

A letter from the celebrated Dr. Tissot, to Dr. Zimmerman, on the morbus niger; including some apposite cases equally curious and interesting. The whole illustrated with an account of the morbid appearances of the dissected bodies / ... Translated from the French by John Burke, M.D.

Contributors

Tissot, S. A. D. (Samuel Auguste David), 1728-1797
Burke, John McDonald
Zimmerman, Dr.

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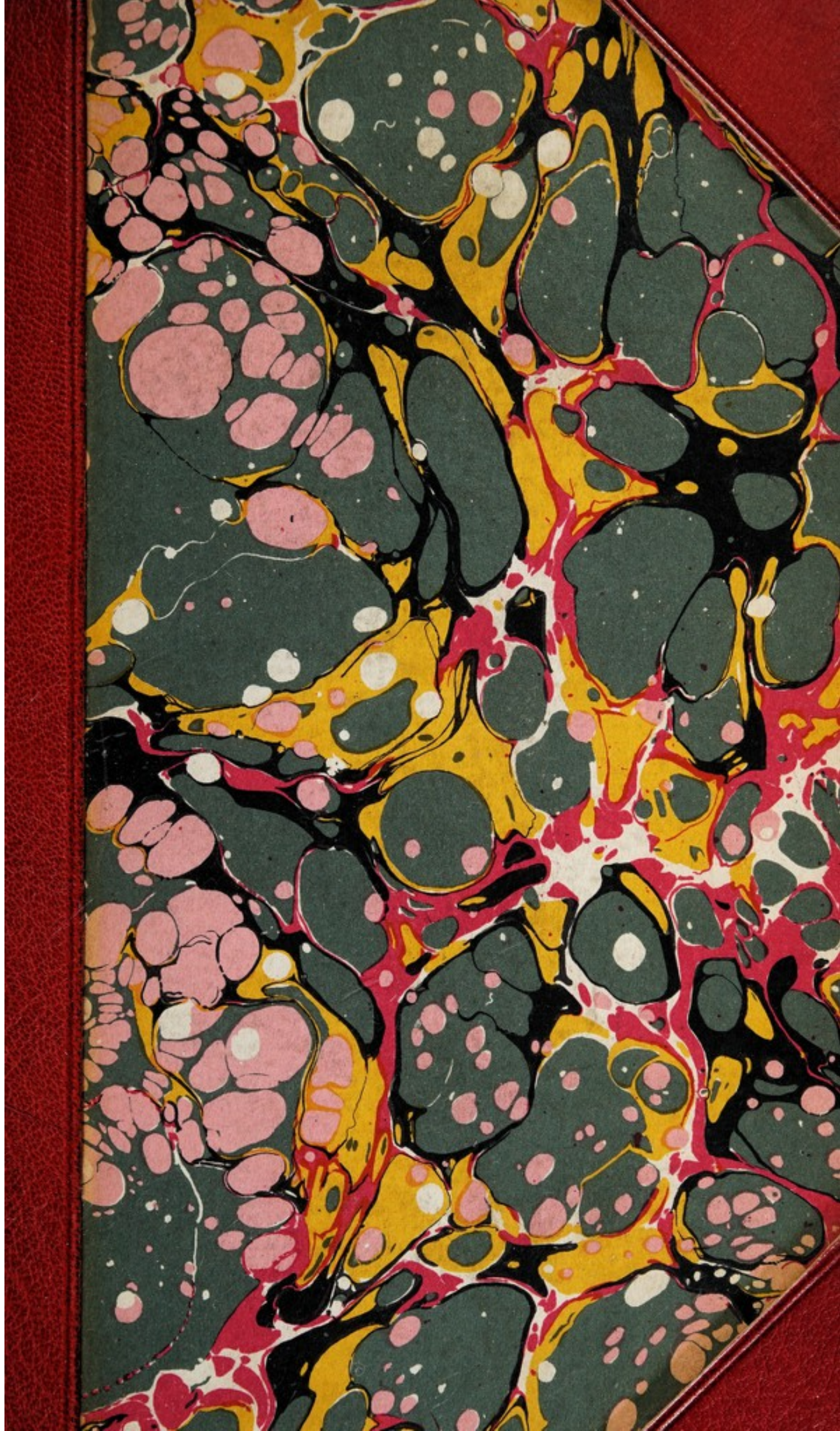
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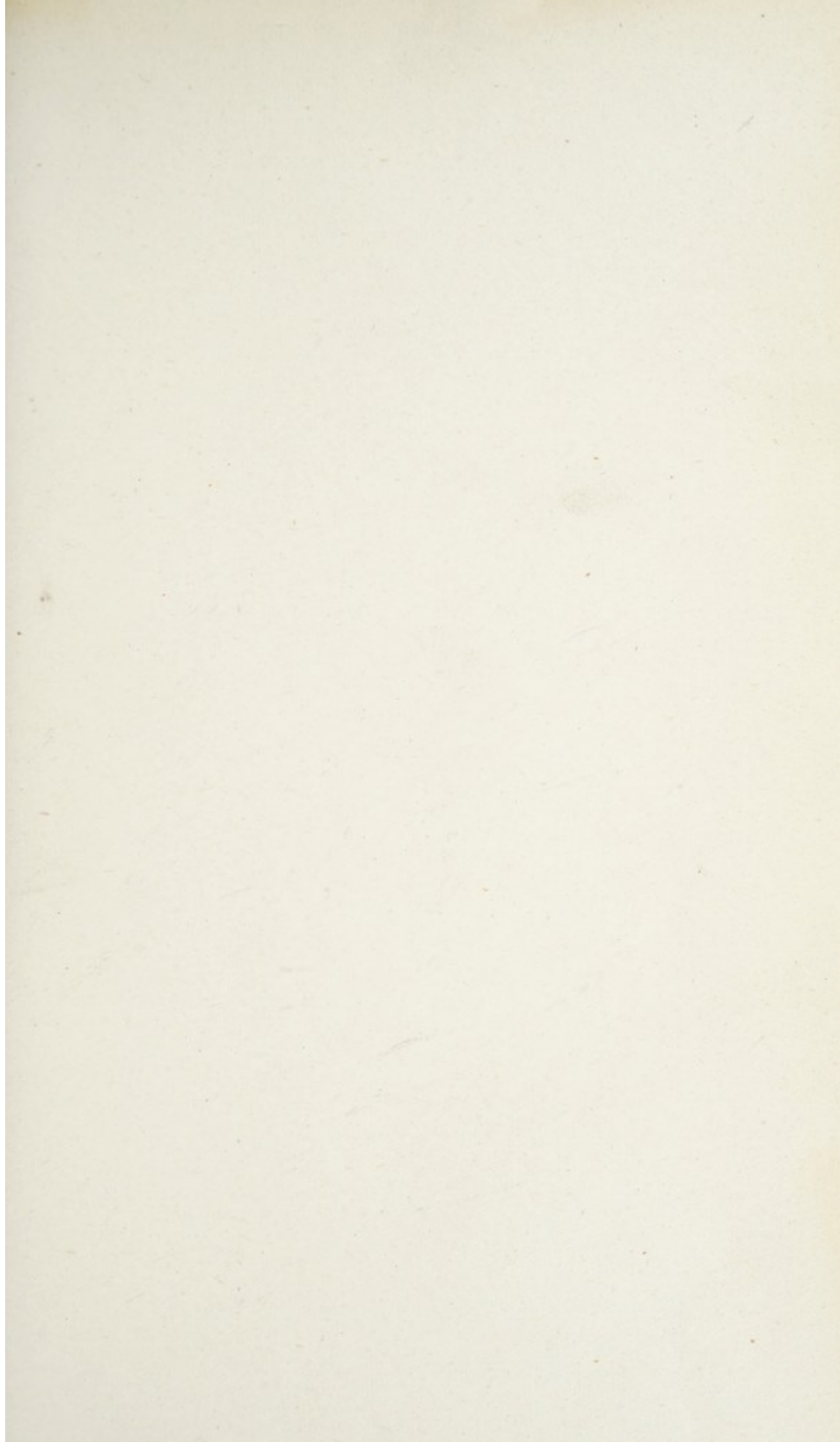
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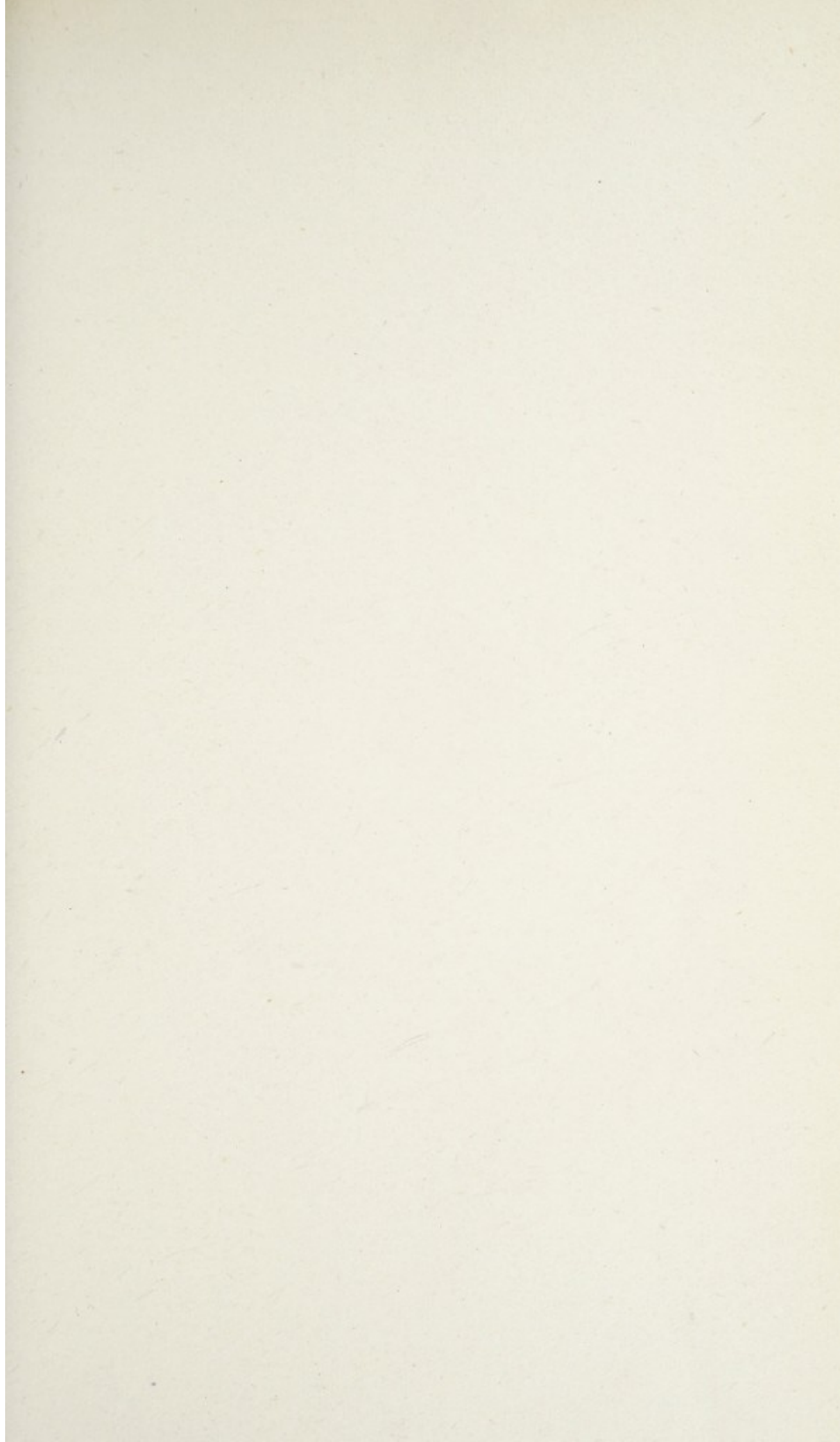
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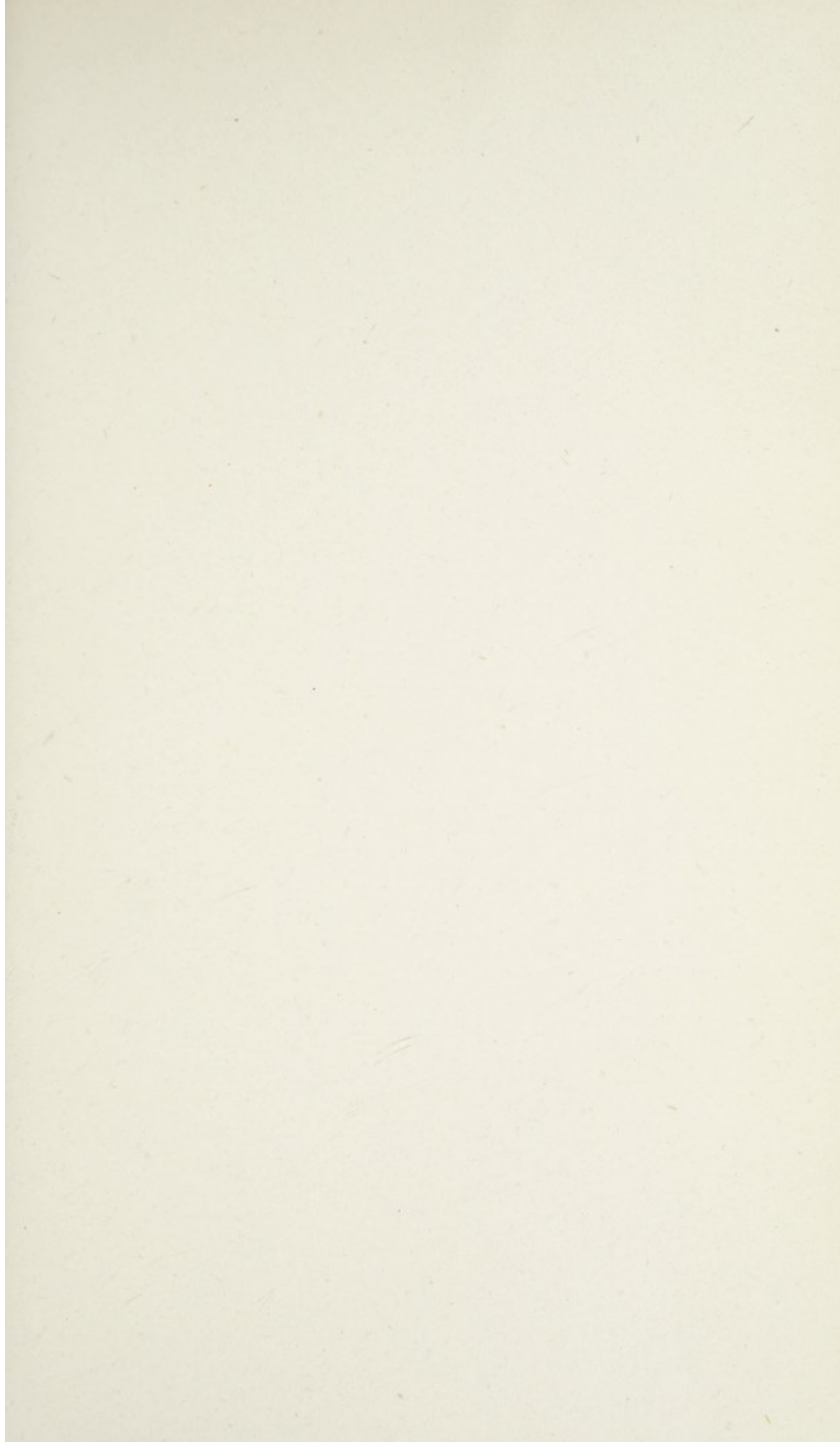


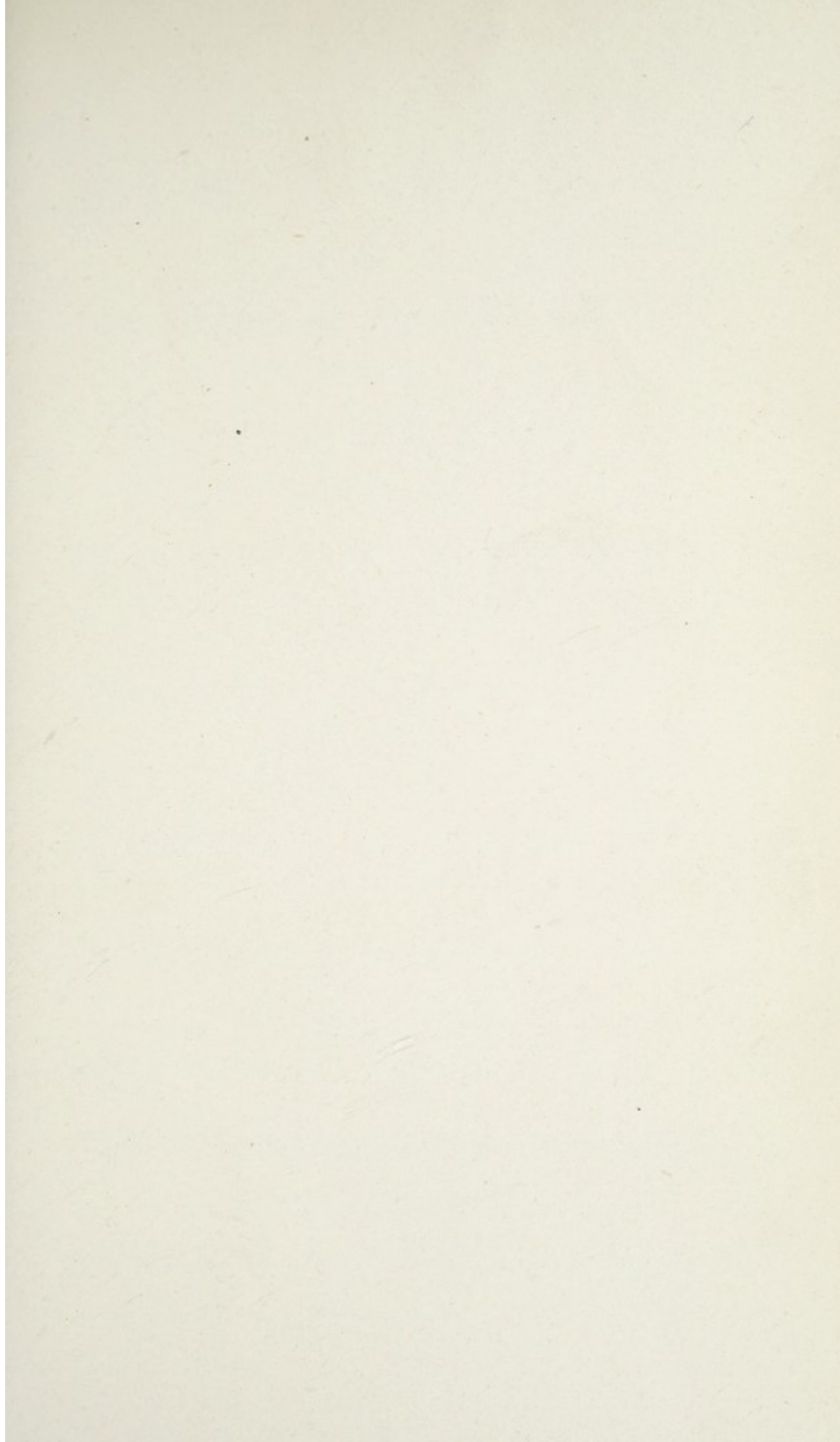


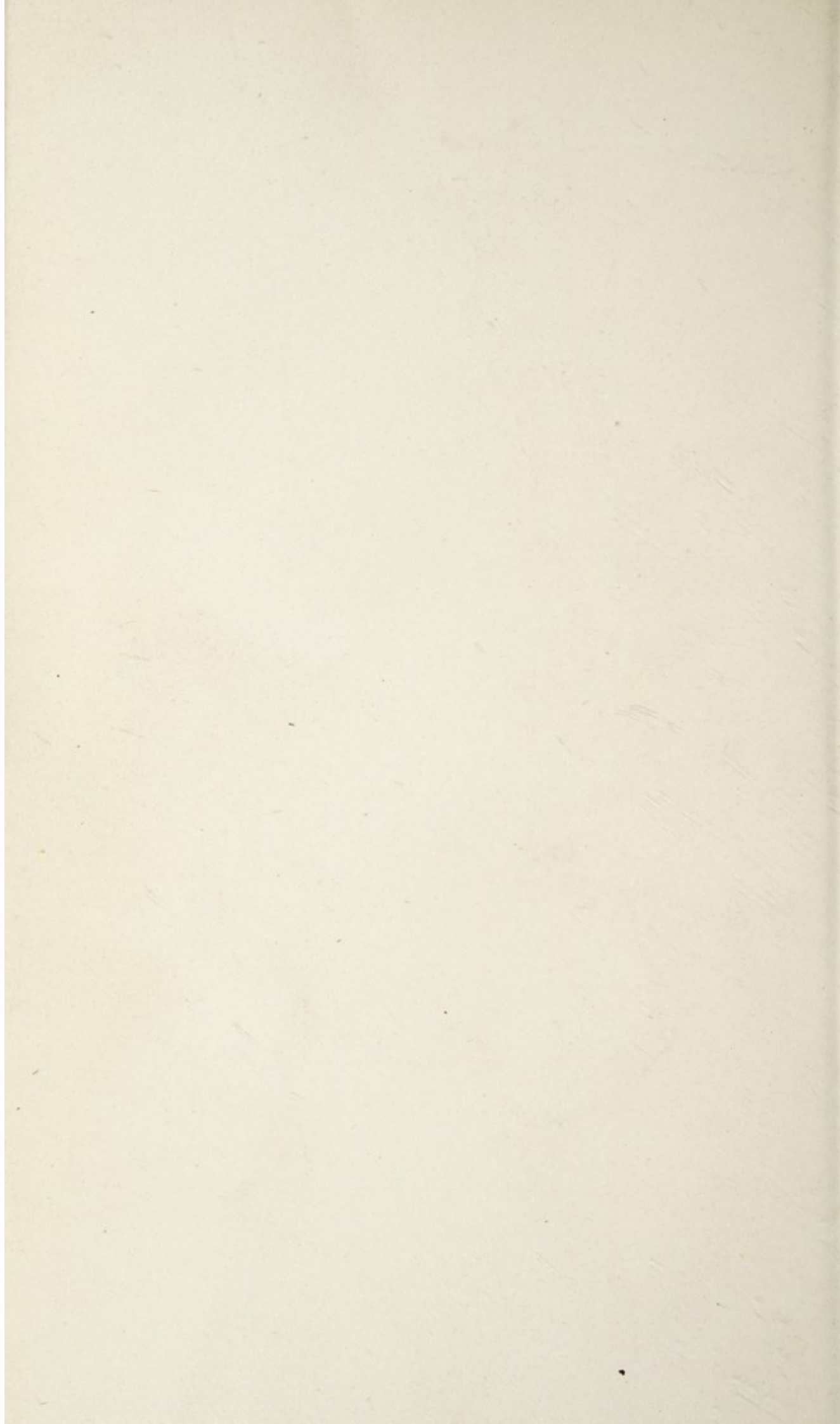


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N. C. Zucchi
To Pitt.
A
L E T T E R
F R O M
The Celebrated Dr. TISSOT,
T O
Dr. ZIMMERMAN,
O N T H E
M O R B U S N I G E R;
Melana Hemorrhagica Sauvage —
I N C L U D I N G

Some apposite C A S E S equally curious and
interesting.

The Whole illustrated with

An Account of the Morbid Appearances of the
dissected Bodies.

Translated from the French

By JOHN BURKE, M. D.

L O N D O N :

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THE TIT FOR

TOM

THE CATHARTIC DR. TISSOT,

DR. SUMNERMAN,

ON THE

MORBUS NIGER

INCUBING

Some Remarks on the

Incubation

of the Morbus Niger

An Account of the Morbus Niger

by Dr. T. T. T.



P R E F A C E.

IT is agreed on all hands that no means are so conducive to the advancement of medical knowledge, as minute and dispassionate details of morbid cases. Hereby we reap the same advantages with the laborious practitioner in point of experience, without running an equal risque of reputation: thus, we enter into consultation with him, and on the one hand avail ourselves of that opinion, to which reason and success give their sanction; whilst on the other we may rectify the errors which he ingenuously acknowledges, or the event arraigns him with. The ever respectable Hippocrates, well aware of the great importance of this mode

mode of proceeding exerted the most indefatigable endeavours, to collect accounts of the principal cases that occurred; and these we have handed down to us with his distinguished accuracy. The other luminaries of physic have followed his steps. To the happiness of our countrymen and the credit of our physicians, we may observe that this laudable scheme has more attention paid to it here than elsewhere: witness the medical collections of the learned societies established here, and in Scotland. To this spirit of observation it is in a great measure that we owe the indisputable ascendancy we maintain over our neighbours: it is notorious that whilst on the other side the English channel the patient is learnedly passed through their various stages of theoretical preparation for medicine, he is simply and radically cured, here. And it may not seem impertinent on this occasion to take notice of a little sarcasm which I have heard drop in public from a professor of anatomy of distinguished abilities in Paris. *Les Anglois, says he, ont de grands médecins, mais ils sont un peu charlatans.* England can boast of excellent

cellent physicians, but they are somewhat empirical.—In the course of the same lecture he judiciously observed, *que la vraie médecine n'est qu'une charlatanerie raisonnée*; true physic is but empiricism regulated by reason. I should then have bowed to him for the indirect compliment he before payed my countrymen, though self-sufficiently thrown out with a view to reflect on them; for this is equivalent to a concession that the English physicians are the only true physicians.

If the reflections I have been just now making should coincide with the general opinion, the present letter of the celebrated Dr. Tissot will have a just claim to general attention. The observations it contains seemed of so interesting a nature to an eminent physician here, that he expressed a desire of having them communicated to the public by a translation. This desire is now complied with, and it is hoped that their approbation will concur with his to make the translator satisfied with his undertaking. The subject matter of the first observations being very little known, must be acceptable to every one who has a laudable zeal for
im-

improvement in his profession. Were a man never to be exposed to the mortification of treating an unknown disorder ill, yet it is highly derogatory to the character of a physician to be ignorant of any thing that regards the art he professes. Should the reader have the joint motives of curiosity and improvement to satisfy in taking the following cases in hand, I flatter myself he will not be disappointed.

tions, the precepts, the opinions, the doubts, in a word, the errors, which have been advanced on this dreadful disorder: but distracted as I am by the number of sick who intrust themselves to my care, I am necessitated to wave this design for the present, and shall content myself with transmitting to you, in the stile of a man who writes to his friend, a clear and faithful account of the two cases which fell under my inspection.

First Case.

A man of fixty, who was subject to an asthma since he reached the age of forty, had, by a sedentary life and a close application to religious studies, impaired a habit of body naturally very vigorous and healthy. For three successive years he was seized about spring with an ague, for which I treated him successfully. His recovery from the last attack was attended with an unusual sort of vigour, which I looked upon with a suspicious eye. The following summer however, the warm weather, with an intermission of his reading, im-

improved the state of his health pretty much for some months. He was not troubled with his asthma, and he had no complaint, but some colic pains now and then, for which he did not think it worth while to take medicines, as they gave him little uneasiness. Towards the latter end of this year, his pains encreased about the umbilical region, the sternum and in his back: they became exceeding troublesome after his meals, howsoever exact he might have been in the choice of his diet, and produced such extreme weakness, that he dreaded he should not survive it. He found some relief by kneeling down and leaning, with his body inclined, upon the seat of his chair. The unhappy sufferer, mistaking the nature of his complaint and looking upon it to be flatulent, took large quantities of coffee and spirit of cherries, both to ease his pain and raise his spirits; and regulating his diet upon equally false grounds, added the use of warm drinks. When his pains remitted, he was feeble, faint, and dejected, his stools were liquid, his urine crude, but the other appearances were such as a state of health presents.

In the month of March I was suddenly called to his relief one day after dinner; I found him in the attitude I mentioned before, pale and weak; he had thrown up about eight ounces of reddish black blood, after having been seized with the most violent pains, severe anguish and a deliquium; the pain and anxiety had now quitted him. I soon discovered that some blood-vessels having been a long time overdistended with the contained fluid, had at length burst and produced an internal hemorrhage. It was obvious what opinion to form upon such symptoms. Hippocrates holds them to be mortal. I ventured however to entertain some hopes from the patient's strength and the softness and evenness of his pulse: he had no feverish symptom; and I had known similar distempers which did not end so desperately.

The success which attended the practice of other physicians in cases of this nature, and a due consideration of the disease, directed me to dissolve and evacuate the extravasated blood lest it should degenerate to a putrid state; to pre-

prevent any future effusion; and to keep up the patient's strength.

To satisfy these intentions, I ordered him first, to be put to bed, and to be kept there quiet and lightly covered; that his diet should be the *Cremor Hordei*, which is the *Ptisana Colata* of Hippocrates: he was better pleased with the taste of that made of oats; I desired that he should drink frequently and a little at a time, of a posset made with almonds and light broths or milk, and lastly that he should take an emollient glyster twice a day.

Ordering in the mean while that one of warm water should be injected, he voided very little fæces after it, but a good deal of black clammy blood, partly liquid, partly in lumps of the size of an egg and very difficult to separate from the bottom of the chamberpot. These are evidently the characteristic marks of the *Atra bilis* of the ancients, and the *Morbus Niger* of Hippocrates. The glyster administered in the afternoon was followed by such another stool. During the four ensuing days he was free both from Nausea and pain; he slept some hours at night; his stools were still
black,

black, and his urine slightly tinged; and he was recovering his strength; it is true that he did not deviate from my orders in any one particular.

His amendment giving me to understand that the blood-vessels which were the source of the hemorrhage were closed again, I prescribed a decoction of tamarinds in order to evacuate what yet remained in the *Primæ Viæ*. This brought away seven stools, some of which, and particularly the last was not so black as usual, and, by the mixture of yellow it contained, promised a change of matters for the better.

The next day having taken a glyster he voided fæces of a good condition, and afterwards I indulged him with a little bread and skirrets.

On the ninth day he undoubtedly ate a little too much, and growing uneasy for about an hour, he fell into a deliquium and vomited a little blood of a good colour; upon which I forbad him his bread and skirrets. Since that time his stools present a good appearance, he feels neither pain nor uneasiness, observes an
exact

exact regimen, and lives upon vegetable food by choice. In fine he enjoys as good a state of health, as an old man possibly can, harassed as he has been with a severe complication of diseases, continual pains, vexation, and to crown all, with a copious flux of blood and a rigorous diet. This naturally weakened him; if however his stomach should loath other victuals, I shall advise him to live upon milk alone.

This disorder then as I told you before was an internal hemorrhage and the black matter was degenerated blood; I suppose you are of the same opinion: but the subject admits of further enquiries.

For instance, it may perhaps be asked whether this is the *Atra bilis*. Though it is with reluctance I depart from the opinions of our common Chief, yet the force of truth will not permit me to hold the affirmative of this question: my avocations do not allow me to set forth my reasons at present, and to consider whether this same *Atra bilis* is, or is not, a creature of imagination.

It

It may be asked, in the next place, what the nature of the affection, previous to the hemorrhage, was. I answer, an overcharging of the blood-vessels which encompass the stomach and intestines. Thence proceeded a compression on the nerves and pain; the reception of food, as it enlarges the volume of these membranous viscera, encreases the compression too; then the pains redouble; and abate as soon as there is a discharge of blood. This opinion is agreeable to the observation which Kæmphius made and communicated to the public upon dissecting a man who died of a like distemper, he discovered the gastric arteries stuffed with black blood. The stomach, being disordered in its function, occasioned the crude and liquid condition of the stools. In a word, the intermissions and the other symptoms of this disease will not escape the attention of any one, who is well aware, how many causes are capable of varying the impetus of the blood in its vessels, and the sensibility of the nerves. But besides, the remote cause of this malady may be enquired into: and I believe we may lay down five. The relaxation of the vessels,

vessels, brought on both by the intermittents (which produce that effect, whatever may be said to the contrary) and by the emollient regimen, which is appropriated to the cure of them: the want of the exercise necessary to promote the circulation in the vessels of the stomach and intestines: the constrained attitude he sat in during his intense application to study; the coffee, spirit of cherries, and warm drinks he had recourse to: and lastly the improper use of vomits of which he made too frequent trials for several years.

Are there no more powerful medicines than those which I prescribed? Undoubtedly there are, and they are cried up even by men of reputation. But my dear friend, as your sagacity, learning and physical experience make you a competent judge of the matter, I shall lay before you the reasons which induce me to think that they would be either fruitless or dangerous on the present occasion. Bleeding, which is the first thing that occurs to consideration in cases of an hemorrhage, is unserviceable, not to add prejudicial; this I am convinced of by the concurring arguments of

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reason

reason, the authority of capital authors, and my own observations. Here I was furnished with too many reasons to refrain from it; the patient, tormented for a long time with an asthma (a disorder so apt to degenerate into a hydrops pectoris) was at that time very feeble, free from any feverish symptoms, and emaciated by the weakness of the digestive powers, and by a faint and lingering convalescence. How much soever vomits may be recommended upon false principles of theory by respectable writers, could I reasonably prescribe them, without clashing with the most unexceptionable rules of practice? This remedy causes hemorrhages sometimes, when the blood-vessels are in the soundest state, and of course it would be no less than mortal, when they are already burst in any part.

Should I not have made use of purgatives, conformably to my intention of evacuating? Even the mildest of that class, might have brought on a return of the vomiting, by their action on a stomach so irritable and apt to nauseate. I pass over the others in silence; they may be looked upon as poison: they all
stimu-

stimulate the parts, and my purpose was to keep them in a state of tranquility; too precipitate an evacuation would have done some great damage. Let us observe what passes in external wounds: do we not see them bleed afresh, if the little obstructing clots are too roughly removed from the orifices of the vessels? the same thing will naturally happen to internal wounds. On the other hand, the glysters answer every good end that could be expected from the purgatives; they temper, they excite, without irritating, a gentle peristaltic motion, which counteracts that of vomiting; and it is this, that renders them so effectual in similar cases.

It might perhaps have been wished that I had prescribed drinks of a more resolvent or of a more acid quality. But unluckily while I look over the medicines ranked in the former of these two classes, I cannot meet with any, void of a dangerous acrimony; besides, as the diameter of the intestines is sufficiently wide for the free passage of the larger clots of blood, it is to be apprehended that a dilution of this corrupted substance would favour its absorption into the vascular system, and would

therefore be attended with alarming consequences.

Messrs. Navier and Bonté, to whom we are indebted for good observations on the Morbus Niger, set a great value on the acid spirits, and among the rest on the Aqua Rabel-læ (dulcified Spirit of Vitriol) to which I should prefer the pure spirit of vitriol here; these acids are undoubtedly possessed of an antiputrid quality in an eminent degree; they mitigate heat and feverish symptoms; but my patient was free from both; I therefore could have but very distant apprehensions of a putrid diathesis, and I looked upon the almond drinks to be sufficient to answer the indication of preventing it, not pretending at the same time but that more powerful medicines might have been made use of.

I did not venture to allow my patient any kind of meat; this sort of food is too apt to favour an hemorrhage and putrefaction, and to generate feverish symptoms. The preference is undoubtedly to be given to that nourishment, which the experience of so many ages proves to be of a temperate, sweetening,
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nutritive and cooling quality, I mean the Ptisanna Percolata of the Immortal Hippocrates.

If we consider the weakness of this patient, it seemed naturally consequent to prescribe the medicines, improperly called cordials. But their action would infallibly have brought on the flux of blood from the intestines again, whence this same weakness proceeded; and instead of subduing the disease by this method, I should have dispatched the patient by the effect of these volatil, spirituous, and such like substances.

Do not imagine that I flatter myself with certain hopes of having radically cured my patient. This is so much the less to be expected, because art cannot, upon the weak and exhausted habit of this old man, ground any prospect of restoring him to his native vigour. But I have perhaps dwelt too long upon this observation; my patient did not however sink under his disease. The issue of the following case was not so successful.

Second

Second Case.

An ingenious tradesman, of honest parentage, aged thirty, and married for several years past to a young wife of an excellent constitution, happened to ask my advice about two years ago, for pains in his stomach, so severe that they deprived him of all his strength at the time of the paroxysm. My first treatment of this complaint proved unsuccessful. This led me to suspect that it sprung from a more grievous cause than that which determined me to adopt this method of cure; and hereupon, I put him to a milk diet, and added thereto the assistance of some medicine, which has totally escaped my memory, as these previous particulars were not set down in any of my day-books. Some weeks after, I met him and received his thanks for the recovery of his health. Since that time I did not hear of him, till I was informed of the return of his pains. Being sent for the 23d of March at eleven o'clock, I found him extremely weak, hardly able to speak, and to prevent his fainting

ing totally, he was constantly obliged to smell to vinegar; his aspect was cadaverous, his pulse hardly sensible, and so quick that the pulsations could scarce be reckoned, he was free from any other pain except an importunate tenesmus, occasioned by the efforts of nature. To give you a further account of the disorder, in the beginning of last Summer, a physician conjecturing that he had got obstructions of the liver, the spleen, or pancreas, prescribed him some medicines, which procuring no relief, were succeeded by the use of the waters of Lucca; which this doctor ordered him to drink, and to bathe in. He certainly was not of the same opinion with our celebrated friend Haller, nor with Kæmphiuss, who proves that in this sort of affection, steel and mineral waters are contraindicated; and you know that the waters of Lucca are impregnated with iron; however the patient returned from thence better, and continued so for a fortnight but no longer. Yet how delusive a recovery was this! for then his disorder grew worse from day to day. He was attacked during the whole winter with

pains

pains in the loins and stomach, and a vomiting of limpid water; no food could pass with him, and he was reduced to the necessity of living for several weeks upon broth and a certain kind of pastry called lecrelets. In the night of the 21st instant, this unhappy patient being solicited to go to stool by intolerable pains, fell into a deliquium, and when he was put into his bed again, his weakness encreased to an extraordinary pitch. The physician was sent for in the morning; who, attending to the strength of the sick (for that is the first indication to be followed in order to the preservation of life) ordered him a cordial draught, composed of Aq. Meliss. Tinctur. Castor: and the Syr. Cort. Citrei. to be often repeated; his faintness encreased still, and he rendered fæces of a black colour. Towards night he was ordered another mixture with tamarinds, extract of rhubarb, and Sal acetosæ to be taken by spoonfuls: of this he had hardly swallowed any, when he was seized with a vomiting of fæces, and an unremitting succession of syn-
copes; the purging potion was omitted, his
state

state grew more and more desperate; and about noon he expired.

His brothers, with whom the good of all sick people, and particularly, their sister, (who was afflicted with a pain in her stomach) justly overbalanced the vulgar prejudice, desired to have the body opened, in order to discover the cause of so dreadful a disorder. I was called to assist at the dissection with the other physician, and here follows the result thereof.

The whole body and particularly the Spina dorsi appeared so emaciated, that it sufficiently denoted a Tabes Dorsalis; and this conjecture is confirmed by the relief he perceived after a long absence from home. This perhaps was the only cause of his amendment during his stay at the waters of Lucca. There was no adhesion, no defect in the thorax, except the paleness and inanition of the heart, the lungs and blood-vessels; on opening the abdomen we discovered the muscles bare and quite destitute of fat, as well as the stomach, which was in its natural state and situation. The intestines which were overspread with red and black spots, and filled with wind, resembled those

of one that had died of a gangrene in that part, with the difference of the smell, and the obliteration of the vessels; in the same manner were the vessels of the stomach so effaced, that the strictest search to observe any, was fruitless. The spleen and the liver offered to our view no other defect than a lighter colour than the natural, and a diminution of their volume. The gall-bladder was contracted and only filled with air; the Ductus Choledochus, the pancreas and the kidneys presented no appearance of obstructions: so that all the viscera, to whose charge the mischief was placed, were in a sound state, and only the stomach and intestines were found to be in fault. As soon as they were opened, we perceived a quantity of black blood to stream from the whole tube; that of the stomach, being diluted by the drink, was not so deep coloured, but from thence to the anus it grew more and more black and viscous, particularly in the large guts, where it was equal to pitch in colour and consistence. That contained in the parts overrun with red spots, was fluid; elsewhere it was entirely black, and after it

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was cleared out of the intestines, they resumed their natural colour.

Now let us enquire what is the cause of the patient's death. An hemorrhage whence proceeded a faintness, syncopes, and an inanition of the vessels, which circulated little or no blood during several months past.

The vascular system of the stomach and intestines being overdistended gave rise to this hemorrhage, let it be, if you will, a chronic inflammation; however, no one has given a better description of this excessive plenitude, than Monsieur Kæmpf.

Could this fatal issue of the disorder be foreseen? Let us listen to the respectable Hippocrates, his aphorism runs thus. "Those
" painful commotions, which part from the
" loins, and proceed to the orifice of the sto-
" mach, and which are attended with aqueous
" vomitings, end in a vomiting of a black
" matter."

But previous to the hemorrhage was there no possibility of performing a cure? Kæmpf recommends a vegetable and sparing diet, and gives the preference to vegetables of a mild

and somewhat saponaceous quality, particularly to whey, taken in small and often repeated doses with *extractum sambuci*; in this particular I agree with him, but cannot after mature consideration conceive that any good can be effected by the other medicines he allies with these just mentioned, which are all of a sharp irritating nature. As for the method to be followed after the hemorrhage has declared itself, I have treated that point in my reflections on the foregoing observation.

Supposing we could go so far as to get the better of the hemorrhage, the patient should, in order to prevent the return of it, be debarred the use of every thing that is capable of occasioning a plethora, encreasing the motion of the fluids, rendering them acrimonious, and stimulating the intestines; and we should prescribe, among the strengtheners such as do not exasperate the solids. For it is to be expected that, if we do not restore the relaxed tonus of those vessels weakened by a continual distention of a long standing, the first disturbance that shall happen in them, will burst them again. The agreeable Redi, in his entertaining

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ing letters, which have an ample claim to the reader's applause by the bare merit of their elegant stile, says with very much justice that nature is frequently self-sufficient, and that she in time enables the blood-vessels to recover their strength by the assistance of a light temperate diet. But when the relaxation of the fibres is of an old date and owing to some grievous cause, here it is adviseable that art should step in to the assistance of nature. And in this case as in many others it is, that the ensuing success has declared in favour of the proper treatment.

Should we ask the disciples of Stahl what the disorder of this unhappy sufferer was, they would not fail to distinguish it with the title of an hemorrhoidal colic, and upon this ground they would maintain that the piles would be serviceable to him. It must be allowed that an evacuation by this outlet would procure some relief, considering the infinite number of insculations by which the vascular system is united; for it is but reasonable to suppose that there was not a general destruction of the vessels, but that only a few suffered, through which the blood extravasated. And had it
been

been the hemorrhoidal branches alone that supplied this discharge, it is warranted by a number of observations that the same benefit would have been attained: but does it thence follow that the piles ought to be brought on? I think not. The piles but seldom forward the cure of diseases, and then the service they may be of, is attended with troublesome consequences. You see how many inconveniences the monthly flux, as natural a discharge as it is, renders women incident to; then the piles intail the same disorders upon men. Several observations confirm this assertion; Santorini, Richter, Guntz, Heister, Tralles, who are all of them first-rate writers, have subscribed to it; and Monsieur de Haen has lately set it in the clearest light with his known erudition and sagacity.

I shall add, that it is dangerous to provoke the piles in the disorder which is the subject of our discussion. For, who can answer that the stimulating medicines, which must necessarily be prescribed to promote this discharge, and yet are contra-indicated in the primitive affection, will rather exert their action on the hemorrhoidal than on the iliac vessels.

vessels. It is then to be apprehended that this course would add fuel to fire and dispatch the patient. What I here advance is confirmed by some excellent observations of Doctor de Haen, on the different effects produced by the piles, according to the respective vessels which supply the discharge. I must own at the same time that I do not look upon it to be of any great consequence, whichever of the small branches proves the source of the flux: it is of much more serious moment to be aware that, supposing our patient should recover by this alternative, his disorder will incessantly return as soon as the portion of blood that has been lost shall be reproduced. In this particular it may properly be compared to the colic pains that forerun the appearance of the Catamenia; nothing but the evacuation can give a reprieve from it, and it will continually revert if no other remedy is employed. It would be therefore idle to ground the hopes of a radical cure upon this discharge, for it will only procure a palliative, doubtful and treacherous amendment: we should then be strictly on our guard against bringing it on, unless the use of the emollient glysters

glysters (which are so essential to our purpose) may be looked upon as productive of this effect. Do not imagine in the mean time that I take the colic, with which this man was afflicted, to be an hemorrhoidal colic; I only maintain that though that were the case, all possible means should be exerted to prevent the appearance of the piles, because, as Heister says with much justice, their casual obstruction (to which I shall add the too great quantity thereof) easily gives birth to an infinite number of accidents subsequent to the troublesome ills which they suspend.

From our observations may be drawn many inferences of great import in practice: I shall only mention one. Those severe, inveterate pains of the stomach, the loins and the intestines, are a matter of more weighty consideration than they are usually thought to be; and the bitter, aromatic and spirituous medicines, which are opposed to them, are unsafe and even destructive, while the class of coolers on the other hand supplies us with good stomachics. How many have been daily dispatched by the pernicious custom of prescribing

scribing carminatives to remedy pretended flatulent complaints!*

I have now fulfilled my engagement with respect to the Morbus Niger: but I am just

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* Simson, in the last of his four excellent dissertations intitled *de re medicâ*, gives us an instance of this disorder, ushered in by symptoms, somewhat different from these already laid before us, and otherwise treated. I therefore take the freedom to present the judicious reader with a comparative view of it. This learned author, enlarging on the uses of the mucous coat that lines all the cavities of the human body, takes more particular notice of that which defends the Cardia, or upper orifice of the stomach, and the ill consequences arising from the privation of it. The things most powerfully productive of this bad effect he takes to be spirituous liquors, warm drinks, particularly of a saponaceous quality, and such other substances as are capable of dissolving this slime with which nature sheathed the fibres of the Cardia, and so exposing them to the action of all kinds of stimuli. Hence a cardialgia, if not taken timely notice of, becomes the treacherous forerunner of more dangerous ills. This he reasons on very soundly, and illustrates with the only example he ever met with, wherein the most desperate stages of the disease fell under his own inspection.

“ George Lowe, a labouring man of fifty, consulted me about a distemper he was afflicted with, which he represented as an unusual sort of tightness and a continual sense of fullness in the left hypochondriac region, attended with a most acute pain in the pit of the stomach and the

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now informed of the death of a patient who had experienced torturing pains in his stomach :

opposite part of the back ; besides many wandering pains, sometimes about his shoulder-blades and sometimes in his sides. Lastly, he complained of being subject to such excessive quantities of wind in his stomach, that he was afraid of bursting, and therefore often sought relief by belching ; but his endeavours were generally fruitless. Having proceeded thus far in his account, the poor wretch, as if seized with a fit of madness, threw himself prostrate on the bed, and suddenly heaping all the bed-cloths under his hypochondria, leaned against them with all his might ; shortly after, unable to bear this situation, he rose, sat by the fire, and begged to have warm cloaths applied to his sides. This request was complied with, but to no purpose : until he at length forced up some wind, after being almost tired to death with straining ; and recovered himself a little. Then bursting into tears (as was customary with him) and bewailing his lot in a most pitiful manner, he implored the Divinity to rid him of a life become so calamitous ; nor would he give the least attention to the entreaties of his friends or the physician, but cast his eyes on the ground and so remained inflexible and inconsolable. As often as I go to see him I find him in this desponding condition, and this is not to be admired at, for the unhappy sufferer can scarce ever taste either liquids or solids without experiencing these severe attacks. I now desired to know, first, if he could clearly point out to me the commencement of his disorder ? he replied, that it began at a distant period and gradually increased to that pitch. But he could not satisfy me as to what

mach : after laying before you the state of his case, I shall next proceed to give you an ac-

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what originally gave rise to this grievous complaint, unless it proceeded from his having been formerly overcharged with an enormous burden ; a misfortune which, tho' it befell him long since, had yet made so lasting an impression upon him, that it was still fresh in his memory. I next asked him, what taste his belches had ? he told me that they were not all alike, but generally speaking were so acid and sharp that they absolutely lacerated his throat. (But whether this sense of laceration was impressed by the extreme sharpness of his belches, or whether the organs of deglutition were really so affected of old, we shall soon discover.) He had no respite from his torture except while his stomach was empty. Besides he was always a little better, when he had a looseness ; and when he varied his diet, though any one sort of food was scarce tolerable to him above three days. To this the patient's account I shall annex a detail of the future successive changes of his distemper. Not long after he was seized with a vomiting of blood, which was mostly concrete, consisted of a good deal of serum and resembled fragments of a liver : this dreadful symptom was succeeded by repeated deliquia. A little after he was chilled all over with cold. A dismal murmuring noise, such as often precedes death, issued at his throat, and thence crept along to his intestines. Here all hopes were given over. However, after a spoonful of warm wine was poured into his mouth, he opened his eyes, began to speak and turned away from the wine ; which we afterwards ordered him, mixed with an equal quantity of forge water and a little Bol Armenick. Thus being

count of what we learned from the dissection of the body.

The

being retrieved, he got a little better for some few weeks; when he had a relapse of his former obstinate complaints, and renouncing all assistance he dragged on a life of sufferings almost a year longer. At length I was informed that he voided great quantities of black, hard, parched matter by stool, and expired the day after.

Now I was happy to avail myself of an occasion of investigating the nature of a disorder hitherto unexampled and obtained leave to dissect the body. This done I discovered the intestines all along, as well as the stomach, stuffed with coagulated blood. Hard by the Cardia there appeared unnatural, rough, schirrhous tuberosities; and about a nail's breadth below the Cardia, towards the right and on the outside, where it is contiguous to the liver, a remarkable tumour as big as a fist, of a hard and equal consistence and yellowish colour: it took its rise from the external tunic of the stomach grown ulcerated, and molested the adjacent fibres of the liver so, that it inflamed and rendered it purulent, and yet had no adherence therewith. I could discover no rupture of the vessels any where, and therefore suppose it lay in the interstices of these schirrhous tuberosities, for I traced the course of the blood so far. Nothing else was found amiss in the whole abdomen."

Thus far Dr. Simson. He afterwards, with much justice conjectures this disease to be the genuine *Melancholia flatuosa et υποχονδριακή* of the Antients. As to the nature of this supposed Atria bilis, he agrees in opinion with our author.

The Translator.

The third Observation.

A poor man, aged thirty, had returned to his native country after serving five years in the English army; when he was pressed into the Prussian service, by villains who ravished his little property from him: here he spent nine years in vexation and misery. He at length found means to desert at the battle of Collins, and returning home he endeavoured to work in a printing-office for his livelihood; but this occupation requiring more strength than he was master of, he betook himself to the mending of the high ways, and this work he was frequently obliged, though with reluctance, to discontinue, by the severity of the pain in his stomach.

At last his sufferings grew so unremitting and so acute, that they confined him to his bed, and he consulted me at the end of Autumn. On carefully examining the symptoms of his distemper, I discovered nothing amiss with the operations of the animal œconomy, excepting his sleep, which was hindered by the pain, and the action of the intestines,

testines, which was so torpid that he was continually constipated. He had no nausea, except when his stomach was overcharged; but in that circumscribed space between the Cartilago Ensiformis and the navel, he was incessantly afflicted with an acute and frequently a racking pain, which increased after his meals.

On deliberating with the greatest attention I was capable of, upon the causes of this so violent a distemper, I could only conjecture the existence of a calculus obstructed in its passage to the intestines, or a schirrhous. I even thought I discovered that the liver was affected, by feeling the hypochondriac region where the inferior lobe was found harder to the touch than it is naturally; and this suspicion was corroborated by the circumstance of his being costive; but since this lobe did not exceed its ordinary volume, I could not pronounce upon the matter peremptorily. The painful part admitted of a slight touch, but if pressed upon a little, it was immediately necessary to discontinue the compression, so much was the pain exasperated thereby; from
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hence I concluded that the pancreas itself was injured.

The patient had laboured under no previous disorder; but the hardships of war and the lasting melancholy, which he endured, were very sufficient to produce a schirrhus. As for a stone, if there was any reason that favoured the opinion of it, there were infinitely more that stood up to overthrow this opinion. I therefore directed my views to the resolution of the schirrhus, provided it was not a confirmed one, and this course I adopted the rather, because the medicines that I had an eye to, were undoubtedly efficacious in the case of a calculus, if this should chance to exist. But in this advanced period of the season I was concerned to find myself limited in my choice of the medicines which this desperate distemper required. I ordered him to keep to a light diet, and the use of such saponaceous remedies as the season afforded; to foment the part affected as gently as possible, and to take two or three glysters a day. The patient, far from being relieved by this method, got an universal loathing: artificial mineral waters were prescribed to no purpose, and I
had

had no better luck in the application of sedatives. Upon this I renounced medicine, and advised him to live only upon milk, a little water and honey; and with this regimen he did not even get an abatement of his pain, his disorder kept to its former degree of severity: I however procured him some hours rest by the means of opium, which he had now been taking every night since the middle of January, and which I allowed him every morning too for many weeks before his death. It was a duty enjoined by charity, and humanity, to grant this unhappy sufferer the only relief which providence pointed out for the alleviation of his intolerable pain.

I was well aware that opium was never the less opposite to every step towards a cure; it destroyed the powers of the stomach, so far as to have brought on a general loathing; it favoured his constipation; it opposed the resolution of the schirrhus, and the action of the other remedies, infine, it impaired the patient's strength: but after all hopes of recovery were given over, was I not warranted to employ the only remedy capable of allaying

ing a pain, which if continual would prove insupportable.

In the month of February another physician ordered him to be bled. He was undoubtedly in the right, in such a state of atony, restlessness, emaciation, torture, and inanition as this poor wretch was reduced to, to rob him over and above that of the humidum radicale, if he aimed at the best method of shortening his calamitous days. But that he could have other views than this, is to me incomprehensible: *Ædipus* himself would be perplexed to account for it. There appeared no signs of a jaundice: during the latter weeks of the patient's life, his complaints arose to a continual kind of howling which made me more than once suspect an internal cancer, what the vulgar call a gnawing serpent. He fetched his breath with ease and regularity to the last moment: at length after a slight respite and a short delirium without suffocation, without any other disorder in his pulse than its gradual extinction, he expired on the first of April at five in the morning.

The surgeon his assistant and I could scarce believe our eyes, when we saw that the body

of this man, who was six feet tall and proportionally lusty and well set, only weighed fifty pounds. His skin was hard and livid, the muscles of the abdomen were small, parched, and blackish; and the omentum was rather like a kind of thin parchment. The intestines were hideous to look at; the external membrane of the duodenum, the pylorus and the adjacent part of the stomach were tinged with a yellow colour. This latter viscus was empty, and had no defect, but it lay pretty deep towards its left side and concealed under the liver; which was grown to a prodigious bulk indeed, situated as well as the spleen higher than the third rib, and had no preternatural adherence any where; its surface was, as it were, studded with tuberosities, and felt as hard as stone, except about the passage of the vena portæ: it made as much resistance to the dissecting knife, as a cartilage or a bone in its infant state; and in cutting, the motion of the instrument was interrupted by an incredible number of small stones. We discovered no blood in it; in colour it resembled new cheese; but at the middle and concave part it had degenerated from the natural state

state less than elsewhere. We weighed a piece of it, which we judged to be heavier than an equal volume of marble: the inferior lobe, which was the hardest and the most bulky, compressed all the adjacent parts. The vesica fellea was small, of a cylindrical form; and contained no solid body, only a little fluid and extremely black bile. The spleen being a little bigger than it naturally is, was full of black fluid blood that flowed out through the slightest incision; this argues an anastomosis of the vascular system sufficient for the discharge of many blood-vessels by a single one, or else an extravasation into the membrana cellulosa which connects and supports these vessels. However that be, let it be remarked that the spleen was so destitute of any degree of firmness that it became quite flabby after the blood was evacuated.

This is sufficient to discover the cause of this man's extreme sufferings. What physician can be ignorant that the liver in a schirrhous state imparts the most acute pains to the stomach? But whether I was wrong in conjecturing that the pancreas bore a part in the mischief, we were able to judge after having

removed the stomach. Then we perceived this viscus three times larger than the natural size, harder than the liver, and more stony, of the same colour and the same excessive weight with it. There is no doubt but that the stomach, thus situated between two petrified viscera, must have endured a most extraordinary compression, and come in for a share in all the evils that are attributed to them. I even discovered the characteristic marks of the cancer which I had an apprehension of, in the middle and inferior part of the pancreas, for there it was livid and thickset with tumours proceeding from an expansion of the membrana adiposa. We perceived no preternatural adhesion all over the abdomen; and the period of interring the body approaching, prevented our examining the other cavities, but to say the truth the inspection of them was of no great significance, for what we had already seen sufficiently demonstrated the reality and confirmed state of the disease, and of course the fruitless application of medicine. It is unnecessary for me to dwell any longer on this subject; and on the precautions, the observations that will occur to every physician of your sagacity on
similar

similar occasions. I shall therefore next take notice of another case that came in my way the same week, the matter is not despicable, tho' at the same time it is not of as weighty consideration as the foregoing.

A child four years old, whom I had just recovered from a marasmus by the assistance of the bark and the extract of buckbean, voided in the morning after a slight itching, a young tænia, all of an even thickness, which did not exceed that of a coarse white thread, about twenty-five inches in length, and rolled about in three or four circles. It resembled those which Monsieur Linnæus discovered in the springs in Sweden, and them that a friend of mine observed in a fountain in Switzerland. The celebrated Haller, who is a stranger to nothing that regards natural history, takes notice that this insect is often to be met with in water; but I do not know any body that has observed that ever a child voided one of this kind. I have however been since informed by a respectable lady, that her daughter had voided some of the same form until she came to be ten years old, but that for fifteen years past she had perceived nothing that approached
to

to the *tænia*. As I was in a hurry to set out on a journey, at the time that I was shewn this insect, I did not think of desiring to have it preserved for me in milk. This omission gives me concern; I might at my return have made some experiments to ascertain whether it was capable of motion, of attaining to maturity in milk, and of multiplying as the *polypus* does.

I shall only take notice how absurd and incompatible with observation it is to give this sort of worms the appellation of solitary, whereas they are found in company with other worms. And here we have a recent proof of the anthelmintic quality of the bark; which gives us to understand that the weakness of the digestive powers being the cause of the generation of worms, the medicines fittest to remove them are also those best adapted to remove this weakness.

I shall be attentive to know if in future the child should have *tænia*s; I have seen several people cured of this worm by surgeon Naufer's medicine, which his widow now vends; and they were a second time attacked with it some years after. It is then a false assertion that
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when once the tænia is expelled, the same person is never again afflicted with it. I have already engaged your attention with the narrative of what I learned from the dissection of a body; and I shall now acquaint you with the benefit I obtained by an incision on the living.

An unmarried woman of thirty, of a strong constitution, and irreproachable character, was seized with a violent head-ach, two years and four months ago; this complaint had sensibly weakened her already, at the expiration of some weeks, when she came to have my advice. She suffered day and night without intermission, and was utterly unable to enjoy a moment's sleep. The spot from whence the pain shot, was at the interior posterior angle of the right parietal bone, and might be covered with a small coin; but the sensation spread all over the forehead, and it came on sometimes with such fury, that the patient cried out at one time that she was torn to pieces, at another, that she was burned; in a word, her condition was truly deplorable. As she lived in the country, I had not frequent occasions of seeing her; but her mother or step-father

father gave me a faithful account of every thing that passed. I successively made a trial of every help that medicine could suggest to me, as the patient and those about her were as tractable as I could wish: she got some little relief by cupping, but still more by blisters applied to the head, which were kept running for a long time: no sort of bleeding was of service to her, not even that of the temporal artery, which I ordered her after the example of the celebrated Gesner, who I remember informs us in his letters that he cured a like distemper by this method; neither the semicupium, nor cold bathing, nor pumping, nor opium, nor the seton, on which Ruisch bestows so many encomiums, nothing, in a word, that I could devise, was able to remove this obstinate pain.

During the whole course of this disease, the catamenia flowed at their regular periods, and the patient's ordinary state of health was no otherwise disturbed than by her pain and continual want of sleep. But at length overwhelmed with fifteen months watching and affliction she was obliged to keep her bed, and her constitution began to decline; she was
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ſucceſſively ſeized with a nauſea and colic pains; ſhe voided worms, partly of the nature of the tænia, and partly of an uncommon ſpecies but ſimilar to ſome which ſhe had rendered before in her younger years; and to crown all, ſhe got intermitting palpitations of the heart, anxieties, together with an univerſal ſoreneſs all over the ſurface of her body.

Having deſired her to drop taking medicine during the winter, I could deviſe no other probable means at the return of ſpring of releaſing her from this deſperate condition, than to make a long and deep incifion on the affected part, by which the muſcular and cutaneous nerves as well as fibres being divided might be rendered incapable of communicating the pain. Convinced that what gave riſe to it did not extend beyond the bone, I made no doubt but that it would ſucceed; and altho' I had harboured any apprehenſion of that point, I would nevertheless have tried this expedient rather than continue in the mortifying aſſurance that nothing would get the better of this ſtubborn complaint. I muſt own that the pain might have proceeded from an aſperity on the cranium moleſting the muſ-

cles and the pericranium, and that in this case the intended incision would not have proved very serviceable, but it would at least have brought the true source of the pain to light, and so given room to the employing some other method of cure, perhaps trepanning if judged necessary. The patient very resolutely submitted to endure the pain of the operation, in hopes of getting some relief thereby : and in consequence on the twelfth of April the surgeon made a crucial incision two inches long down to the pericranium ; I procured so plentiful a suppuration that in three days time the pericranium was exposed to view, and I pricked it several times over, without the woman's having any sense of pain, whether I gave her notice of what I was doing or not : I repeated the same experiments the seventh day with the same result and to the great astonishment of the surgeon, who very repeatedly assured himself of the reality of this insensibility. Are we not warranted to conclude from thence that the pericranium is insensible?

But

But we shall lay aside this observation with all the use that may be made of it. The wound was healed up the fifth of May. The patient, contrary to her expectations got rid of her pain from the moment the incision was made, and has had no return of it since ; the heaviness in her head is insensibly gone off, and she has now no complaint but a weakness, a loathing, her palpitation and a sort of dead pain in the trunk and towards the extremities ; she begins to recover her rest tho' slowly ; in fine I flatter myself that all these relics, the fruits of her watching and ill habit of body will yield to the resolution and youth of my patient.

I have already subdued the nausea by the assistance of hypecacuanha ; and I shall employ rhubarb united with cuckow-pint in order to resolve and evacuate the fæces ; moreover this medicine will give a tonus to the viscera, and will revive the peristaltic motion of the intestines and the activity of the gastric juices. I am in hopes that chalybeates and the bark will compleat the cure, provided however that the organisation of all the exter-

nal muscles of the head is not totally destroyed ; as I apprehend that may be the case, considering the constancy and inveteracy of the disease, which might possibly have imparted its effects to the environs of the part primarily affected : tho' this misfortune, which God avert, should happen, it would not argue that the primitive pain was not removed by the incision ; it would only evince the untimely application, and not the inutility of this expedient.*

Should you now ask me what could have been the cause of this extraordinary affection, I reply that the patient was only conscious of a remote one, which was the custom of carrying enormous burdens on her head ; let me
add

* This puts me in mind of Surgeon Poiton's interesting observations on the wounds of the head. He mentions two instances he met with of the most alarming symptoms being occasioned by blows received on the head ; towards the removal of which all imaginable means proved ineffectual, till the affected part was scarified down to the cranium, and suffered to bleed plentifully. In these cases he observed that a compression on the part renewed the pain ; and on this account he looks upon the disorder to be an inflammation of the pericranium.

The Translator.

add a more proximate cause ; the stimulus of an acrid humour obstinately settled on the nerves and perhaps particularly on this very sensible branch of a hard nerve which occupies the affected spot.

From all this we may draw some inference. Physicians are now-a-days grown too timorous : they have preposterously abandoned the more efficacious methods to limit themselves to medicines of inferior energy. Sufficient attention is not paid to this observation of Hippocrates, to wit, that the knife cures what medicines cannot cure. But this intrepid practice that did not hesitate at large doses and powerful medicines ; formerly the favourite practice of the Arabians, and physicians of all other countries ; so successfully adhered to by Senertus, Etmuller, Stahl and Hoffman, is unfortunately buried in oblivion ; nor are the vigorous exertions of the Gesners, the Tortis, and the Hallers, with some other moderns, able to revive it.

add a new experiment; the stimulus of
an acute pain is not only limited on the
nerve and perhaps particularly on this very
sensible part of a hand nerve which comes
from the spinal cord.

I am all the more inclined to draw some inference
from this, that the physicians of a few years ago
were not only abandoned the
method to limit themselves
to the inferior energy. Sufficient
attention has been paid to this observation of Hippo-
crates, that the knife cuts what the
doctor cannot cure. But this improved practice
has not been at large and powerful
medicine; formerly the favourite practice of
the Arabs, and physicians of all other
countries; is not only adhered to by Sen-
nars, Lemblin, and Hoffman, is un-
fortunately but in oblivion; nor are the
vigorous exertions of the Galens, the Torris,
and the Illiers, and some other moderns,
able to revive it.

