is rendered most violently corrosive, fiery and poisonous; so that less than a Grain received into the Stomach, would cause vomiting of Blood, a Dyfentary, bloody Urine, a Salivation, and Death. It hath scarce any Medicinal Use, unless to serve the Purposes of Chirurgery.

SIXTHLY, From Mercury dissolved in Oil of Vitriol they gain Turbith Mineral; and that only by plentiful Affusions of Water, till the Liquor comes away as insipid as it was poured on, leaving a beautiful yellow Calx, which dried gently at the Fire, is called by the Name of Turbith Mineral, and proves an excellent Emetic and Purgative; but as it operates with considerable Violence, its never given, unless the Viscera are known to be sound. This seems to be the mercurial Powder mentioned by Mr. Boyle, as received in a small Quantity at the Nose, by way of Snuff, whereby a certain Captain was perfectly cured of a total Blindness caused by Cataracts; the Medicine operating by Fermentation, Vomit, Stool, Sweat, Urine, and Salivation. Sydenham likewise commends it in Venereal Cases, given in the Quantity of six or eight Grains, in strong Habits of Body, so as to prove Emetic.

SEVENTHLY,

SEVENTHLY, *Mercurius Dulcis*, a safe and excellent Medicine, is made from the corrosive Sublimate (a very violent Poison, being equal Quantities of Mercury, Vitriol, Nitre, and Salt ground together) only by grinding fresh Mercury with it, and repeating the Sublimation till the Points of the Salts are broken fine, or till the Sublimate becomes sufficiently mild, and fit for Use. If the Sublimation be repeated to the sixth Time, it is called Calomel. It is given to young Children, being very effectual against Worms, as purging those slimy Humours whence arise so many Disorders.

EIGHTHLY, *Æthiops Mineral* is an equal Weight of pure Quicksilver and Flower of Sulphur, ground together till the Globules of Mercury are become invisible, and the whole Mixture turned to a black Powder. This black Powder, tho' taken in large Quantities, will not salivate like other Preparations of Mercury.

THUS we see by these several Processes and Preparations, how crude Mercury, an innocent Mineral (whose Efficacy seems chiefly to depend on the great Specific Gravity, and the particular Smallness and Globular Confirmation of its Parts, on which Accounts it is more penetrating, and opens Obstructions in the Body more powerfully than any other Medicine) when dissolved in
acid,

acid, saline, corroding Fluids, becomes a most violent strong Poison. These sharp saline Particles being lodged or concentrated in the Body of the Mercury, are carried along with such Force by the Gravity of that, as to cut and tear in Pieces whatever comes in their Way.

BUT the physical Account of its Operations, in its natural State, or typical Dissolutions, we leave to its proper Place.

E

THE

THE
PHYSICAL USE
OF
QUICKSILVER.

HITHERTO we have only laid before the Reader, the Natural and Chymical History of Mercury, shewed the Manner of getting it from the Mines, cleansing and purifying it, and make it fit for medicinal Uses; how to distinguish the good from the bad, to detect the villainous Frauds of such as would impose the adulterate and mixed for the clean and depurate; as likewise collected and placed in one View all the Properties or Characters of it, and exhibited the several Preparations, Mixtures, and Solutions, as well as observed their various Virtues, we may now make a Stand, look back a while, and reflect a little upon the Subject.

It is a difficult Matter to remove vulgar Errors; they are as strongly rooted as the most inveterate Disease, and Reason and Physic are frequently

quently baffled by both. How high did the Cry run formerly against the Use of the Bark, one of the best Medicines in the *Materia Medica*? What Fears? What Apprehensions of its evil Consequences? What strange Misconstructions of its Effects, and downright absolute Perversion of its Properties? Nothing can be safe from such Misconceptions; neither Merit in Man, or Excellence in Medicine: The wiser and more honest Part of Mankind, by the natural Turn of Thought and Temper, as naturally engage in Defence of both; and there have been very few noble Remedies found, either by Art or Chance, and brought in Practice by the skilful Right-judging Part of the Faculty, but have been as generously supported by Reason and Argument at the very Instant that the Torrent of popular Clamour was at the Height against them. The Cause of both is the same; and the Party formed against both the same likewise. The great Physician of Course falls into a Method of Practice, which the lazy, the little, the unskilful Practitioner, can no more imitate than he can understand.

WHERE is the Wonder therefore, that such exert all the Malice they are Masters of, and strive to blast what they cannot copy.

WERE *Hippocrates* and *Freind* to rise from the Dead, they would again, for a while, suffer the same Fate: Nay, *Esculapius* himself, were he to revive, wou'd find his own divine Skill, and his

Father's Godhead, both blasphemed by some. But the World by Degrees comes generally about, and all this Envy only directs us where to pay our Applause.

It only remains for such to proceed upon their own Strength; as a Genius will see further into Nature, in the Compass of a few Years, than ordinary Souls, were they to live a thousand.

As some are made Enemies through Envy, others may become so through Interest. I hardly doubt but that some of the trading Tribe are found useful enough this Way; they can serve very well for *Mercuries* to carry and hawk about Scandal; and People in Business are allowed to act from a View of Gain. Perhaps by some such great Philosophers, the vulgar Error of Quicksilver being a Poison, might be fortify'd; as who can tell what a Destruction just Apprehensions of its Virtues might occasion to Gallypots; how many Phials might be thrown to the Dunghills, &c. We must therefore try to remove this Prejudice, and so clear our Way to a more full and larger Account of its Efficacy.

It is very evident, that it cannot possibly be any Poison of itself: All Poisons, as is well known, consisting of cutting and acute Particles. But does Mercury consist of cutting acute Particles? In the Mines it may be mixed with
arsenical

arsenical and other heterogeneous Particles, and therefore Care should be taken to have it depurated before it is administer'd; when this Depuration is made, the Viper's Bag is taken from it.

To make this further appear, and put the Matter quite out of Dispute, let us consider its Properties.

It is the heaviest of all Bodies, (Gold excepted,) and the most Fluid of all Fluids, divisible into the minutest Parts by the smallest Force, entirely free from all Acidity, all Manner of Sharpness, the Formation of its Particles globular, perfectly smooth and polite.

It is an Observation of Mr. *Lewenhoeck*, that the Blood likewise consists of Particles of a globular Formation: Whence it will follow, that it is utterly impossible, that the Particles of the Blood, and the Particles of the Mercury, should enter into such a Contact with each other, as to be linked together, the Globules of the Mercury being so extremely smooth, their mutual Action upon each other, therefore, must be thus: The Motion of the Blood, and of the Lymph that accompanies it, causes these small Globules to strike one against another; by which Shock repeated, all the Particles both of the Blood and the Mercury, are separated and multiplied to almost an Infinity; by which Means the Coagulations of the Blood are destroyed, it becomes
more

more subtle and fluid, and less apt to obstruct and embarrass, as it moves in the smallest Vessels; the Globules of Mercury united with the Lymph being exceeding smooth, and containing, in Proportion to their Bulk, a very large Quantity of Matter, do insinuate themselves into all Places where the Rapidity of their Motion carries them; forcing all Obstacles which oppose their Course, and dispersing every thing that is unnaturally united; which, by the Motion it receives from it, is hinder'd from reuniting, and thus it is hurried away to some, or all, of the Emunctories, according to the Inclination of Nature, or the Disposition of the Subject. These Particles likewise being united with the Lymph, render it more fluid, penetrating, active, sweet, and balsamic, and by Consequence more fit to increase the nutritious Juice in the several Parts of the Body, and more proper to repair the Losses it has undergone through the Violence of Diseases, taking away at the same Time the fatal Causes which produced them.

MERCURY therefore cannot possibly have any Thing in it that is Corrosive or Vicious: these Qualities never belong to it, unless incorporated with saline, acid Particles, and with Salt and Vitriol, to make corrosive Sublimate, and the like.

IN itself then it is a most safe, as well as most excellent Medicine; but by certain Mix-
tures

tures, it may be render'd either a strong Poison, as in Sublimate, or a safe Cathartic, as in *Mercurius Dulcis*. Its Operations in both these Respects we shall likewise clearly account for.

IN the Sublimate, the mercurial Globules are stuck full of the sharp Salts from *Aqua Fortis*; so that each Particle is like a Ball stuck round with Needles. The Mercury loses its Fluidity, for rolling about in such an acid *Menstruum*, till it becomes full of these little Parts, its smooth Surfaces are changed into very unequal ones.

IN this Case then, two Circumstances concur to make it thus mischievous: As first, the Salt being drove into the mercurial Globules, gives them Points which they had not before; and secondly, the mercurial Globules add to the saline Particles, Gravity and Force which they had not without them; that is, crude Mercury by its Weight, when in Circulation in the Juices, would strike hard upon whatever it met with, but for want of Angles or Points, could not hurt the Parts, and the saline Particles, tho' they had Points, have not Force enough to drive them into the Membranes, so as to do much harm. But when by this Process they are join'd together, the Weight of the Mercury drives in the saline *Spiculae*, like Wedges, and makes 'em cut and tear in Pieces whatever comes in their Way; so that these Chrystals, or armed Balls, like so many Knives and Daggers, wound and
stab

stab the tender Coats of the Stomach, and all the Parts they pass through.

THIS is the Nature of Sublimate: And these Properties flow plainly from the Contexture of its Parts.

IT will not be difficult now to apprehend, how, in making this Sublimate into *Mercurius Dulcis*, the same re-sublim'd with fresh live Mercury, especially if it be repeated three or four Times, it loses its Corrosiveness to that Degree as to become a good Medicine.

To this End it is to be considered, that the Action of these saline *Spiculæ*, depending upon their Gravities and Largeness, they must necessarily by every subsequent Sublimation be broken into smaller and smaller Parts; whereby these Points, which were before so sharp, will be almost lost, so as not to make Wounds deep enough to do Mischief, and therefore will only stimulate the Membranes of the Stomach to that Degree, as to excite them to an Excretion of their Contents, and glandulous Juices, upwards or downwards, according as the Force of the Irritation is greater or less. The few Salts remaining in these mercurial Globules, may, perhaps, be much taken off in their Passage through the *Primæ Viæ*, but not altogether; so that when these Globules get into the Blood, by their Motion and Weight, they must necessarily dissolve the preternatural Cohesions

Cohesions of all the Liquors ; particularly of those which circulate in the smallest Canals, and are more viscid and tenacious, making them more thin, or of more easy Secretion, whereby all the Glands of the Body are set to Work, and scoured of their Contents : But the salival ones especially, being many in Number, very large and wide, and the Juice they separate of a tough and ropy Consistence, so that a considerable Quantity of it is accumulated before it is forced out of the Orifice of the Ducts : these Effects will be most remarkable in them ; and a Salivation or Spitting must continue so long, till the active mineral Particles are through these and other Passages discharged quite out of the Body.

THIS is a plain intelligible Account of its several Operations in crude Substance, Sublimate, and *Mercurius Dulcis*.

BUT as Mr. Belloste in his *Hospital Surgeon*, p. 51. very justly observes, “ If Mercury may be
 “ judged of from its Effects, surely crude Mercur-
 “ ry has the best Title to be called *Mercurius*
 “ *Dulcis* ; for that which is prepared with Fire,
 “ and goes by that Name, is capable of uniting
 “ with Acids in the Body, and thereby forming
 “ an Acid : So that not to incur the Danger of
 “ raising a painful Salivation, it must be given
 “ but in small Quantities, and that seldom : I
 “ have been a Witness to the terrible Conse-
 F quence

“ quence of it, upon a Lady of Distinction, who
 “ fell a Sacrifice to the Remedy, and her own
 “ Opinion.

As Mr. *Belloste* proceeds to speak with much good Sense upon this Head, I shall conclude this Chapter with his Words: “ When crude Mercury enters into the Body by Friction or Fumigation, it mixes with the Lymph, but then it penetrates also into the Veins and Arteries. Such a Collection of Globular Corpuscles striking against the arterial Blood, with a Direction contrary to the Course of it, acts upon it in the Manner of a Bank or Damm.

“ If the Blood and Spirits yield to such a Shock, this Motion must of Necessity be much weakened, and even suppressed as far as the Friction extends, so that they will inevitably stand still or move backwards: This Conflict can be of no Service to the Patient, but must produce such Symptoms as always attend an impeded Circulation. I have beheld too many Instances of such sad Cases.

“ If it enters the Pores of the small nervous Fibres which terminate at the Skin, it will by its Volatility penetrate into the Trunks of the Nerves, and oppose the Course of the animal Spirits, thereby occasioning a Palsy.

“ THESE

“ THESE Effects are not produced by Mercury, as crude Mercury; 'tis the Manner of applying it which causes it to oppose the Course of the animal Spirits, and occasion these Extravagancies, besides many more, which I forbear to name.

“ 'Tis plain then, that there is a Difference between transmitting crude Mercury through the Pores of the Skin, and giving it at the Mouth at certain Intervals; for in this latter Way, it intimately mixes with what it finds in the Stomach and Chyle, it enters the Blood, it associates with the Lymph, it follows the natural and voluntary Motion of it, it facilitates its Course, and enlivens its Motion; it renders it more fluid, subtle, and fit to pass; it destroys the Obstacles which oppose its Passage, and then uniting with it, they penetrate every where: All this is brought about with the utmost Gentleness and Expedition, without Constraint, Agitation, or Tumult; and yet its Operations are divine and surprising.

I NOW come to treat of Quicksilver more at large, to specify the particular Diseases it may be given in, and to assign the Reasons of its wonderful Effects in these Cases,

THAT several of our greatest Practitioners have frequently made use of Mercury in Disguise, done eminent Service to their Patients with it, and gained much Reputation to themselves, is with me past all Doubt: That many now continue to use it likewise, with as good Success, and as much Secrecy, I doubt not neither.

NAY, some are found, who speak evil of it in Public, but notwithstanding give it concealed in private: A strong Argument in its Favour, whatever Views may oblige them to act in such a Manner. Such little Pieces of Craft will ever be practised by some, especially such as stand in need of them.

BUT those who set out upon different Principles, who consider Physic, not as a Trade, but as a Science, a useful and an honourable one, and intend the Good of Mankind by Profession, never act thus in the dark; their Practice is very fair and open, and Friends they are to those, who like themselves, are content with the Reputation of doing Good, and borrow not Assistances from Cabals and Parties to steal a Name. Such was the late Dr. *Freind*; and such are several now living, Ornaments of the Faculty, and most useful Members of Society. I shall introduce what I have to say with a Passage from that great Man's *Emmenologia*, Chap. 14.

“ I have found the continual Use of *Æthiops*
“ *Mineralis* to be not only safe, but always ef-
“ fectual ; which is generally postpon’d to the
“ other Preparations of Mercury upon this Ac-
“ count only, because it is the most easily pre-
“ pared of them all. Thus the Operation of
“ Quicksilver holds universally the same ; which,
“ however constant it may be, hinders not yet
“ in the least, but that Quicksilver may be en-
“ dowed also with other Properties ; for it not
“ only opens obstructed Vessels, but also as con-
“ stantly blunts the Points of the Acids.”

THESE Properties alone, here mentioned by the learned Doctor, are of great Benefit to Mankind, and it is as certain that in these Respects, it is the most efficacious of all Medicines: Let us now open our Eyes to other Properties, which we may collect from two Books, which have made no little Noise in the World: The one written by *Thomas Dover*, M. B. the other by *Mr. Bellosse*, an eminent Surgeon abroad. These two Gentlemen have acted very fairly, and very honestly ; for, as by repeated Instances, they have experienced the Virtues of Quicksilver, they have as frankly laid those Instances before Mankind.

EXPERIENCE is the best Guide, and Facts the strongest Recommendation ; these Gentlemen have found it useful, and accordingly openly declare what Relief they have found it to give ; it is an
easy

easy Matter to cry out, *Quack! Emperick!* but the World will still think such Men as honest, as skillful, who prove their Practice by well-attested Facts. 'This is the very Case with these two Gentlemen; Cabals and Factions are known to subsist among the Faculty; and it may be much safer to kill in the common Road of Practice, than cure out of it. Clamours are very apt to rise, and Falshoods to fly about, when Physicians shall dare to be greater Friends to the Patient than the Apothecary.

BUT let us hear the honest Batchelor of Physic: For some Years last past I have not so easily assented to several received Opinions in natural Philosophy, as many others have done, who are ready *jurare in verba alicujus Magistri*, but have thoroughly weighed and considered them so far as to be convinced, that they are, for the Generality, false. I shall set down one Error more.

'Tis a generally received Error; nay, even among many Gentlemen of the Faculty, that Quicksilver is Poison; if such Persons are not ashamed of their being no better natural Philosophers, I have no Reason to be under Confusion of Face for them.

THEIR Opinion is a Sign they have travelled far at home.

LET them take a Trip to *Hungary*, and visit the Mines where the Quicksilver is dug; they may there see Slaves working entirely naked, to prevent the stealing this precious Jelly of Metals, as it may be called, yet every Day swallow so much that they buy a Choppin of Drink with it at Night.

SEVERAL Physicians have enquir'd of my Patients, to what End do I give it? Wherein can the Efficacy and Power of it consist? If they do not know, what follows may serve for Instruction.

FIRST, It secures the Patient from all Vermicular Diseases; of which no Practitioner can be sufficiently apprized, that has not spent some Time in hot Climates.

NEXT it opens all Obstructions, which are supposed to be another general Cause of Diseases.

LASTLY, It makes a pure Balsam of the Blood beyond all other Things in the Creation: Otherwise, why cannot Venereal Ulcers be cured without? We often see those Sores in a Salivation grow well without the Help of a Surgeon.

I DESIRE to know, why I am called the Quicksilver Doctor by way of Derision? Pray, do not you, Gentlemen, Physicians, Surgeons, and Apothecaries,

thecaries, prescribe it almost every Day of your Lives? I aver you do. Only you disguise it, and I give it in such an open honest Manner, that my Patient cannot be deceived in taking it. Let me ask you, what is your *Æthiops Mineral*? Is it not Quicksilver ground to a black Powder with Brimstone, and in as great Esteem with you as any of your Medicines? A very ingenious Physician says, *This is like striking a Man with your Sword in your Scabbard.* And where it possible to have found a worse Menstruum than Sulphur, I do not know, whether it ought not then to have been tried. Certainly this Medicine shews a more than common Virtue, which can thus powerfully exert itself, when bound down by so contrary a Quality.

He then proceeds to tell the following Piece of History:

A PATIENT of mine, a Gentleman of Reputation and Figure, was lately taking of Quicksilver by my Direction; he told me, one of the most eminent Physicians here in Town said, he was very sorry to hear that I had put him under a Course of Quicksilver, and affirmed it to be the most dangerous Medicine in the whole World; advising him by all Means to leave it off, when this Gentleman, at the same Time was intimately acquainted with a Person who had the same Indisposition with his own, and had Quicksilver prescribed him by this very Doctor. He told

told me, besides, in what Manner he gave it ; which a Man who had studied Physic only a Month, would have thought no small Reflection upon his Judgment. I wish my Patient would have given me his Name, it should have been put down in Words at full Length, for the general good of Mankind.

I APPEAL to the Reader, says he, if such a Person as I lately mentioned, deserves the Title of Doctor; as for my Part, though I am but a poor Batchelor in Physic, I shall for ever scorn so mean, so dishonourable a Behaviour.

HE goes on to shew that he was not single in the good Opinion he has of Quicksilver, from the Sentiments of two learned Physicians, Dr. *Freind* (whose Opinion we have already quoted,) and Dr. *Cheyne*, whose Words are these :

“ IN *Æthiops Mineral* and *Cinnabar* of Anti-
 “ mony, the Mercury is so bridled up by the
 “ Sulphur, that none of their sensible Operations
 “ and Appearances are felt, while they produce
 “ wonderful Changes in the Body. I cannot
 “ pass over *Æthiops Mineral* without pressing
 “ its more universal Use therein, than for ought
 “ I know, it has yet had in common Practice. It
 “ is one of the most certain and universal Alte-
 “ ratives, if dosed sufficiently, and long e-
 “ nough persisted in, of all the Dispensatory. It
 “ radically extirpates the Itch, Piles, scorbutic

“ tic, and scrophulous Ulcers; all cutaneous
“ Foulnesses; all Inflammations and Fluxions
“ of the Eyes; all internal Ulcers, Rheuma-
“ tism, White Swellings, sharp Humours in
“ the Stomach and Guts; and almost all Di-
“ stempers arising from fizy Juices. I say it
“ cures all these, if Art can do it. It may be
“ given almost to half an Ounce a Day, espe-
“ cially with interspersed mercurial Purges,
“ without Trouble, or any sensible Operation,
“ and may be continued a Twelve-Month, if
“ one pleases. I have had frequent Occasions of
“ trying the *Æthiops* in different Cases, since the
“ first Edition of my Treatise, and never with-
“ out Success. Amongst others, I tried it upon a
“ Person of an exceeding gross corpulent Habit,
“ who had passed the Meridian of Life, for a
“ spreading, foul, scorbutic Ulcer, which had
“ affected the whole Ankle for more than
“ a Span Length all round, and was pretty
“ deep in the Outside. He took three Drams,
“ made up with Syrup of Lemons, twice a
“ Day for four Months successively, and a
“ gentle mercurial Purge once in ten Days;
“ this, with a low, cooling Diet, and proper
“ Dressings, healed it quite up, when it was
“ generally thought, scarce any Medicine, espe-
“ cially so easy a one, would ever finish such a
“ Cure in such a Constitution. The *Æthiops* was
“ taken without Disgust, Trouble, or Interrup-
“ tion of Business; and it was observable (and
“ it is for the sake of this Observation chiefly that

“ I mention this Instance) that the very Æthiops
 “ itself, after the Body had been a little reple-
 “ nished with it, in two Months Time forced
 “ itself through the sound Part of the Leg and
 “ Skin, and stick’d to those Parts of the Plaister
 “ that covered them, in its proper Substance
 “ and Colour; which shews how readily this
 “ Medicine passes through the small Vessels of
 “ the Glands. This very Method never fails to
 “ cure Ophthalmia’s, even scrophulous ones; and
 “ is a most certain Remedy in an Ulcer of the
 “ Bladder, as I have already found, if given
 “ in a sufficient Dose, and prescribed in a sufficient
 “ Time.” *Cheyne’s Essay on the Gout, Edit. 2.*
pag. 48.

MUCH may be said to shew the Impossibility of Quicksilver doing any Damage to the Patient; what gives Offence to Nature, is, what we term Spiculæ, Points, or Edges. Now, Quicksilver always retaining a globular Figure, together with the Softness of its Body, no Harm can happen from the Use of it; only this I would advise the Patient, that he get a small Crucible, put into it the Quantity of a Pistol-Bullet of Quicksilver, set the Crucible on the Fire, if any of the soft Metals are put into it, they will remain, and the Quicksilver will fly off. But let him take particular Care not to hang his Head over it, for the Effluvia are a Poison of the most subtle Nature.

Now does any Thing so Useful, so Beneficial to Mankind, deserve to be so much exploded, and treated with so much Calumny? But amongst all their false Insinuations, let them bring one single Instance, well-attested, of the Damage any one hath received from it. Though I believe there never was a Medicine given, but sometimes has proved not only detrimental to the Patient, but even Death itself hath ensued, especially when misapplied. Witness the so-much-celebrated *Gascoin's Powder*, which occasions yearly the Loss of so many thousand Subjects to the Crown. I aver, Quicksilver never did any Harm to the Patient, which is more than can be said of any other Medicine.

THIS Gentleman hath been a Practitioner for several Years, and hath had several Advantages, which others have not had, of observing the different Methods of curing in different Countries, as well as the different Diseases which infest Human Nature; from which a wise Man may draw many useful Conclusions. His Book shews him to be both an honest and understanding Man, and is wrote with a very commendable Design. He continues on the same Practice, prescribing Quicksilver in Variety of Cases, whilst the Lazy, the Ignorant, and the Unskilful are contented with jogging on in the old Manner, and abusing those who study, at the smallest Expence, and with the least Disgust, to relieve Mankind.

WE see by his Book in what Variety of Cases he makes use of this Mineral; as Gout, Stone, Hysterical Diseases, Green Sickness, King's Evil, Itch, Diseases of the Intestines, Epilepsies, Apoplexies, &c.

HE assures us likewise of a Matter of Fact, upon his own Knowledge, that the *Indians* at the *Malucco* Islands, and the Ladies of *Smyrna*, often take Quicksilver as a Remedy against Barrenness.

THE Gentleman that succeeds, but who indeed, in point of Time, wrote something before the last, is the famous Mr. *Belloste*, first Surgeon to her Royal Highness the late Dowager of *Savoy*. This Gentleman is now living, and used this Medicine both upon himself and others, through a long Course of Practice, during which he saw the various surprising Effects upon different Constitutions, of his Remedies. The whole is related in a natural Manner; Facts, with his own Reasoning upon those Facts; and though some may please not to agree with him in his accounting for the Effects produced, no Man can dispute his Success, the Facts being so strongly attested, as to place them beyond Contradiction.

HE begins with Encomiums upon Mercury, styling it a Miracle of Nature, and the greatest Gift of Providence in the whole *Materia Medica*;
but

but very honestly confesses, that Chance had the greatest Hand in letting him into the Knowledge of its admirable Uses.

“ I AM ready to acknowledge, says he, that
 “ it was not in Consequence of any Reasoning
 “ that I first entered upon the Use of it; how-
 “ ever, the Success I met with from its Admi-
 “ nistration, emboldened me to stick to it, and to
 “ add Authority to one Experiment by another;
 “ my future Employes gave me frequent and fa-
 “ vourable Opportunities of trying its Efficacy
 “ in many chronical and inveterate Cases, which
 “ where esteemed incurable, yet they entirely
 “ gave way to crude Mercury.”

HE has found out, he says, a Method to prevent it from sublimating; though without such a Restraint, he is of Opinion that the Heat of our Bodies is not sufficient to sublime it: In which, no doubt, he is right.

HE then acquaints us with the Manner in which he gives it: Though for the sake of his Family, to which his Pills may prove a Maintenance after his Death, he prudently conceals the Preparation of them as a Secret; for this he is blamed by some, who daily act almost in the same Manner. He mixes the Mercury with gentle Purgatives, which determine one Part of its Action by Stool, another Part of it communicates itself to the Blood, mixes with the
 Lymph

Lymph in Circulation, without losing its Globular Figure, and never leaves it till it has rendered it capable of penetrating every where by its Subtilty and Fluidity, and of nourishing all Parts by Means of its balsamic Particles, which it reinstates in their natural Condition, when they are depraved and altered, and removes all Obstacles that may impede its Progress.

EXPERIENCE being, as he well observes, the strongest of all Proofs, he proceeds to relate what Cures, and in what Diseases he has experienced it to perform.

VENEREAL Complaints, 'tis a known and undoubted Specific for ; so I shall pass over all of this Sort which he has mentioned. But what shall we say of schirrous Tumours, as big as one's Head, covering a Man's Thigh, brought to Suppuration in eighteen or twenty Days by taking Mercury ?

HE assures us he made use of it with Success in several hard and schirrous Tumours ; those of a moderate Size, and of no very long Duration, were dissipated without Suppuration, and the large and old ones brought to a Suppuration by it.

HIS Solution of these Effects is natural and plain,

THESE Tumours are owing to Congestion as well as Obstructions in the Parts of the Body; which, as they cannot put themselves in Motion, do stand in Need therefore of something to disunite them. What more likely than Mercury to perform this?

ITS little Globules, divisible to Infinity, uniting with the Lymph, and rolling along with it inseparably, the Rotundity of their Figure making them at the same Time fit to combat the Obstacles they met with in their Way, they slide upon, strike, rub, and set in Motion the Particles of the Matters which were united, glued together, connected and coagulated in the Parts, or in the Glands; they render them fluid, reduce them to Pus, or carry them away with themselves, to throw them out of the Body by Perspiration, Stool, or Urine.

THE next Case that follows, is of a young Woman who had a Tumour on her right Cheek for two Years, which, when it suppurated, was dressed with a Tent, and that left a Fistula in the Parts, so that by Degrees she lost the Use of her lower Jaw, her Mouth almost closing, that she could take nothing in but Liquids; she was likewise cured by the same Medicine.

IN all scrophulous Cases Mercury is equally prevalent, whilst very few other Remedies affect
their

their Causes. The Source of this Disease is in the Blood, and their Seat in the Glands and Joints; and frequently, as he justly remarks, the Inheritance of our Ancestors Irregularities.

THE Acid which causes these cold Coagulations, is acknowledged to be exceeding difficult to be destroyed. Mercury, which is confessed to be the greatest Blunter of the Points of the Acids, does this by Degrees, by circulating with the Lymph in the Articulations, and in the scrophulous Glands, by gentle Degrees, it removes these Obstacles: Thus the Fatigue and Danger of a Salivation is saved.

THOUGH Instances of Tumours upon the Liver, the Breast, of long standing, being cured in a Month's Time, are standing Evidence of that Force and Friction with which Mercury acts to blunt the Acids; nay, what is farther recommendatory of it, though some in these Cases may be absolutely incurable, nothing is more fit to mitigate the Pain, prevent a further Progress, and to oppose Corruption and Stench.

HE likewise made use of his own Remedies himself, which few Physicians are willing to do, in a violent Fit of the Gravel, so that he voided small Stones with inconceivable Torture, Blood instead of Urine coming from him.

THIS Disease is occasioned, in his easily conceiv'd concise Manner of Description, by a thick glutinous Lymph. How natural then this Medicine, which so constantly renders it more fluid, and prevents any further Concretions of this Sort, in Retentions of Urine, occasioned by the same viscous Jelly in the Lymph, he prescribed the same to several Persons of Distinction, who all in a short Time made Urine with a full Stream, without the least Pain.

It appears then, to use his just Reasoning, that Mercury is serviceable in the Gravel; that it brings it away, and prevents stony Concretions, by destroying the Viscousness of the Lymph, which conglutinates the tartareous Particles of the Blood.

THIS Viscousness occasions much the same Symptoms as the Stone itself; and if it does not produce such exquisite Pain, the unhappy Patients are however frequently attended with Suppression of Urine, by its stuffing up the Tubes which should convey it into the Bladder: In such a Case, Mercury, by the Rotundity of its Particles, its Motion, and its Weight, is capable of breaking, dividing, dispersing, and consequently subtilizing, and destroying the Coagulation; and at the same Time it blunts the Points of the Acids, and forces them to let go whatsoever is connected with them.

IN another Disease, no less painful than the last, he found his Medicine no less efficacious, and that is the Cholic. The Patient was a Woman, and had been subject to it for three Years; by a double Dose of Mercury she was eased of these tormenting Pains, and before the Morning, after she had taken it, voided a Pailful of Excrements and Water: She must have had all the lower Belly stuffed with viscous and acid Humours, which occasioned a Tension and Irritation of the Intestines.

THIS prodigious and hasty Evacuation in this Case he does not deny to be the Effect of the Purgatives in some measure, but then no doubt the Mercury had its Share in contributing to it, by breaking the Humours, and making them more fit to be discharged, *i. e.* by its Weight determining it downwards.

FOR Mercury, as he conjectures, when received into the Stomach, is blended with whatever it meets with there; and as the lacteal Vessels imbibe whatever is subtle enough to enter their Orifices, the volatile Part of the Mercury is taken up by them, and conveyed into the Blood, which it renders more fluid and soft; and what remains in the Intestines, takes downwards, and pursues the Course of the Purgatives, opening and subtilizing the Acids and viscous Humours which it meets with in the Way, and

carrying off whatever is vicious or unserviceable to the Oeconomy,

As to what he relates of its Effects in the Itch, and all cutaneous Eruptions, Pimples, and Tettors spread over the Face and other Parts of the Body, they are easily accounted for already; the external Application hath been long in use in such Cases, which by exhausting the Acids, and opening the Skin, work a Cure. But a Salivation would in all likelihood ensue, in such Applications, should any of the acid Particles, when blended with the Mercury, re-enter into the Road of Circulation, upon which Account he affirms, crude Mercury taken in at the Mouth, to be the most effectual, certain, and expeditious.

BUT are not its Effects surprizing, when he assures us, that in a universal Leprosy, when the Head was in a sad Condition, and the whole Body covered with white Scales, yet by only taking a Pill every other Evening, towards Bed-time, the same Gentleman should in six Weeks time appear abroad with his Head and Neck clean as a Pearl, and perfectly cured? Can stronger Evidence be desired, of its rendring the Blood balsamic, and sweetening its acrimonious State?

THE Gout in its Infancy, the Rheumatism, the Siatica, all Diseases of the same Nature, though differently named from the different Parts of the
Body

Body affected, are all to be cured by swallowing Mercury, as frequent Experience had assured this Author on many Occasions; and the mechanical Solution of its Operations very obvious; to wit, by its Percussion, Friction, shaking, dislodging, and taking off the Points of Acids.

IN complicated Cases he gives us likewise Instances of its powerful Effects; and has that honest Mind, as not to conceal an Effect of it which might be apt to fright some of his Readers; which is, that in one of these Cases, (but then it was the only Time he ever knew it produce such a Consequence, though he had given it sometimes above six Months together) it excited a Salivation; but then it was so mild, as scarcely to warm the Mouth.

THIS is a particular Mark of a sincere ingenuous Disposition; I do not at all doubt, had he met with more of this Nature, he would as openly and frankly have confessed the Truth to the World.

IN Worms, and the Volvulus, or Iliaic Passion, this Medicine hath been long given; these Cases therefore I forbear to mention.

BUT he proceeds to shew, that it is a capital Enemy to all Kinds of Corruption; and that even worn externally, its Emanations are capable of securing the Body against malignant and infectious

infectious Air, of what kind soever it be, without Exception.

Mr. *Le Begue*, in his Treatise on the Pestilence of *Marseilles*, asserts, that this Infection has its Original from a Multitude of the Eggs of Worms which infect the Saliva, the Food, the Chyle, the nervous Juice, and finally the solid Parts, that the Heat of the Stomach hatches these Eggs, and then the young Worms do greedily devour a good Part of the Aliment, by which they increase to a certain Size, and then excite the first Symptoms of the Pestilence: According to this System nothing can be more proper to destroy these Worms, together with their Seeds, than Mercury: He shews that *Æthiops Mineralis* hath been prescribed in the Pestilence; and our *Boyle* is quoted, according to whom the Pestilence is found seldom to attack Persons who live in the Neighbourhood of Mercurial Mines; and upon Consideration that Mercury is extremely volatile, and that it transpires more than any other Metal, he thinks, that a Body prepared with his Mercury, or some other like it, provided it also carried about it little Bags of Mercury on the *Sternum*, and near the Emunctories, would be defended from infectious Air by the Atmosphere of mercurial Vapour surrounding it. If we examine well into this Matter, it is no other than one Vapour or one Air overpowering another.

THESE

THESE mercurial Vapours do likewise keep at a Distance from the Body the contagious Particles of the Small Pox. And he declares upon his own Knowledge, that several Persons make use of no other Preservative; and why may not then it have the same the Effect on pestilential Vapours? they differ but it regard to more or less.

HE instances in particular, in a Sovereign Prince, who had wore it about him more than fifty Years, to preserve him from this Disease, who when he wrote this Treatise was above fourscore, and never had it; and acknowledges that himself constantly wore it about him, with the same View, and with the same Success.

WHAT then, as he concludes, is more proper than Mercury to cure the Pestilence, the Small Pox, and all vermicular Diseases, as it destroys the Putrefaction which hatches the Worms, and dissolves the Coagulations which are reckon'd inseparable from these Diseases.

Mr. *Cicognini*, a Friend of our Author, (an eminent *Italian* Physician or Surgeon) had assured him likewise of this Matter of Fact, that 'tis common in *Italy* to wear crude Mercury for a Preservative against noxious Vapours; and that the Ladies also carry it about them to prevent the Jaundice and its Symptoms.

I SHALL not trouble the Reader with any farther Evidences : How far it may be useful as a Preservative against Contagions, when only worn about People, must be left to future Observation. These few Instances may convince us, that it hath been serviceable to some ; and indeed it carries an Air of likelihood along with it, especially, if the Persons who are apprehensive of catching any such Disease, at the same Time be so wise as to take Mercury inwardly ; for then by communicating itself to the Chyle, the Blood, and lastly to the Lymph, and accompanying it to all Parts of the Body, whereunto it is conveyed, and arriving with it at the Pores of the Skin, its volatile Parts escape in a mercurial Perspiration, and being darted against the surrounding Air, and meeting with the Vapour of that which is worn externally, they together form a sufficient Quantity capable of invironing the Body, and mundifying and clearing away whatever is vicious, malignant, and epidemical in the Air.

THUS we see what a Variety of Miracles Mercury is capable of working ; and yet how easily its Operations are accounted for : It insinuates itself into the Liquors, renders the Blood more soft, more fluid, and more fit to be carried and conveyed into the finest Vessels, at ever so great a Distance, by way of Circulation, in order to communicate Nourishment to the several Parts of the Body ; it destroys without Dispute, all Obstructions

structions and Obstacles; it opens the Tubes, and the depuratory Canals; it removes every Thing that might hinder the Distribution of the nutritious Juice, and the natural Course of the Fluids and Spirits, that it blunts the Acids, which occasion Leanness, and are the Foundation of a great Number of Infirmities; in short, it brings about the Evacuation of every thing that is heterogeneous and vicious, without meddling with any thing that is good and necessary.

It must therefore be a Specific in all Obstructions and Coagulations, where the Blood is too thick, the Humours viscid, and the Spirits obstructed. I shall pursue this Author no farther; what hath been already said, will give sufficient Light of the great Use it must of course be in Cataracts, Polypus's, and even a Sarcoccle: Experience had convinced *Belloste*, on a Multitude of Occasions, that Mercury was effectual in all these Excrescencies: From the foregoing Principles it is easy to conceive the Manner of its Operation; by rendering the Blood and Humours fluid, and fit for Circulation; their Thickness is the efficient Cause of these Diseases; and the Cause being removed, the Symptoms cease.

I CANNOT see how it can be disputed (tho' some Persons are pleased to make a Difficulty of it) that Mercury enters the Lacteals and lymphatic Vessels: 'tis true these are most minutely fine; and it is as true likewise, that Mercury

I

given

given in Substance in any Quantity, cannot remain long in the Stomach, but passing the Pylorus, it enters the Intestines, and is discharged by the *Anus*; so that perhaps none of it is communicated to the Liquors: But the Case is otherwise, when the Mercury is minutely divided in any proper Menstruum; it then mixes with the Chyle, insinuates itself easily into the Orifices of those Vessels, is carried into the Blood, and accompanies it in its Circulation.

No Man who considers its Fluidity and Divisibility, that there is scarce any Cohesion at all in the Parts of Mercury, and that a single Grain at a Touch will fly into 1000 Globules, and each of these again into 1000 lesser Globules, and so on past Comprehension; and yet all these, though infinitely reduced, remaining unchanged as to Weight, Opacity, and Separability: No Man who considers this, can doubt in the least either of its Capacity of entering these Vessels, or of its Capacity of doing infinite Service when entered.

AND this clearly accounts for that observable Circumstance mentioned by Dr. *Cheyne*, quoted above, where the *Æthiops*, after the Body had been fully replenished with it, in two Months Time forced itself through the sound Part of the Leg and Skin, and stuck to those Parts of the Plaister that covered them, in its proper Substance and Colour; and, indeed, this Passage of
Dr.

Dr. *Cheyne's* Essay is properly *Belloste's* Book in Miniature ; as *Belloste's* is the Doctor's at full Length.

WHAT an admirable Medicine then is Mercury ! A Specific in several, and next to one in most Diseases !

THE Pox, the Piles, scorbutic and scrophulous Ulcers ; Inflammations and Fluxions of the Eyes ; the Itch, the Leprosy, and all cutaneous Foulnesses ; internal Ulcers, Rheumatisms, White Swellings, Tumours, sharp Humours in the Stomach and Guts ; Stone, Gout, and Gravel : What an Army of the most terrible Foes ! against the major Part of which this Friend to Nature is a Specific, and the best Remedy against the rest that is yet known.

IF the *Frenchman* hath not reasoned right, his Facts, however, ought to be supposed true, till they are found false ; and I cannot find that any Body hath reason to doubt them ; in the general, his natural Way of accounting for the Operation agrees with Dr. *Freind* and Dr. *Cheyne*, two as good natural Philosophers as any that ever professed Physic : But the Credit of this Medicine does not rest here only, every Day's Experience convinces us of its incomparable Efficacy ; it is given in a multitude of Cases, and found serviceable in most : Though I cannot think it can be of that Benefit as most People now take it, crude and in Substance, especially if taken in any Quantity,

tity, because it doth not stay long enough in the Stomach, but passes expediting through the *prima via*, and so out at the *Anus*; but when it is received in a proper Menstruum, and remaining in the Stomach mixing with the Chyle, and entering the Road of Circulation, insinuating itself into all the finer Vessels and glandulous Parts, it is then it performs its wonderful Operation, sweetening the Mass of Blood, bearing down all Obstructions, blunting all the Spiculæ, the Points of the Acids, throwing off every thing that is vicious, and rendering all the Juices fit for Circulation in the finest Vessels.

How probable, how likely these Effects! when all the Properties of Mercury are considered; the least Reflection upon these forces us at once into a full Persuasion and Conviction of its extraordinary Use.

Its specific Gravity renders it the greatest Deobstruent wherever it comes; its Fluidity and Divisibility capacitate it for entering the minutest Orifices, and though never so minutely divided, it still preserves its first Prerogative, retaining still its Nature, and being the same specific Fluid: Its Parts are perfectly smooth and polite, of a globular Form, and free from all manner of Sharpness and Acrimony; hence it is capable of rolling along with the Blood and Juices and producing all these Alterations in them, which tend to preserve the animal Oeconomy.

I CANNOT help thinking therefore that it is the best and most universal Medicine in the whole *Materia Medica*, and in the Hands of a Skillful Physician, may do more Good than all the others put together have done Harm.

DR. *Turner* indeed, a Gentleman of good Learning and Practice, hath been pleas'd to censure the *French Man's Book* pretty severely, tho' I cannot find that he hath said one Word to the chief Point in Question, which I humbly apprehend to be the Truth or Falsity of the Facts mention'd therein; No Matter whether those Instances are philosophically or unphilosophically accounted for; are they true?

IT is a very Trifle, whether the Operations of his Mercury are mechanically and artfully solv'd? Did his Mercury do the Service it is affirm'd to have done in his Book? If it did, I suppose it may do as much good to *English* Constitutions as to *French*: If Physick will work a Cure, its End is obtain'd, no Matter whether the Doctor can account for one step of the Process.

THIS is the first thing to be regarded; a History of Facts is the most serviceable, a stronger Argument in behalf of any Medicine, than the most plausible Scheme the most philosophical Doctor ever yet invented: Not that I am against such Amusements; I have often been well entertained

tain'd by 'em; they shew much Ingenuity: let 'em only possess their proper Place and Order. The most Ingenious Physician doth not always do the most Good in his Practice; It is one thing to give a pretty Account for the Causes of Diseases, and the Effects of Remedies, and another to understand the Motions of Nature, and when to relieve her. But to the Doctor.——“ When I
 “ look'd over this Book, says he, however un-
 “ philosophical, yet there seem'd to run through
 “ a great part thereof an Honest Intention of
 “ serving the Publick;” and what made the Doctor change his Opinion? only because *Belloste*, like most other Men, was resolv'd to make the most he could of his Nostrum. “ But so soon as I
 “ found him making a Secret of what is known
 “ to the whole World, valuing so common a
 “ Remedy at an extravagant rate, and this con-
 “ trary to a Promise he had formerly made of
 “ divulging the same, I was forced to alter my
 “ Opinion both of the Man and his Medicine;
 “ and can esteem the latter no other than a Piece
 “ of vile Empiricism, related to that of his Coun-
 “ try Man's *M——n's*, at this time with us:
 “ Which Promise he now tells us must be left
 “ to his Family (who it seems are to subsist up-
 “ on Quackery when he is gone) whether it shall
 “ be ever fulfill'd or not.”

For my own Part, I confess myself very lit-
 tle solicitous about Names; if this piece of vile
 Empiricism hath actually done the Service *Belloste*
 affirms

affirms of it, a few hard Terms will hardly suspend its Effects in similar Cases: " But leaving
 " this to fare as it may happen, I think we may
 " assure our Reader, that whoever can inviscate
 " and rub thoroughly the common Quicksilver
 " with Turpentine, till reduced into the most
 " subtle Particles, or 'tis render'd invisible, then
 " incorporating with any of our Dispensatory
 " Purging Pills, provided he hath Skill enough
 " to adjust the Dose to the Patients Strength
 " and Nature of his Disease, is Master of as good
 " a Remedy of this kind as either of our Secret-
 " Mongers can be." This is something handsomer
 than the last Period, and the best Method in the
 World to beat down all Pretenders: Discoun-
 tenance them not with harsh Expressions, which
 are easily given on both Sides, but with the Cer-
 tainty, the Expedition, the Cheapness of your
 Practice.

" I MUST own that I have found it often an-
 " swer in a milder *Lues*, as well as *Lepra*, in a
 " stubborn Itch and pustulous Eruption, though
 " by its too long Continuance at some times
 " (whatever this Gentleman may alledge to the
 " contrary) I have observ'd sore Chaps and a
 " stinking Mouth, as more than once from
 " M——n's Quack Pills." I have nothing to say
 concerning this Person; but as to *Belloste*, he doth
 not alledge to the contrary, but hath frankly
 confess'd that he found the same in one particu-
 lar Instance, but then it was the only one, very
 mild,

mild, and the Mouth but just warm'd. An Indication this, methinks, of an honest Mind!

“WHAT is still worse, an Hæmiplegia has ensued the ill-tim'd Use of the same Remedy;” As if it were any thing surprizing that ill Consequences shou'd ensue the ill-tim'd Use of any Remedy whatever.

I CAN now say with this Gentleman, “That I shall not detain you longer in pursuing Monsieur's mechanick Solution of the Effects of Quicksilver, in either Way of its Administration;” because the Goodness of the Medicine, or the Reputation of *Belloste* doth not rest upon his Mechanick Solutions of the Effects of Quicksilver, but upon the Effects themselves only in the Cases he hath set down.

F I N I S.



