

An essay on the cure of the gonorrhoea [sic], or fresh contracted venereal infection, without the use of internal medicines / By William Rowley.

Contributors

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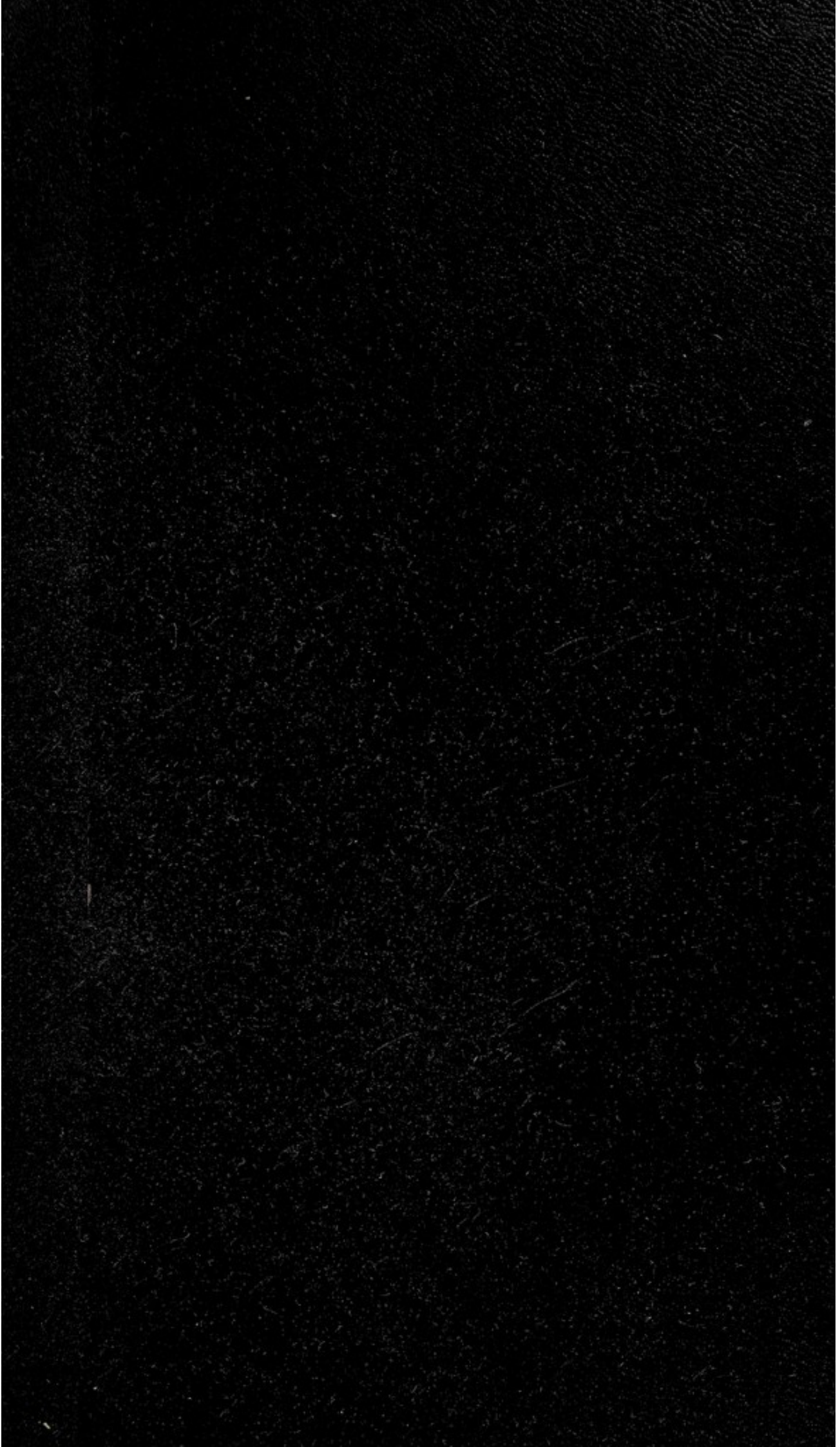
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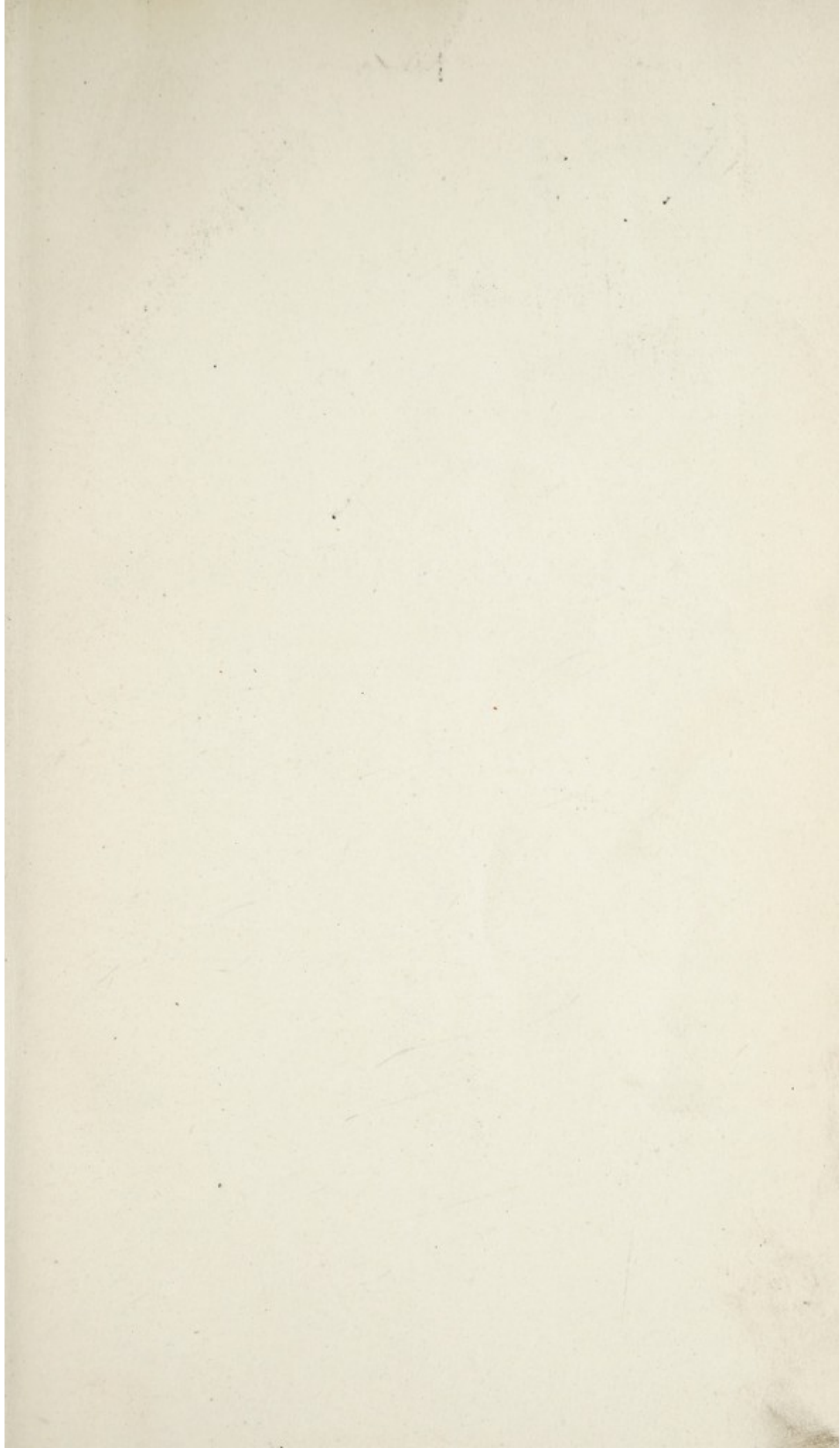
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A N
E S S A Y

ON THE
CURE of the GONORHOEA,
OR FRESH CONTRACTED

VENEREAL INFECTION,
WITHOUT THE USE OF
INTERNAL MEDICINES.

By WILLIAM ROWLEY, SURGEON.

L O N D O N :

Printed for F. NEWBERY, No. 20, the Corner of St.
Paul's Church Yard. 1771.

[Price One Shilling.]

Surgery. If what is advanced in the following Sheets (which is founded on Facts, and is the Result of practical Observation) meets with the Approbation of Men of Candour, and proves of Service to Mankind, it will give me infinite Satisfaction.

High Holborn,
No. 192.

An

An E S S A Y, &c.

IN treating of this Disease, I shall not attempt to explain how the infection is communicated, but shall leave that and other speculative enquiries to those Authors who have treated largely on the subject. I shall confine myself to the best practical method of relieving the patient when infected, and shall immediately begin with the symptoms of a recent or fresh contracted Gonorrhœa.

The first symptom observable in a fresh Gonorrhœa or Clap, is commonly an agreeable sensation in the whole, or greatest part of the urinary passage.

At this time none, or scarce any discharge is discernible on the linen; yet this symptom is most probably occasioned by a discharge, though not sufficient in quantity to erode or destroy the mucus, which defends the passage from the saline particles of urine in its passing. As the quantity and virulence of the discharge increase, the effects of the infection of course begin to be more attended to. Spots are observable on the linen, the edges of which appear of a darker colour than in the center; and this dark margin is a principal mark to distinguish the venereal from discharges arising from other causes.

The mucus now abraded, or perhaps not furnished from the inflammation of its secretory ducts, the urethra is exposed, and probably excoriated. Hence, at this time, is felt a violent
pain

pain and smarting in the evacuation of urine. Another symptom is the Chordee, or painful erection, which chiefly afflicts the patient at night, and the external edge of the urinary passage appears inflamed.

These are the most common symptoms of the disease, but differ remarkably with respect of violence in different constitutions. For in patients of thin habits, I have generally observed them, as well as the cure, more troublesome and difficult than in fat and plethoric people. It must be remembered then, that it is in the foregoing state of the disease, and no other, that I recommend the following method of treatment.

I shall not attempt to refine, as some have done, in dividing this disease into a number of stages, which I believe only exist in the imagination, but shall

consider it in those views which a change of symptoms fairly points out, which unprejudiced observation will find extremely simple, and to which my method of cure is adapted.

The seat of the disease, which has been the subject of dispute amongst men of great reputation for their physiological enquiries, is with me a matter of no great importance, as every part, which has been or can be rationally assigned its seat, is equally subject to my method of treatment. However, with great respect to these, I shall take the liberty of delivering my opinion, as it occurs from practical observation; tho', while it appears a mere matter of opinion, I should be the last person who would advance any thing positive on the subject.

The most prevailing opinions I believe are, that the seat of the disease is
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in the Veficulæ Seminales, prostrate or Cowper's Glands; this may, no doubt, sometimes be the case, but not always. It is the obvious property of the venereal virus to attack the glands; this is evident from the sudden inflammation of the testes and inguinal glands, from a stoppage of the running by any injudicious treatment, &c. It is highly reasonable therefore to suppose, that all the lacunæ are subject to receive the infection, so that many different parts of the urethra may be the original places of the virulent discharge. If this is the case, the nearer the first seat of the running is to the neck of the bladder, the more the urethra will be affected, the more severe the symptoms, and the greater will be the quantity of the discharge, and, *vice versa*, for whatever part of the urethra it happens in, all between that and the neck of the bladder escape unhurt.

It

It is very certain, that the inflammation and heat of urine are frequently felt much nearer the external extremity of the urethra, than where authors contend for ; and the situation of inflammation and pain may be always reasonably supposed the place of the discharge. I have had some cases, where the seat of the disease has been so near, as to be cured by the introduction of a feather dipped in the injection I shall hereafter mention : and this, indeed, was what first led me to differ in opinion, from others who confine themselves to particular parts. As this, however, is a matter of no great consequence in the cure, I shall advance no more in favour of this subject, but leave it to be ascertained by men of superior abilities, and more leisure than I have for such enquiries.

The symptoms arising from a fresh infection, as the titillation, heat of urine,
chor-

chordee, and acrimōnious discharge from the urethra, is the first stage of the disease, which may be called the malignant: when the discharge is thicker, the dark margin disappears, and the heat of urine and chordee leaveth the patient, and an agreeable sensation is felt after urine, like what I have mentioned as the first symptom of infection; this I shall call the second stage of the disease, which is the mild healing state.

It will be necessary, previous to introducing a new practice, to give some account of the present methods, used by practitioners of Surgery in general.

It is common for some of the older practitioners, in the country in particular, to order drastic purges and mercurials.

Some surgeons have depended entirely on simple emollients, others order electuaries of nitre and cremor tartar,
joined

joined with gentle purgatives, and sometimes with camphor : another method is, to cure by injections of various compositions.

To give strong purges and mercurials in a state of the disease, which is merely local, and admits of proper remedies to be applied immediately to the part affected, appears very absurd ; nor can I see why they are retained in practice, unless in blind obedience to custom. Instead of relieving the patient, both reason and experience teach, that they do manifest hurt ; for, by frequently diminishing the discharge, they disturb nature in her curative intention, and in all probability, cause an absorption of some of the infectious matter into the constitution, and produce a necessity, indeed, for a tedious course of internal remedies to perfect a cure ; which otherwise would
lay

lay the foundation for a confirmed Pox. Another objection, which will be acknowledged by all judicious surgeons is, that the continuance of strong purges will produce such a great relaxation, as to occasion those obstinate, and often incurable gleans, which numbers complain of, who have been treated in this manner. Besides these disagreeable circumstances, they often occasion indigestion, and other complaints in the stomach, the hæmorrhoids or piles, which frequently terminate in a fistula in ano.

C A S E I.

In which rough Treatment was used.

I Was sent for to a patient, who had a great hæmorrhage of the penis, and had lost an immense quantity of blood. On examining, I found the
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greatest

greatest part of the glans penis in a state of mortification; he had nearly the appearance of a dead corpse, with purple spots on every part of his body. Upon enquiring, I found he had been very roughly treated by the surgeon who had the first management of his case: he had been drenched with strong purges and mercurial vomits, which had broke down the texture of his blood, and caused the present dreadful appearances. I immediately made use of styptic applications to the penis, by which means, and slight pressure, I stopped the hæmorrhage. I then desired the apothecary (Mr. Bouquet in Queen Street, who had been called just before I saw the case) to make a strong decoction of bark, to which was joined elix. vitriol. acid. and an addition of the pulvis cort. peruv. This I ordered to be given in small quantities very

ry often, and at intervals ordered some of the confect. damocrat. to prevent its purging. This method I continued three days, when I perceived the spots in several parts to disappear, and a large part of the penis appeared a little loose; but I used no violence to remove the mortified part, as it would have endangered a fresh hæmorrhage. By continuing the method, he became considerably better on the seventh day; but the putrid parts smelt exceedingly offensive. On the eighth day, in the evening, I was called, and found him extremely faint, from loss of blood by a fresh hæmorrhage, which had not been perceived till I came. I made use of styptic applications as before, and succeeded in stopping it a second time. But some days after the greatest part of the yard dropped off. I continued repeating the bark, &c. as before; and in

about a month he walked to my house. When he had recovered sufficiently, I put him under a mild mercurial course, and by this means effected a cure. However, since that time I have heard, that the man was afflicted some time after with a disease of the lungs, of which he languished a considerable time, and died; and it is no improbable conclusion to imagine, that the foundation of this last disease was owing to rough treatment.

C A S E II.

AN officer in the navy, contracted a clap in England, and was ordered out to the East Indies in the fleet last war. The surgeon, who had the first care of him, gave him drastic purges and mercurials; the consequence of which was a very bad gleet. After
 suf-

suffering it between five or six years, without gaining relief, he came home to England, and applied to different surgeons of character for his cure ; the cold bath, bougies, and internal medicines for this purpose were used, but without any success whatever, for the discharge was not in the least abated. This unhappy circumstance had such an effect on his mind, that it brought on a nervous disease, and he was reduced to almost the appearance of a skeleton when I last saw him, which is now near eight years ; at which time, despairing of a cure, he went over to Ireland. I was witness to a number more such cases, which came under my own care during last war, which were in general incurable.

Emol.

Emollients in this disease I have often found successful. By decoctions of marshmallows alone, in a great number of instances, I have succeeded in the cure. But although I have found it so successful, especially when joined with nitre, yet there is a very great objection to this method, as I have in a number of repeated instances observed.

To cure by the emollient method, the patient must drink very plentifully, two or three quarts in the day at least, and observe a very regular regimen. The consequence of which will be, in general, a relaxation of the sphincter of the bladder, and an incontinence of urine; or, if the patient escapes this, I have observed, that after the discharge of urine, some have suffered great pain at, or near the neck of the bladder, probably from a less degree of relaxation
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for some months. The same complaint has sometimes happened, when great quantities of diluting liquors have been drank, in which nitre has been dissolved.

C A S E.

Where an incontinence of Urine followed the Use of Emollients.

A Gentleman applied to me for the cure of a fresh contracted Gonorrhœa, who had been treated by the emollient method in some former infection. He being young, and seemingly of a good constitution, I proposed putting him under this method of cure, and ordered him to drink three or four quarts of the decoction of marshmallows every day ; by which means the violent symptoms were soon relieved (which is certainly the common effects of

of

of this method) and he living very regular, in about eight days the inflammatory symptoms entirely left him; and by continuing the decoction, his cure was compleated in about three weeks. But the consequence of this method was an incontinence of urine; and notwithstanding all the common methods were used in such cases, as alum, vitriolic acids, &c. yet it was near three months before this complaint was cured.

Nitre joined with gentle cathartics, in the form of an electuary, I have known succeed in curing great numbers; but it is apt to occasion very disagreeable cold sensations at the stomach, with great pain; which, however, I think may be easily remedied, by always giving the nitre in a dissolved

ved state. I am fuspicious, that these effects of nitre in pills, bolusses, or electuaries, must have been the cause of that timorousness, which I have observed in able practitioners, when they order this remedy. The generality of labouring people, and those who live very irregular, I have cured, by giving from half a drachm to a drachm of the nitre, rubbed with five grains of pulvis jalap. three times a day in warm water, increasing the quantity of the water in proportion to the nitre; but this method is rather tedious, the patient suffering the disagreeable complaint of scalding, or heat of urine, for two or three weeks or more; and if accompanied with a violent chordee sometimes longer. The method I propose, is calculated to immediately alleviate these symptoms; and if attended to in time, infallibly prevents any such complaints;

D

plaints ; the cure goes on agreeable to the patient, and Nature is assisted in the manner she points out for the cure.

The method of curing by injection, is much superior to any other in this state of the disease, because its effects are immediately applied to the affected part ; but I believe, that the injections, which are made use of in common, are not to be depended upon, at least those made publick ; for some surgeons have been so mean, as to pretend to secrets of this sort. And, I believe, that the generality of surgeons give internal medicines, when they attempt the cure by this means.

In the composition of an injection, no astringent or drying drug should be made use of, as such are very dangerous : nor can I approve of powders in an injection ; for tho' it is not very probable, yet it is not impossible, that

that some of the powder may get into the bladder, and if retained there, may form the nucleus of a stone. I have seen cases, where astringent injections have been used, in which the patients have been attacked with confirmed poxes a long time after the supposed cure. Others have been lucky enough to have complaints of an alarming nature, immediately on the checking or stopping the discharge, as buboes, swelled testicles, &c. And the same has happened where rough treatment has been used; which, in the course of an extensive practice, I have frequently observed. Nature of herself procures this discharge to carry off the disease; and if she is not interrupted, but assisted by gentle means, the cure will be soon accomplished.

C A S E.

Where an improper Injection laid the foundation of a confirmed Pox.

MR. W. a married man, applied to me for advice in a sore throat. Upon examination, I found the throat ulcerated, and he being rather feverish, I concluded it to be of the putrid malignant kind, which was the opinion of his physician, who ordered him the bark and elix. vitriol. acid. which he took for some days without the least success. He being dissatisfied, I was sent for again; and upon a second examination, I began to suspect the case to be venereal; and told him my opinion: however, he denied having had any venereal infection for two years: on his applying for advice to two or three different physicians

cians and furgeons, and they all concluded it to be venereal. He had been treated, by the furgeon who first had him under care, by an injection, some of which he had by him of ol. amygdal. and afterward by an astringent of the vitriol. alb. dissolved in some aq. rosar. which soon cured him, as he imagined: but instead of that, was the cause of a confirmed pox. I began the cure by bleeding, gave him a gentle purge, and fumigated the ulcers in the throat with cinnabar factit. and he being of a robust habit, I ordered him inwardly a decoction of farsap. and a proper portion of the corros. sublim. dissolved: by a continuance of which, and he observing a regular diet, &c. his cure was accomplished in about nine weeks, and he has remained in good health ever since.

The

The method of cure which I make use of, is by injection alone. This is composed of a mucilage of gum arab. argent viv. & ol. lin. p. exp. This is to be thrown up the urethra, three or four times a day, and retained in it eight or ten minutes at each time, gently pressing the whole passage. This injection lubricates and defends the urethra from the saline particles of urine, and conveys, at the same time, the remedy, which is the known specific in the disease, in one of its simplest forms. So that it is calculated not only to ease the severest symptoms, as being an artificial mucus to supply that produced by Nature, of which she is deprived by the malignancy of the disease, but likewise attacks the disease itself.

The mischiefs occasioned by injudicious injections, have, I am sensible, alarmed

alarmed the apprehensions of mankind in general, and even of some sensible practitioners, and may, no doubt, create an objection to the use of them. But let them be assured, that these bad effects, as swelled testicles, buboes, &c. are absolutely always either caused by astringents checking the discharge, or by some saline acrimonious particles increasing the inflammation. For repeated experience has convinced me, that even calomel and præcipit. alb. which are often used in this way, are corrosive to the tender membrane of the urethra in this inflamed state, and has produced alarming effects. What are the consequences of a solution of the corrosive sublimate injected, those who use it best can tell.

C A S E

C A S E.

Where a violent Inflammation was caused by an Injection of Oil and Calomel.

MR. B. applied for the cure of a Gonorrhœa ; and I having heard great encomiums of calomel and oil, by a gentleman who had made use of this method in a case or two with success ; and tho' I must acknowledge, I had no great opinion of calomel and præcip. alb. in an injection, as such preparations, however dulcified, still retain something of a saline quality ; but having succeeded in a few cases myself, I was induced to make further trials. I began the cure by this means, and the consequence was a violent inflammation in the whole body of the penis, and all the inflammatory symptoms

toms were increased. I left off any further use of the injection, and immediately pursued the cooling method, but it did not succeed; for immediately an inflammation of the testicle came on, which was very violent; and the running was entirely stopt; upon which I used the remedies in such cases, as plentiful bleeding, cooling medicines, and the mercurial ointment, to the part, &c. By that means, in a tedious manner, I cured the patient. But an induration of the testicles remained a long time afterwards.

I have never known the injection, which I have recommended, in an extensive practice, once to stop the discharge, nor does it increase the irritation, as it contains nothing stimulating. For argentum vivum, blended with mucilaginous substances, never has any

E

such

such effect. Instead of the patient being tormented for a great number of days, and often weeks, with the scalding of urine, and the chordee (which is known to be the case in the common methods of cure) the symptoms are immediately relieved. Instead of a thin corrosive discharge for a length of time, a milder matter, more uniform in its colour and consistence, soon issues from the passage, and all the disagreeable symptoms are removed, except the discharge, which I generally leave to Nature.

The criterion to omit the injection, is at the commencement of the second stage, when rather an agreeable sensation, or itching, is felt in the passage after voiding urine: for although the running may continue a week or two longer after this, it is a matter of no consequence, as it gradually decreases
every

every day; and thus a mild, easy cure is effected, without any danger to the constitution. The continuance of the injection at this time cannot be of further service, and may be detrimental; for the matter which issues at this time, may reasonably be looked on as mild and useful, as is the case in healing sores, which the injection would counteract.

C A S E.

A Married gentleman, of rather a thin habit, applied to me for the cure of a fresh contracted Gonorrhœa. His complaints were a very great heat in discharge of urine and chordee, which was remarkably troublesome in the night. He had a copious running, which was very acrimonious, and the dark margin, I have before mentioned, was to be seen on

his linen. I began his cure by the injection, which was used four times a day, and it produced good effects in alleviating the symptoms; the scalding gradually became less, and the chordee was not felt after the sixth or seventh day of injecting. However, I continued the injection, and about the twelfth day, the itching, which I have mentioned in the second stage of the disease, came on, and the matter shewed evident signs of its mildness. At this time I omitted the injection, and in about nine days after his cure was compleated. In about four months after he received a fresh infection, but by applying on the first symptom, I cured him this time by the same means in a few days, and no ill consequence has happened since.

I believe it will be allowed, that in the common methods, three out of ten, at least, are attacked with some one or more of the complaints already mentioned, as buboes, swelled testicles, &c. but in all the cases which I have cured, not the least ill consequence has happened, except one, which was an induration of the perinæum, and which easily gave way to an alterative of the sulph. præcip. antimon. & calomel; of each of these were taken two grains in a pill, night and morning.

I must observe, that in the first stage of the disease, I order the patients carefully to avoid colds, and excesses of all sorts; such as drinking, riding, and other hard exercises, &c. for these very often suddenly bring on similar effects to injudicious practice. Though patients, treated in my method, will be much less liable to the injuries arising from

from such liberties, than where internal medicines are used. However, the risk of such accidents should by all means be shunned, if possible.

This then is the practice I have long used, and which has been attended with a quick and easy success. However, that success alone would never have prevailed on me to publish it as an improvement, unless my own practice had proved the tediousness, and ill consequences, I have already mentioned of the common methods.

F I N I S.

