

A letter / from J. Keyser, surgeon and chymist, of Paris, to Mr. J. Wathen, surgeon, of London, in answer to his pamphlet, intitled, Practical observations on the venereal disease, &c.; ... To which is added a letter from the learned Prof. Le Cat, of Rouen, with an account of a remarkable cure ... performed with ... [Keyser's] medicine.

Contributors

Keyser, J., active 1752-1765.

Wathen, Jonathan. Practical observations on the venereal disease

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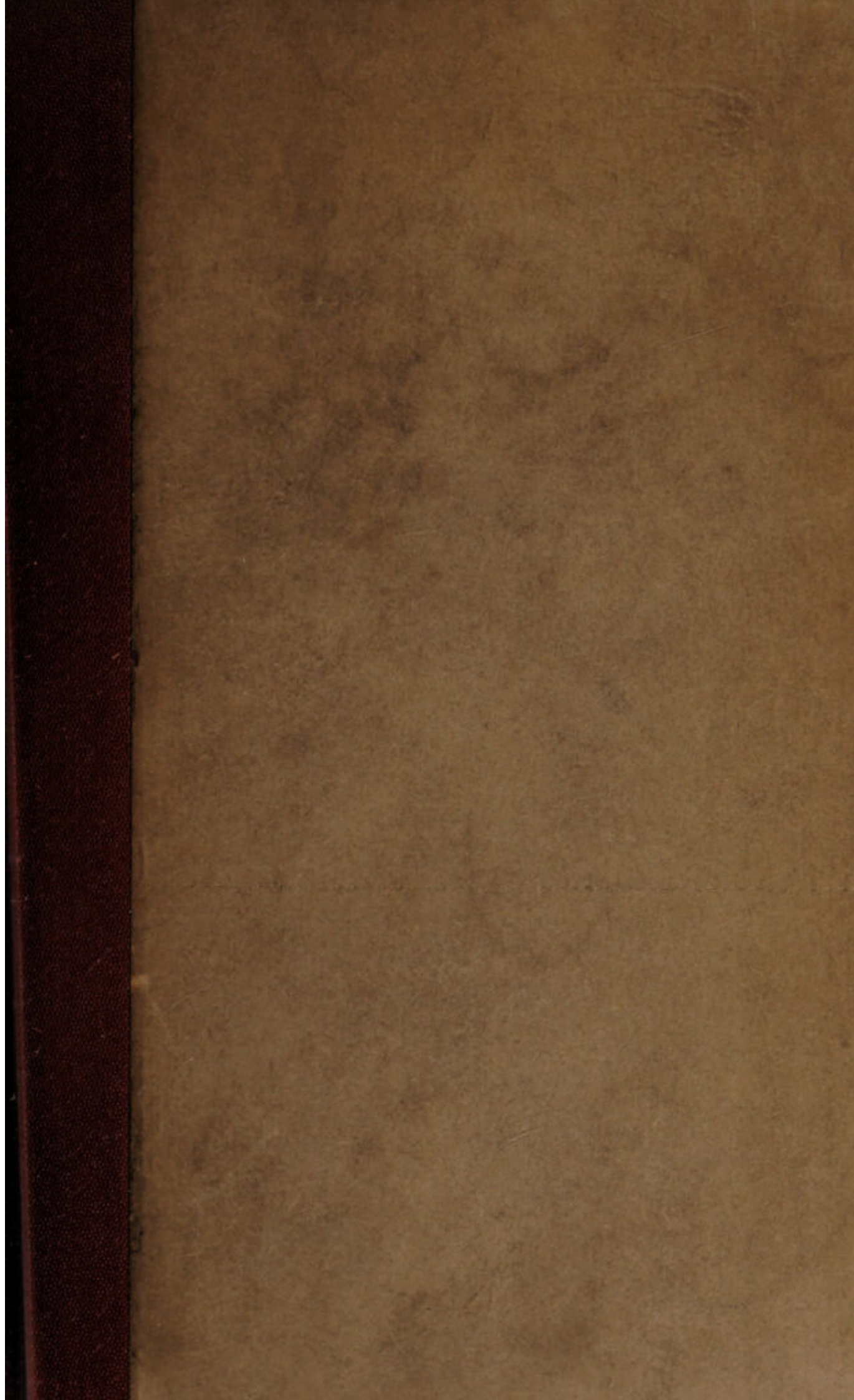
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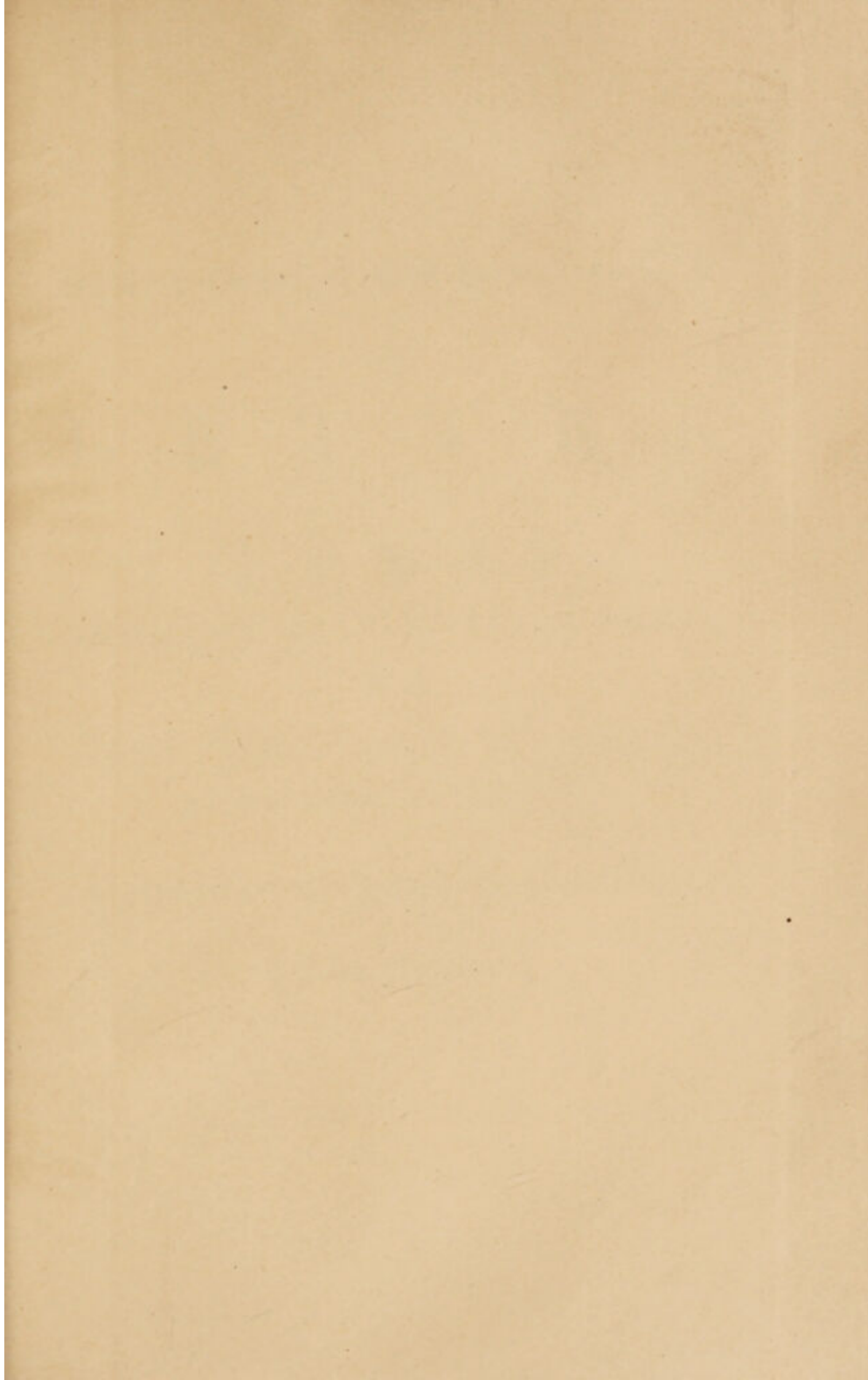
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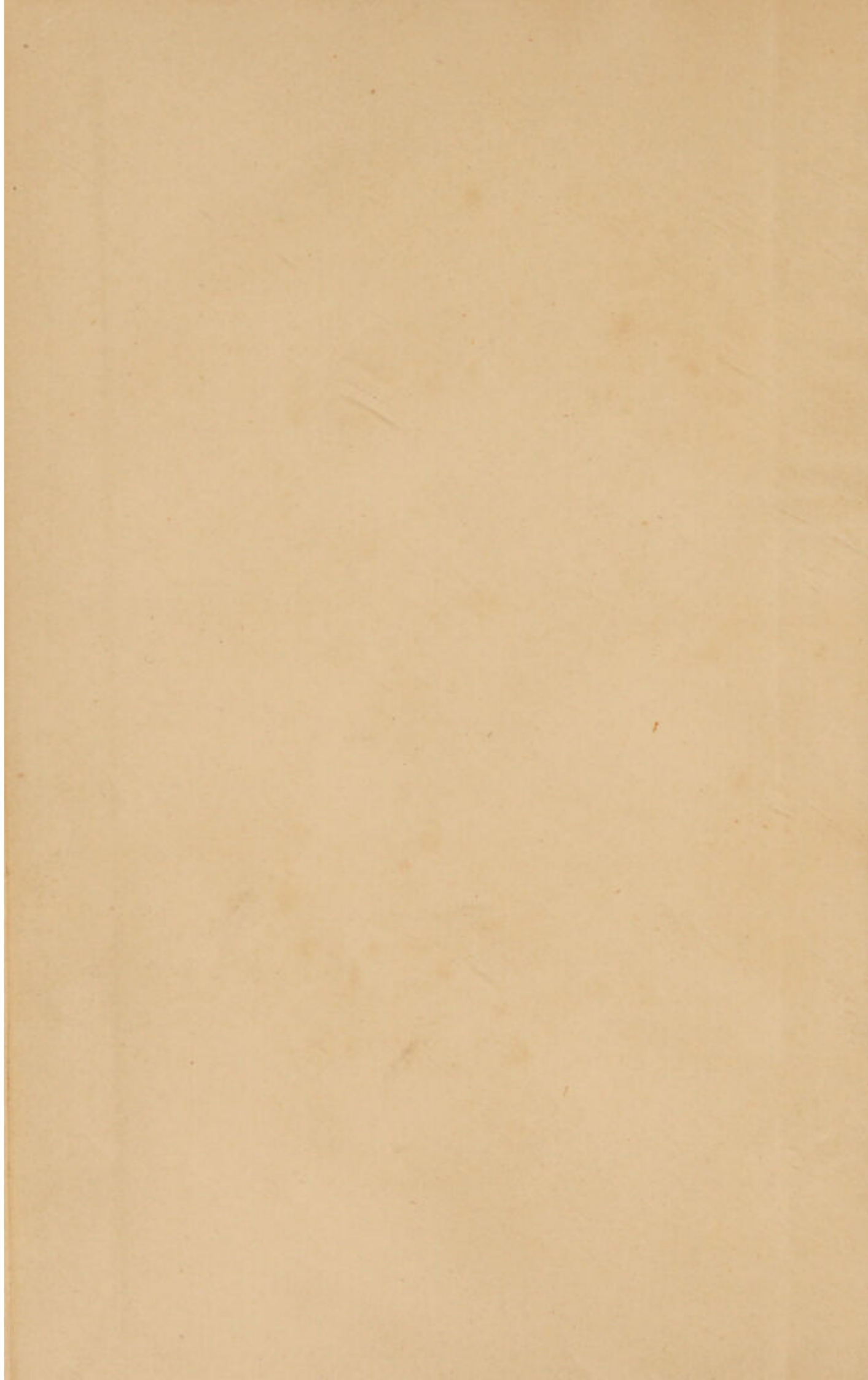
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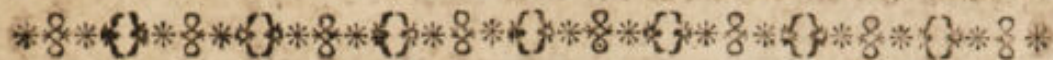


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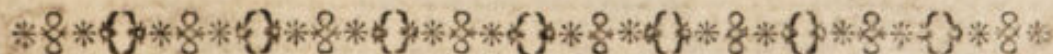
A
L E T T E R

FROM


J. K E Y S E R,
SURGEON and CHYMIST, of PARIS,

TO

Mr. JONATHAN WATHEN,
SURGEON, of LONDON.



[Price Sixpence.]



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A
L E T T E R

F R O M

J. K E Y S E R,
SURGEON and CHYMIST, of PARIS,

T O

Mr. JONATHAN WATHEN,
SURGEON, of LONDON,

In answer to his Pamphlet, intituled,

Practical Observations on the Venereal Disease, &c.

I N

Which he has introduced and espoused certain Animadversions of an anonymous Writer on the celebrated Medicine called KEYSER'S PILLS.

To which is added,

A LETTER from the Learned Professor L E C A T, of Rouen, with an Account of a remarkable Cure that Gentleman performed with this Medicine.

Hic non agitur de verbis, sed de rebus.

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. NICOLL, at the Paper-Mill, in
St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1765.

of surgeon, had openly adopted the sentiments of this anonymous writer, and, unprovoked by me, who have not the honour of knowing him but by name, fallen most cruelly upon my medicine, and declared it wholly unfit for answering any of the purposes in the Venereal Disease, which are set forth in what he is pleased to call the plausible Narrative so often published.

A little candour, Mr. Wathen, nay I will take upon me to say, a little recollection only, would have sufficed to spare us both some trouble; you, that of hearing truths that cannot be agreeable to you; and me, that of being obliged, in defence of an injured reputation, and of the real virtues of that medicine, which has so happily relieved numbers of our fellow creatures in the most deplorable cases, to make those truths public.

It was matter of some surprize to me, on perusing your pamphlet, Sir, which was sent me over by my correspondent, and is intituled, *Practical Observations concerning the Cure of the Venereal Disease by Mercury, &c.* to find that you, who had thought fit to lay aside the lancet, and take up the pen, in order to give the world satisfactory ideas of the properties of medicines, and their *modi agendi* in the human body, should not have judged it more worthy of your time and labour to have given us an account of the operations of some of those many universally received specifics, whose manner of acting has so long puzzled the most eminent physicians to account
for,

for, while their effects were so well known and applauded; such, for instance, as the bark in intermitting fevers, in stopping the progress of a sphaeculus, with many others too tedious to enumerate, rather than have confined yourself to the investigating and elucidating the nature of the cure of the venereal disease *by mercury*; a thing which is known by almost every chirurgical Tyro of a twelvemonth's standing, who need not be asked twice to answer with certainty, that mercury has not nor can have any other known manner of operation but by its fluidity and permeability. You doubtless had your reasons for confining yourself to this beaten track, rather than run the hazard of being bewildered in a chaos of suppositious explanations, which, upon a strict review, might not have been held by adepts in medicine as perfectly infallible. But to come more home to the subject which gave rise to these pages:

You are pleased to say, Sir, for you must allow me to look upon you as the assertor, who stand forth the promulgator of the tenets or reflections of an anonymous writer, in the Introduction to your *Observations, &c.* that the writer "clearly demonstrates, that Keyser's pills (notwithstanding

" the plausible Narrative so often published) are not

" sufficient to cure a confirmed lues. He accounts

" (you tell us) for their reputation in France from

" the interested patronage of the great, who have

" procured their general use in the army and navy;

“ who gave sanction to those surgeons and cases
 “ only, by whom and in which this medicine is
 “ used; that all others, however superior in real
 “ success, are equally discredited and neglected;
 “ nay even rewards it seems are given to those
 “ who make use of Keyser’s pills;” and conclude
 with a quotation in French from the same anonymous
 writer, which in English runs thus: “ A con-
 “ siderable volume might be formed of well-au-
 “ thenticated observations that have been made of
 “ cases in which Mr. Keyser’s medicine has failed
 “ of success.”

This paragraph runs off prettily enough; but I am sorry to say that it wants that foundation so essentially necessary to every superstructure of this kind, namely, TRUTH. This I must take upon myself to prove. In the first place, you say, “ He (the anonymous writer) *demonstrates*
 “ that Keyser’s pills are not sufficient to cure a con-
 “ firmed lues.” By any quotation you have hitherto favoured us with, no such demonstration appears; and I am surprised, that, in the eagerness of your pursuit to hunt down my medicine, you should not have reflected that it was necessary to have given us some extracts from this curious production, containing the arguments against the medicine, with an account of cases in which it has failed of success, or an analysis of the medicine itself, all tending to demonstrate its inefficacy or unfitness for the purposes for which it is administered.

But

But nothing of all this appears, and the public are obliged to submit to the *ipse dixit* of an anonymous writer, which is very seldom regarded by men of sense; and Mr. Wathen certainly can do himself very little credit, by quoting random passages of such a performance against a medicine, especially as it will be made appear that the writer has acted as invidiously as unjustly on his part.

But you, with this writer, are pleased to account for the reputation of these pills in France, &c. (for it seems you allow them to have acquired some reputation) “from the interested patronage of the great, &c.” Is it possible, Mr. Wathen, is it possible that a gentleman, who, like you, must be supposed to have some acquaintance with the genteel world, can stoop so low as to be the retailer of such illiberal reflections on men of the first rank and character in a learned and polite nation? Does honour, humanity, and truth, reside no where but in your country? Let me ask Mr. Wathen, does he think so meanly of the great personages immediately about a court, and the presence of their sovereign, and who many of them, from their military offices, have the inspection of the health and treatment of those brave fellows who have ventured their lives in the service of their country, that they are to be, by any consideration whatever, biassed to give their sanction to the use of a medicine, which, instead of alleviating the disorders of the wretched sufferers, shall leave them in the same or a worse state than it
first

first found them in? Do you, Sir, hold the great and the eminent in your own profession in so contemptible a light (not to give it a more harsh appellation) as even to suppose, that if yourself was to apply to them, with all the advantages of the most powerful interest, you could bring them to be advocates for, and constant administrators in their own practice of a precarious remedy, and thereby hazard their own justly-acquired reputation, to answer the private and interested ends of an empiric; especially when the ease and health of numbers of their fellow creatures were so nearly concerned in it? Let me then tell you, Sir, that the many persons of the first consideration in physic and surgery, in most of the capital cities in Europe, who have favoured me with very flattering and full certificates, would as much disdain such a conduct, or even the imputation of it, and would reject with the deserved contempt any man ignorant or impudent enough to solicit their countenance in behalf of any method of cure that did not to them carry the conviction of rationality and experience to recommend it? Then let me acquaint you, if haply you know it not, that in the kingdom of France in particular no *nostrum* can be sold without having previously undergone the examination of gentlemen appointed by the faculty of physic. The French government, by the excellency of its police, protects the lives of its people from being destroyed by quack medicines. It is true, great encouragement

ment is given to the profession of arts and sciences. There is a large field open before them, where each may shew his abilities to do good, but not to do any mischief, at the same time that emulation is encouraged, which has for its object the advantage and benefit of mankind. Thus, when a man of genius has made any new discovery in physic, or improvement in any branch whatever of the useful arts or sciences, it is immediately laid before the proper judges whose province it is to take cognizance thereof, and examine with the greatest exactness the merits of the author, whom, if approved, they reward accordingly. This has already happened in my favour, Sir: my medicine, after the strictest scrutiny, and a course of the most accurate and impartial experiments, in various cases, has been deemed by judges, as unbiassed as they are discerning, worthy to be recommended to universal practice, and is now actually in full and constant, and permit me to say, successful use in the hospitals and army, for curing the Venereal distemper; and his most Christian Majesty, who is no more susceptible of impositions than other crowned heads, has, in consequence of the united attestations of the most eminent physicians and surgeons of his court and kingdom, been graciously pleased to honour and reward me with a royal pension of 10,000 livres (or about 500l. English sterling) a year. And as a still further mark of his royal favour, and of the esteem in which he holds my medicine, after
 having

having purchased the secret of me for a very handsome consideration, he causes the medicine to be given to all his poor soldiers in the several hospitals at his own expence; but at the same time permits me to enjoy the benefit arising from vending the same during my life, or of disposing of the secret (which I have as yet made known only to his most Christian Majesty and the Marshal Duke of Biron) to my own best advantage. These testimonials, in favour of my character, and that of my medicine, are, I confess, too flattering for me to pass over unnoticed. As to the suggestion, or rather confident assertion, of the anonymous writer, that rewards have been given to persons for making use of my pills, it carries with it something so very absurd and repugnant to common sense, or a knowledge of mankind, that it merits not a reply.

With regard to the analysis my medicine underwent by Mess. Piat and Cadet, apothecaries at Paris, which you take notice of in the 13th page of your Introduction; this is a circumstance that rather does honour to the remedy than otherwise. The occasion of this analysis being made, was a book written by an anonymous writer, charging it to be a composition of corrosive sublimate, and consequently injurious in its effects; whereupon the Marshal Duke of Biron, who was and still continues to be the avowed patron of this medicine, from a knowledge of its composition, and a conviction of its utility, in order to convince the public

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lic of the injustice of the anonymous writer's charge, ordered this analysis to be made; the result of which was, as your Introduction observes, that my medicines were found to be pure mercury, perfectly divided, by means of a vegetable acid, and by the help of a certain machine, constructed at my request, by the ingenious Mr. Vaucanson. But to what does all this tend, but to prove that it is not of that corrosive and dangerous nature which the anonymous writer would have made the world believe? He himself (who proved to be no less a person than the learned Dr. Astruc) did afterwards candidly acknowledge his error, and retract his assertions.

But pray, Sir, what authority have either you or the anonymous writer, who seems to be your oracle, to assert so boldly, nay even to appeal to your English surgeons, Mess. Hawkins and Bromfield *, that, after the most candid trials, they have both of them rejected my pills, as not only insufficient, but very injurious? What the opinion of those gentlemen concerning the solution of sublimate, which is so artfully tacked to the mention of my medicine, may be, is no business of mine. But I must tell you, and that, Sir, from undoubted authority, that those gentlemen are so far from regarding my medicines in the dangerous or contemptible light here represented, that at this very time a powder

* See page xiv. of the Introduction.

similar to that of which my pills are composed, is made use of in the hospital they superintend.

Many *endeavour* to prepare mercury after my *supposed* method, by a long and constant trituration, so as to effect a perfect division of its parts. All this labour and pains, which I am sorry to say, will fail them at last, would not surely be worth while, unless they conceived some degree of virtue and efficacy to reside in my preparations, which they would thus imitate*.

But now, Sir, I come to that part of your Introduction, where you attack me in your own person. And here I must beg leave to retort on you your own words, in your 13th observation, where, speaking of mercury's being the only medicine for curing the venereal disease, you say, "It is well known (however disingenuous it may be) that some who have appeared most conspicuous in opposition to it, have notwithstanding had recourse to it in their private practice, and thus discovered their real sentiments." I could wish that no part of Mr. Wathen's conduct, in respect to my remedy had fallen under the censure of this his own very just observation, and that he had not so inconsiderately joined in the attack on the reputation of a brother surgeon, by chiming in with the sentiments of an anonymous author, who as falsely as ignorantly has advanced several things against my

* The analysing of a medicine may shew what is not in it, but cannot always shew its component parts, nor the methods of compounding them.

medicine, which I defy him to prove, or even to make good the least of his assertions. But to proceed :

You say, in the 13th page of your Introduction, “ He (the author of the *Parallele, &c.*) asserts with “ *me* (observe that *me*, Mr. Wathen!) that this “ medicine (of Mr. Keyser’s) is more slow, uncer- “ tain, and *dangerous*, than any of the common in- “ ternal mercurial preparations, to be met with in “ every dispensatory or chemical archive; and “ produces a multitude of credible witnesses in “ proof of his assertion.”

To you now, Sir, I appeal against yourself; I appeal to your own words, your own experience, and your own practice, to refute all and every syllable this anonymous author can possibly say against the good effects of my medicine. Some people, from motives of self-interest, will disguise their real thoughts; but to a man of delicate sentiments, acquired by a liberal education, this kind of dissimulation is supposed to appear low and unwarrantable. What then am I to think, Sir, who have now lying before me letters from my correspondent in London, a gentleman of established character, assuring me, that you, Mr. Wathen, have not only made use of Keyser’s pills in your private practice for sometime, but have praised them even to a degree of enthusiasm to my correspondent? nay, that you was so very fond of these pills, that you not long since applied to that gentleman to let you subscribe three or five hundred pounds

in order to become a joint purchaser of the secret of that medicine, provided Mr. Keyser would sell it to four or six purchasers, who should become proprietors of it in England; that you have told that person over and over, that they more than answered your most sanguine expectations: you was even pleased to give some instances of their success, particularly in a lady of a nervous and weakly constitution, whom her husband had injured; and that you had been extremely embarrassed in your endeavours to remove her complaints, as you said that all other preparations of mercury, however softened by all the art you could make use of, or guarded by the most cautious administration, proved rather hurtful, and productive of bad consequences, to the patient, than any way contributed to her relief. It is true, indeed, you never let this or any other patient in her way know that they were Keyser's pills you gave them, for reasons very obvious.

And here, Sir, I must beg leave to observe, that you have been a little wanting in that candour and ingenuity which we naturally look for in persons who, by their education or profession, are raised above the prejudices or meannesses of the vulgar. The facts I have mentioned happened about two years since; therefore, had you, in the course of any subsequent trials, found my medicine fall short of the efficacy you was at first inclined to believe it possessed, would it not have been more satisfactory to the public, more agreeable to the character of the
 surgeon

surgeon, the gentleman, and the humanist, to have offered a candid and clear refutation of the supposed virtues ascribed to these pills? to have given some few cases, judiciously and impartially selected for the view of the public, where they have failed under your hands of late, and from thence have deduced your reasons for now endeavouring to explode their use, and stigmatizing them with the character of being *a more slow, uncertain, and dangerous medicine, &c.*? for I am afraid the former warm expressions of your's in their favour will be thought by the unprejudiced part of the public to agree very ill with your present assertions.

But be that as it may, I have not leisure to maintain a paper-war with you, and was compelled to appear in print this time, to vindicate my own character as a surgeon in that of the medicine I have invented, and whose use I recommend; and therefore I shall cut short the dispute, and content myself with having thus exhibited the true state of the treatment I have received, leaving to the impartial public to judge between us.

But before I entirely take my leave of you, I shall endeavour, Sir, to shew the great difference between your (newly-adopted) opinion of my medicine, and that of others in the faculty. These are not ordinary evidences which I am about to produce, but gentlemen of reputation in the profession, whose judgments are to be depended upon, and, I doubt not, will do honour to any cause, were they to give a preference either to my medicine, or
the

the other mercurial preparations commonly made use of in the cure of venereal disorders. Let the facts give evidence for themselves.

Mr. Guerin, a celebrated surgeon in Paris, whose name is held in deserved esteem by every gentleman of the profession, has, with distinguished candour, given the following faithful narrative of the effects which he has seen produced by this remedy, in the course of his own practice, for the space of three years, in the hospital which was founded by the Marshal Duke of Biron for dispensing it to the French guards.

I. "The remedy (says he) is good, and free from all manner of inconvenience. Already (in the space of two years) 500 soldiers have been successively cured in the above-mentioned hospital, and I can aver of most grievous disorders, that for the most part had been missed by the best-approved usual methods, and in which mercurial frictions have proved ineffectual.

II. "I have had the management of this remedy myself, and have effected by it cures that astonished me.

III. "I prescribed it constantly, and have not as yet met with any accident to make me doubt, not only of its efficacy, but even of its *superiority* over all the antivenereal remedies hitherto known. I am sensible that no medicine ever has been and continues to be so furiously attacked as this by all the suggestions of jealousy and envy; but the candid
and

and rational practitioner will by a very few trials be convinced that self-interest has been the cause of all this opposition.

IV. "I find that this remedy demands scarce any preparations, not even baths, except in such cases where you may judge them necessary; no other regimen need be prescribed to the sick, but to avoid being guilty of excess. A patient may be cured by this remedy without any person about him, servant or others, harbouring the least suspicion.

(Signed) GUERIN."

The above is an abstract from a letter wrote by this gentleman to a surgeon of some eminence in London. To this certificate, among many others, of the virtues of my medicine, I shall subjoin two very extraordinary cases, certified by Mess. de la Faye and Morand, men of the most established reputation and character in their profession.

"The first is that of Mr. Du Bois *, principal
"servant to Monsieur Le Maitre, Treasurer Ge-
"neral of Artillery. His case was as follows: All
"the upper part of the coronal-bone † was exosto-

* See a Narrative of the effects of a medicine discovered by Mr. Keyser, for the cure of the Venereal Disease, &c. published in London by James Cowper, M. D. printed for Mr. Nicoll in St. Paul's Church Yard, and to be had of all the Booksellers in Great Britain, Price 1s.

† *Coronal Bone*, is the upper part of the skull.

“ fed* ; all the articulations † of his shoulders,
 “ arms, and hands, were anchilosed ‡ ; the joint
 “ of the wrist, with the bone of the arm, were sur-
 “ rounded with a tumour of a most enormous size,
 “ and so pernicious in its effect, as to distort the
 “ wrist upwards in such a manner, that his fingers
 “ laid upon the fore-part of his arm : All the fingers
 “ of this hand were exostosed and contracted ; the
 “ whole arm was emaciated, and looked withered.
 “ The tibia, or shin-bone, was likewise exostosed
 “ in its whole length : two deep and malignant
 “ ulcers preyed upon the left leg, the bone of
 “ which was carious, or rotten : the superior part
 “ of the right shin-bone was exostosed ; the most
 “ severe and acute pains, all over his body, were felt
 “ night and day without ceasing ; a hectic fever, ac-
 “ companied with a cough and spitting of purulent
 “ corrupted matter ; no sleep, and a continual loath-
 “ ing of all food : his body became emaciated to
 “ the greatest degree, and reduced to the last state
 “ of weakness.

“ Mess. de la Faye and Morand, whose patient
 “ he was for two years, declared that they had
 “ used their utmost endeavours to cure the said

* *Exostosed*, signifies a swelling or protuberance of a bone,
 and sometimes out of its natural place, and often produces a
 mortification if not prevented in time.

† *Articulations*, signify the joints of the body.

‡ *Anchilosed*, signifies a contraction, stiffness, and immoveable-
 ness of the joints.

“ patient,

“ patient, but could not succeed. Dr. de la Motte,
 “ an eminent physician of the faculty of Paris, had
 “ also attended him. These three gentlemen de-
 “ clared and certified, That Mr. Keyser’s medicine
 “ had performed a most astonishing cure on his
 “ patient, to whom he administered this admirable
 “ remedy on the 1st of March 1760, and accom-
 “ plished the cure in four months; which was at-
 “ tested by Dr. de la Motte, Mess. de la Faye and
 “ Morand, celebrated surgeons at Paris, in the
 “ month of August 1761; at which time he still
 “ continued to enjoy a most perfect state of health,
 “ without having the least return of any of his for-
 “ mer frightful symptoms.”

The second case is described and the cure attest-
 ed by the famous Professor Le Cat, the first anatomi-
 mist, and one of the most eminent surgeons in
 Europe. I shall give it in his own words, as they
 stand in a letter he was very lately * so obliging to
 write me on the subject of my medicine.

L E T T E R from Mr. L E C A T, Doctor of Physic,
 and Chief Surgeon of the Hôtel Dieu of Rouen,
 Professor and Demonstrator Royal of Anatomy
 and Surgery; of the Royal Academies of Paris,
 London, Madrid, and Lyons, and of that of

* This is the second letter from the learned Professor Le Cat
 to Mr. Keyser. His first letter, of a very extraordinary case,
 was published three years since; we may conclude from this se-
 cond, that Mr. Le Cat has not like Mr. Wathen changed his
 opinion of my remedy.

D

Bologna;

Bologna; of the Imperial Academies of the Curious of Nature, and of St. Petersburg; Perpetual Secretary of the Academy of Rouen, &c.

To Mr. KEYSER, on occasion of an extraordinary
Cure performed by his Pills.

“ S I R, Rouen, 27th May 1765.

“ I need not tell you, that it was in consequence
“ of the well-authenticated testimonials of two
“ surgeons of the greatest reputation in Paris,
“ Mess. Morand and Guerin, who had themselves
“ been eye-witnesses to the success of your medicine
“ in the hospital founded by the Marshal Duke de
“ Biron, that I determined to make a trial of it
“ for the space of two years, at the end of which
“ time, being convinced by my own repeated expe-
“ rience of its efficacy, I publickly adopted its use
“ in my practice. A friend of mine, Mr. Signard,
“ who is now become one of your’s, happening to
“ be at my house for some days, afflicted in a de-
“ plorable manner with a disorder in which your
“ pills * are of particular use, I advised him by all
“ means to try them at his return to Paris, and at
“ the same time recommended him to advise with
“ you; the consequence of which was, that, by your
“ great care, and the help of your medicine, he

* The French term is *dragées*, i. e. medicinal sugar-plumbs,
or comfits.

“ recovered

“ recovered perfectly a health, which every one
 “ that knew him believed irreparably lost. Mr.
 “ Petit, Physician to the Duke of Orleans, has, as
 “ well as myself, given you an authentic attestation
 “ of that truly noble cure, as indeed no person,
 “ who has a regard for truth, can refuse his testi-
 “ mony to facts, the publication of which has
 “ such evident tendency to the welfare of mankind
 “ in general. For some time after the above-men-
 “ tioned instance, tho’ I have constantly persisted
 “ in the use of your pills, Sir, I have not met with
 “ any cures worthy of being particularly noticed,
 “ till lately I have performed one in the course of
 “ my practice, which I think extremely well adap-
 “ ted, not only to recall the good opinion of some
 “ in favour of your medicine, who really thought
 “ it not at all superior, if even equal, to the com-
 “ mon method of mercurial frictions; but also to
 “ silence those who, consulting their own interests,
 “ rather than the advantage of their fellow creatures,
 “ have decried your pills, merely because the use
 “ of them considerably lessened their profits; for it
 “ is beyond doubt, Sir, that the publication of
 “ our medicine gave a mortal blow to the pecuniary
 “ interests of surgery; and I am afraid there are
 “ very few of its professors sufficiently friends
 “ to the community to sacrifice those without
 “ some regret. But to proceed to a relation of
 “ the case:

“ Mr. Le Ch— C—, Captain in the regiment
 “ of D—, had all the symptoms of a confirmed
 “ pox; and the gentlemen of the faculty, in one of
 “ our sea-ports in Normandy, were of opinion that
 “ he had nothing left, but to submit to be laid down
 “ in a salivation. Accordingly, about the latter
 “ end of June last year, after bleeding, purging,
 “ the use of proper baths, and all the necessary
 “ precautions to insure success usually premised in
 “ these cases, the proper frictions were administered
 “ in a pretty ample and frequent manner. These
 “ soon raised a very copious salivation, which conti-
 “ nued the usual space of time. At the 11th rubbing
 “ all the symptoms disappeared; at the 16th, (for
 “ the patient underwent that number) the disorder
 “ seemed entirely conquered, but the spitting still
 “ continued. Hereupon they gave him repeated
 “ purges, and in large doses, in order to carry off
 “ the redundant salivation, which at length they
 “ effected, and the gentleman thought himself well
 “ enough to go abroad; but, about the beginning
 “ of November, he was obliged to take to his
 “ house again, on the re-appearance of some of the
 “ former symptoms, and had already been several
 “ months under the hands of physicians and sur-
 “ geons, and he continued so to be, during the
 “ whole month of November, on account of the
 “ return of certain ulcers that occupied the roof of
 “ the mouth and the throat. The gentlemen who at-
 “ tended him, having in vain tried all their skill to
 “ remove

“ remove these ugly symptoms he applied to me at
 “ Rouen, in a most pitiable condition. I must
 “ confess that I could not help being startled at
 “ the havock these ulcers had made on the parts
 “ affected; the roof of his mouth was all bespread
 “ with them, and the integuments of the palate
 “ and throat were deeply corroded, as was also the
 “ pharynx. These ulcers were attended with a
 “ violent inflammation, that affected the whole
 “ eustachian tube, and from thence communi-
 “ cated itself to the organs of hearing, occa-
 “ sioning a deafness. On the right-side of the
 “ upper jaw, near the nose, was a hard scab, as
 “ large as the end of one’s finger, under which was
 “ an ulcer of the same size, which had eaten entire-
 “ ly thro’ the lip. But the most afflicting circum-
 “ stance of all was, that his body was reduced to
 “ a mere skeleton, which he could, but with the ut-
 “ most difficulty, drag about. In this situation, tho’ I
 “ heartily wished, Sir, by means of your medicine,
 “ to restore to life and health a brave servant of
 “ his Majesty thus cruelly afflicted; yet, on the
 “ other hand, I thought the cure so hazardous, not
 “ to say even rash, that I advised him to go to
 “ Paris for assistance; but he would not hear men-
 “ tion of it. Indeed, I believe, he thought he had
 “ not strength enough to support the length of the
 “ journey, without being carried in a very easy
 “ conveyance. But, independent of that circum-
 “ stance, he assured me, that he had such a confi-
 “ dence

“ dence in me, that he was absolutely resolved to
 “ continue at Rouen, and submit entirely to any
 “ method I should think proper to try with him.
 “ Unfortunately for us both, he had imbibed a
 “ strong prepossession against your pills, and he had
 “ still greater reason to be averse to the ordinary
 “ method by salivation, of which he had suffered
 “ all the horrors, without reaping the least advan-
 “ tage from it. For my own part, I had many
 “ years ago experienced, on sundry occasions, the
 “ very precarious success of the extinctive method,
 “ as it is called, so much in use formerly at Mont-
 “ pellier. Your method then, Sir, appeared to
 “ me the only one I could with any degree of
 “ certainty make use of with my patient, in the
 “ miserable state in which he then was; and this ve-
 “ ry opinion of its certainty and safety made me
 “ determine, notwithstanding his repugnance, to
 “ put him upon the pills immediately, and that,
 “ without either bleeding, purging, or the use of
 “ baths premised. Accordingly I began, by giving
 “ him one pill every morning and night, on the
 “ 21st of December 1764, and increased the dose
 “ very gradually, and at considerable intervals. He
 “ could get but very little sleep; at the end of a-
 “ bout a fortnight the deafness, which I have al-
 “ ready taken notice of, went off; this first good
 “ effect began to give me some glimmering of
 “ hope. About the 28th day of the cure, the pa-
 “ late appeared pierced quite thro’; the 36th day

“ N/.

“ my patient began to sleep tolerably well, and re-
 “ covered his appetite. Two days after I found a
 “ separation of a considerable portion of the middle
 “ and anterior part of the bone of the palate. At this
 “ time he took only ten pills a day. This con-
 “ firmed me if possible, more than ever in my good
 “ opinion of your medicine. In a month after the
 “ cornet* on the left side of the nose came away
 “ entirely. He then took thirteen pills a-day, and
 “ no more, for I did not dare to increase the dose far-
 “ ther on account of his weakness. During this time
 “ the ulcers of the integuments of the palate, and
 “ those in the bottom of the throat, continued shift-
 “ ing their appearances, in such a manner as gave
 “ me great uneasiness, for as fast as they healed up
 “ on one side, they broke out on the other. In some
 “ of the intervals of these changes, the uvula and the
 “ whole pharynx were so corroded with ulcers, that
 “ the lower part of these organs seemed to hang to
 “ the upper only by slender threads †, as it were,
 “ infomuch that I was every day under apprehen-
 “ sions of a total separation. Happily indeed these

* *Cornet* is the French name for one of the spongy laminæ,
 or thin bones of the nose, so called by them from its crooked or
 horn-like figure.

† These slender red threads, were only blood vessels, which
 are known to be less liable to putrefaction than muscles, or even
 bones, as there has been instances where the muscles were entirely
 consumed, and the bones carious, yet the blood vessels remained
 entire. This seems to confirm the doctrine of some anatomists,
 with respect to the coats of arteries.

“ threads

“ threads appeared of a bright red colour, which I
 “ looked upon as a favourable prognostic. By
 “ this time three months were elapsed, his appetite
 “ however was now very good, he slept well, his
 “ countenance became healthy and promising, and
 “ his strength considerably repaired; hence I plainly
 “ saw that nothing was wanting to crown our en-
 “ deavours with success, but to give the medicine
 “ in stronger doses, which I now determined to do;
 “ and by that time I had increased the number of
 “ his pills to twenty-eight, and afterwards to thirty
 “ a-day, the ulcer began to heal with amazing
 “ promptitude, and the cure was attended with no
 “ accident worthy of remark, either in the head, the
 “ mouth, or the bowels; while the ulcers were heal-
 “ ing, a very strong tucking-in cicatrix was form-
 “ ed the whole length of the middle of the base
 “ of the uvula, which persuaded me that the palate-
 “ bone, which supported it, had been separated
 “ or exfoliated, and had come away without my
 “ perceiving it. In a word, after having taken the
 “ increased dose of thirty of your pills a-day for a
 “ week, this great cure was accomplished, after my
 “ patient had been four months and a half under
 “ the course of the remedy:

“ This, Sir, is the substance of the observations
 “ I thought necessary to communicate to you, as a
 “ justice I think myself indispensably obliged to
 “ render to your method of cure. You have my
 “ full

“ full permission to make it public : for, believe me,
 “ no consideration in life whatsoever shall hinder
 “ me from paying the tribute due to truth, espe-
 “ cially when it so nearly concerns the welfare of
 “ my fellow creatures ; a way of thinking and act-
 “ ing which I flatter myself will meet with the ap-
 “ probation of every person of honour and under-
 “ standing.

“ I am, &c.

(Signed)

LE CAT.”

“ I certify that the above letter, of which this is
 “ a copy, was written by me ; and furthermore,
 “ that, during several years that I have now con-
 “ stantly made use of Mr. Keyser’s pills, I become
 “ daily more and more convinced, that they far
 “ excel every other medicine for obtaining a per-
 “ fect and radical cure of the venereal disease.

Rouen, June 7, 1765.

LE CAT.”

This last case, Sir, I think may be termed a
 very bad one ; and if Mr. Le Cat had thought that
 the common mercurial preparations would either
 have proved more easy for his patient to bear, or
 likely to succeed better in the event, there is the
 greatest reason to believe, from that gentleman’s
 known candour and humanity, that he would have

E

pre-

preferred them to mine ; but my chief reason for inserting these cases is to demonstrate to every reader how unjustly my reputation might have probably fallen a sacrifice to the ungenerous representations of an anonymous antagonist, had I not been thus strengthened by the assent and opinion of persons whomay justly be ranked amongst the brightest luminaries of their profession.

Daily experience indeed teaches us that the generality of mankind are too ready to receive unfavourable impressions on the least plausibilities: but under these disadvantages, and the additional one of being a foreigner and a stranger in your country, as well as the interruption of a general correspondence with France, caused by the late war, having hindered my medicine being hitherto known in England, but to a few, most of whom did not think it their interest to encourage the importation of a discovery, which, however useful it would prove to the public, might diminish their profit in this class of disorders; notwithstanding all these disadvantages, I say, yet do I flatter myself, that what I have asserted concerning the superiority of my medicine over all other antivenereals, will be well received by the generous and unprejudiced part of the English, a people who are no less remarkable for their discernment, than admired for their candour.

And

And now, Sir, having, as I think, answered in every part the invidious suggestions and groundless reflections thrown out against my medicine by the anonymous writer of the *Parallele*, &c. whose sentiments you have thought proper to adopt in your pamphlet, I shall here close this long letter, with declaring, that I rest the merits of my cause with the candid and discerning public, doubting not that they will do me that justice which appears to be my due. In the mean time, I remain,

S I R,

Your humble servant, &c.

Paris, Oct. 1, 1765.

J. KEYSER.

F I N I S.

And now, Sir, I shall be glad to see
in every part the business of the
the business of the world of the
teachments; and have the honor
your friendship, I shall be glad to see
with delight, that I find the world
with the candid and discerning public, doubtless
that they will be me that I have which appears to
be my duty, in the mean time, I remain

21 D

Your humble servant, etc.

John, Esq. 1707

But in 1707

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A N
A N S W E R
T O T H E
L E T T E R
O F
M r . K E Y S E R , & c .



[Price Six Pence.]

THE

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TO THE

LETTER

OF

M. K. E. T. & R. Co.

NEW YORK

Price Six Pence

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A N
A N S W E R
T O T H E
L E T T E R
O F

Mr. *K E Y S E R*,

S U R G E O N and C H E M I S T of *Paris*,

I N W H I C H

The Insufficiency of his Medicine, for the Cure
of the V E N E R E A L D I S E A S E, is further con-
sidered.

A L S O,

Some of the Evidences of the anonymous Author of the
P A R A L L E L are produced, and confirmed by the
Testimony of M. *F A B E R*, President of the Com-
pany of Surgeons, and Counsellor to the Committee
of the Royal Academy of Surgery in *Paris*.

By J O N A T H A N W A T H E N, Surgeon.

L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN RIVINGTON, at the *Bible*
and *Crown* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*. 1765.

A. N. S. W. E. R.

TO THE
L. E. T. T. E. R.

OF
M. R. E. T. S. E. R.

Surgeon and Consultant of the
in which
The Institution of the Medicine for the Cure
in the various Diseases, &c.

Also
Some of the History of the anonymous Author of the
Treatise on the Venereal Disease, and continued by
the late M. R. E. T. S. E. R. of the Com-
mittee of the Royal Society, and continued in the
Journal of the Royal Society of Surgery in 1780.

By JOHNATHAN WATSON, Surgeon.

LONDON:

Printed for J. K. Richardson, at the Bible
and Church Lane, in the Strand, 1785.

Advertisement.

HAVING lately published a Pamphlet, entitled, *Practical Observations on the Cure of the Venereal Disease by Mercury*; I was obliged, by the Nature of my Subject, to give an Account, in the best Manner I could, of every Preparation of that Mineral; but especially of those which I had made Trial of in my own Practice. I then reflected on the Insufficiency of Mr. *Keyser's* Pills as a general Medicine; but this Censure fell in with my Experience. Nor did he suffer more by my Remark, than all others, who by their *Noftrums* endeavour to engross a superior and exclusive Power of curing this Complaint. I there proved what I now assert, that such Claims are

ADVERTISEMENT.

not only presumptuous, but false; and very injurious to those who are influenced by them.

What I then wrote did not arise from Prejudice or Resentment; nor did I mean to destroy the Profits of his Patent: But as he has been pleased to call me to a public Account, I am obliged, tho' against my Will, to enter the Lists, and explain the Reasons on which my Opinion of his Medicine is founded.

A N

A N S W E R

T O

Mr. *K E Y S E R*, &c.

S I R,

IN O sooner perused the Letter you so publicly favoured me with, but the Respect due both to the Subject and its Author, determined me to return an Answer as soon as possible. Permit me, however, first of all, to declare it as my Opinion, that a Writer, with or without a Name, is entitled to just so much Respect as he has Reason and Facts to support what he advances; so that the greatest Names have no more Weight with me than the nameless, where the *ipse dixit* only is on their Side. If others are of the same Sentiments, they will perceive at once the Reason why you was so sensibly touched by me and the anonymous Author, and why I have not the least Resentment to any Thing your Letter contains. In Proof of which, I will do my utmost to rectify your Mistakes, and satisfy all your Doubts and Scruples concerning my Proceedings with respect to your Medicine, my Observations, and the anonymous

Writer, &c. You seem surprized, *that I should not have employed my Pen in accounting for the salutary Operations of the Bark in Fevers, &c. rather than those of Mercury in the Venereal Disease.*—My Answer is, I never prescribe the Bark, or any other Medicine that comes within the Province of the Physician; but that I have particularly confined my Attention to Mercury: The dispensing of which, in the Venereal Disease, on the Account of Cancries, Buboes, and many other Symptoms requiring chirurgical Treatment, has now for some Years been committed to the Care of Surgeons.

Why then should you expect me to employ my Time in what is so foreign to my Profession, and which, you say, *has so long puzzled the most eminent Physicians to account for, to the Neglect of that which is proper to it, and with which I am necessarily better acquainted?* To this you have already replied, *The Nature of the Cure of the Venereal Disease by Mercury, is a thing known by almost every Tyro of a Twelve-month's standing.* Hopeful Youths indeed! I should be glad to hear that your *Parisian Spring* produced the Fruits of Autumn, did I not fear they might be too crude for a happy Digestion, and portend a Famine in the Winter. However generally received and perfectly understood this Doctrine may be with you, it is not so with us: Even our Professors have different Senti-

Sentiments on that Subject, and do not all tread *this beaten Track of ours*. Tyro's, you know, generally follow their Leaders, and become the most zealous Partizans: The Reason is obvious. What is become of your truly great and immortal *Astruc*? Are his Sentiments on this Affair annihilated? Is there not one Tyro to espouse his Cause? Here he has many who adhere strictly to his Doctrine, of the specific and antidotal Qualities of Mercury in Venereal Disorders. I might ask the same Questions about pretty nearly the same Thing, usually expressed by the Word Extinction, still maintained by many here. But what I have said will perhaps be sufficient to prove, that there is not, at least with us, that general Agreement you suppose, concerning the mechanical Operation of Mercury, whereby it cures the Venereal Disease; and which I have endeavoured publicly to demonstrate, in my late Book of Observations. The Reasons then for my writing on that Subject are not only apparent, but justifiable. Why then are you offended? The only Reason I can assign is, that such Reasonings and Enquiries tend directly to the Discredit of secret and particular Preparations of Mercury, of which yours is one. The following Inference then (tho' a notable Truth) could not be very agreeable.

“ Away then with Arcanas, Nostrums, and curious Preparations, &c. they have no Value,
but

but as containing somewhat of this only Remedy (Mercury) for their Basis : Nor have they any good Effects but what are derived from thence, and as they are regulated in their Operation *.” But that I should transcribe certain Words from an anonymous Writer, corroborating my Sentiments, was, it seems, intolerable. That Author needs not my Countenance. The Facts he produces are fully sufficient to justify his Sentiments concerning your Pills.

I should not despair of removing your Objections, were they not so nearly related to your Interest : For upon what other Foundation could you except to my Principles, which for ought I see, correspond entirely with your own. I have in that Piece set the Merits of Mercury, in all its Forms and Preparations, in a just and true Light ; and have shown the Method of applying them distinctly or conjunctly, upon Principles that must insure Success.

In a Survey of this Kind, it was impossible for your Medicine to escape my Notice ; the more especially, as I was experimentally acquainted with it, having about seven Years since made Use of it in my own private Practice for the Space of six Months, or more. And the Result of these Trials, I have there expressed, agreeable to your Citation, “ That

* See my Observations, Pag. 48. Sect. 76.

this Medicine of your's is more flow, uncertain, and dangerous, than any of the common Mercurial Preparations to be met with in every Dispensatory or chemical Archive." But to be more particular ; those Trials were conducted by me agreeable to your own printed Directions : That is, I gradually increased the Dose, and persisted in the Course, maugre the Opposition I met with from the Obstinacy of my Patients, or the Disease itself : For I was strongly prepossessed in its Favour, by the Cases contained in your Narrative ; their Cure, there said to be performed by your Pills, and confirmed by the Testimony of so many respectable Names.

In some Periods of this Process, I was flattered with Success *, and in others disappointed. Nor did my Patients receive any real Service from it ; but when it made the Mouth sore, a Crisis common to every Species of Mercurials ; but in this the Length of Time, the enormous Doses, and Necessity of repeating the tedious Process, were Difficulties insurmountable. Besides the Disease, in some continued to increase, notwithstanding the most rigorous Perseverance in your Medicine ; and obliged me of Ne-

* This was the very Time the Proposal mentioned by Mr. Keyser was made ; and when, as he justly observes, I complimented him upon its Efficacy. See the following Case.

cessity to decline its further Use, without performing by it one single Cure.

But from all I have said, I would not have you infer, that I deny the Possibility of its Curing. No; my real and impartial Deduction is, that your Medicine has no Right to claim Equality, much less Superiority, to other more common mercurial Preparations, as a general and universal Cure of the Venereal Disease: For as it is milder and weaker, so it is less efficacious than most of that Class; and of Course requires a tedious Length of Time, and a vast Quantity of the Pills, to effect the Cure, whenever it is thereby obtained. In Proof of which, I appeal to the Cases recited in your Letter and Narrative. It is fit only for weakened and exhausted Constitutions: It is there that your's, or similar ones, which every Dispensatory abounds with, may be properly applied, Whether such a State be the Consequence of the Disease itself, or of other more active Preparations; when, if they do not compleat the Cure, they will at least prove a good Supplement or Auxiliary, till others more active and certain may be exhibited.

It was such an Instance, Sir, that you allude to, where I most justly complimented you upon its Efficacy*: But I must now in-

* See Not. Pag. 5.

form you, that as her Strength increased, the Venereal Symptoms again prevailed; the Poison found Access into the Body, even whilst she was taking your Medicine, produced an Exostosis on each Elbow, and a larger on the Leg. She nevertheless grew stronger, and more able to pursue a vigorous Course of Mercurials; by which, and the Sarsaparilla Drink, strictly persevered in for a Month, she was perfectly cured, and remains well to this Day.

I could have been glad to preserve my Opinion of your Pills; and can appeal to your Correspondent as a Witness, with what Candour, Constancy, and Impartiality, I persevered in their Use for several Months; but that Experience, which arises from stubborn Facts, obliged me to alter my Sentiments.

You will now give me Leave to correct an Error, in which you seem to triumph greatly. You have Letters from your Correspondent, you say, *which inform you, that two Years since, or thereabout, I made an Offer to purchase a Share in your Medicine.* When this Mistake is rectified, it will stand thus: *Somewhat more than seven Years since, I made, &c.* For this Proposal happened to be made at the very Time the Patient just mentioned was under my Care, and when she (and some others) seemed to have received

ed much Benefit from your Pills*. My Book of Patients Names; her perfect Remembrance of so unhappy a Period of Life; and the Evidence of a particular Friend of mine, whom I consulted upon that Occasion, sufficiently certify the Date of that Occurrence.

There is another Circumstance also, which I cannot help remarking. You were informed, it seems, *That I praised your Pills to a Degree of Enthusiasm*. Now, as this is not my Manner of speaking in general, it is much less so on Subjects relating to our Profession, where we sometimes find Reason to change the most sanguine Opinions. The Observation I had then made, justified me in entertaining favourable Hopes, but not in pronouncing extravagant Encomiums.

However, I can easily excuse this Mistake, even without your Apology; for it is not impossible that the particular Mode of my Expression should be forgot, where *five* Years out of *seven* have escaped the Memory. Let this be as it will, I doubt not but I then commended it, as far as I thought it deserved; for I will ever do the strictest Justice to Men and Things that I am able. But seven Years, Sir, is a Space in which many Experiments may be made, and many Reflections arise, that may oblige us to alter our

* See Note, Page 5.

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tion? and our Countryman, Mr. *Douglas's* experimental Testimony of like Cures? But still further: You may think me too credulous, perhaps; for I pay the same Respect to each of your Antagonists, who, whilst decrying the Validity of those Cures, wrought by their Opponent's Mercurial Medicines and Methods, extol their own, as the only Means by which that important Event ever was or can be accomplished.

What better Testimony could we wish of the Efficacy of any Mercurial Preparation, than what we have lately received from *Vienna?* where no less than 4880 Persons, afflicted with the various Symptoms of this Disorder, such as they usually salivated for in the same Hospital (*St. Mark's*) were perfectly cured by the *Solution*.

Dr. Locher had the Care of these Patients, who were all actually examined, and the Reality of their Cures confirmed by the celebrated *Baron Van Swieten*. Have you any Authentication superior, or even equal to this? But it would fill a Volume to relate the numberless and wonderful Cures performed, and very well attested by different Mercurials, and different Persons, in different Countries, before and since your Time, with and without your Pills. And I would now inform the Author of the *Parallel*, notwithstanding you think him *my Oracle*, that *Vienna is not*
the

the only Place where Miracles are performed. But I need dwell no longer on Facts so well known, and so indisputable. The Method of authenticating extraordinary Cures here, tho' usually confirmed by the most solemn Oaths, are but little regarded, because they are seldom made Use of but by Empirics and Nostrum-mongers, who are generally suspected by Persons of liberal Education. Besides; the Evidences are generally taken by Magistrates, and witnessed by others who have no Manner of Knowledge of Medicine.

I perceive that in this Respect you have the greatest Advantage, since some of the Faculty of Physic and Surgery, and those Men of the greatest Reputation, have frequently witnessed the Validity of your Cures in the most solemn Manner; *Nous soussignes, &c.* * but by what Means they were at first induced to comply with it, I have no Idea; for I believe, sooner than any of the Faculty here would give their public Sanction to even as valuable a Secret as your's, they would suffer Amputation, and submit to be Cripples all their Days.

To be serious; I look on all these Authentications as equally valid, when taken. The Patient appears to be cured, and no doubt is oftentimes really so; because Mercurials, the only true and certain Antive-

* *Faber*, Vol. II. Pag. 200.

nereals, (tho' differently prepared) have been administered, any one of which, exhibited with Prudence and Perseverance, will always be attended with pretty nearly equal Success; and where, though one should fail, another will have a happier Effect; which I am persuaded you have often experienced in other Cases, as well as those related at the End of your Letter *.

I could not wish for a stronger Proof of this Truth, than in the Case related by Mr. *Le Cat*; which, though he seems to think *well adapted to recal † the good Opinion of some in Favour of your Medicine*, serves only to confirm the Justice of my Remark.

But I cannot forget this charming Thing called Authentications, and the Advantages that might be derived from it, could it but here be procured in your Way, and appropriated to myself without——Alas! my dear Sir, I could instantly draw up such a Catalogue of Cases, which (though nothing more than is common to every Practitioner) would redound greatly to my Honour and Reputation; especially, as every Patient should publicly appear before my Judges, and solemnly attest every thing I relate; (as for those who happen not to be so well as might be

* See my Observations, Sect. 50. Pag. 29.

† I now call M. *Le Cat* to witness, I am not singular in my Opinion of this Medicine—that there are others, who once thought of it, as I did, but now think as I do.

wished,

wished, I should certainly keep them at Home) I would then publish my Narrative, and apply for an annual Pension from our most gracious King, than whom no Prince in the World is so great an Encourager of Merit; nor could he be deceived or imposed upon herein, since the Facts would be real, and the Examination indisputable. This done, I would voluntarily, gratefully, and unreservedly, divulge to his Majesty, all and every one of my secret Medicines, and Methods of Cure. I would present him with my late Observations, and an Abstract of the Pharmacopœia's treating of Mercury, desiring nothing more than his Royal Leave to make Use of them for my own private Benefit*.

With Respect to the Analysis of your Medicine, and the Machines constructed by Mr. *Vaucanson*, I mean only, that since your Medicine is Mercury, and the Preparation of it (by your own Confession) a very mild one, it possesses the Properties of a mild Preparation only†; and that when we want a milder still, it may be had in pure, genuine, unaltered Mercury. Or should one of somewhat more Force be required, the *Pilulæ Mercuriales* of almost every Dispen-

* See Letter, Pag. 7, 8.

† It is therefore more slow and uncertain, and of Consequence more dangerous than those in common Use. See Pag. 6, 7.

fatory will answer the Purpose: But that all these are far too mild and sluggish for common Use—I say common Use; for I am not ignorant of the Propriety, and even Necessity of them, at some particular Periods of a Venereal Patient's State of Health, as well as of his Disease. Nay, this is so generally known, that nothing is more common than Preparations, so similar in Operation and Effect to your's, that one might swear they were the very same, did we not know the contrary. You say a similar one is used by Messieurs the Surgeons of St. *George's*, who, it seems, have not discarded your Pills; because they still discover their Approbation of them, by using *another Composition* of their own in the Form of Powders*.

But to return—Your Pills were, in my Opinion, the most properly and suitably applied in the Case of M. *Le Cat*, that was possible. Nevertheless, I really think the *Pilulæ Mercuriales* given every Night and Morning, from eight to ten Grains, with the Sarsa Drink, or the latter alone, would have cured that Patient much sooner, and more pleasantly than your's. I speak from Experience, upon which those Observations are founded which occasioned your Letter.—
What Need then for ten, twenty, thirty

* See Mr. *Keyser's* Letter, Pag. 10. and *Critical Review* for *October* last, Pag. 312.

Pills a Day; enough surely to disgust any thing but a despairing Mortal, and these continued for four Months and a half! I cannot conceive how he was able to swallow them. Your Patients are certainly much more submissive than ours; for was I to order such Doses, I am confident they would never more see my Face; besides, they expect to be (and such Cases generally are) cured here, in less than two Thirds of the Time.

Well, this capital Case of M. *Le Cat*, confirms me every Way in my Sentiments of the Mercurial Operation, and the general Inutility of your Pills, when compared with other and more common Mercurial Preparations. I do not mean to detract from the Reputation of so celebrated a Man, who is well known, and as highly esteemed in this Country. However, I cannot help observing, that he does not appear, from his Treatment of the Case above-mentioned, to be either perfectly skilful in the Choice of Mercurials, or the Direction of their Operation, so necessary to the Cure of the Venereal Disease, which you say, *every Tyro of a Twelve-month's standing is Master of*: For if every learned Professor was perfectly accomplished in each Branch of Practice, Discoveries as well as Disputations would for ever cease. I should have had no Reasons for publishing my Observations, nor

C

you

you of Consequence have ever favoured me with a Letter. Perfection is not a human Acquirement.

I would, as you see, have willingly appropriated that Character to your Pills — but alas ! they had too many Symptoms of Imperfection.

I am

S I R,

Your humble Servant, &c.

J. WATHEN.

P O S T-

P O S T S C R I P T.

I Did not apprehend that the slight Animadversions I made upon Mr. *Keyser*, were sufficient to justify so public a Resentment as he has expressed against me: But to convince the World that I am not eager in adopting a new Opinion without Grounds, I think myself obliged, in Justice to the anonymous Author, to subjoin a few of his Facts and Reasonings; which, in Concurrence with my own Experience, confirmed my Opinion concerning these famous Pills. But first, let me produce the Sentiments of *Mr. Faber*, *Master in Surgery, President of the Company, and Counsellor to the Committee of the Royal Academy of Surgery.*

That this Gentleman understands the Subject on which he treats, will not be disputed by any one that has read his *Traité des Maladies Vénéérienne*. This Work, which cannot be too highly esteemed, is comprised in two Volumes. He says *, “ This Remedy resembles all those other Preparations of Mercury that are but of little Force and

* Vol. II. Pag. 198. 2d Edition, published 1765.

Activity: Nevertheless, when they are continued for a long Time, they have sometimes been attended with Success; but if considered and used as a general Remedy, they will not answer the Purpose.

“ That which has contributed to the Reputation of this Medicine, is the numerous Certificates by which it hath been authenticated: But these Sorts of Proofs of the Goodness of a Remedy, are altogether Impositions on the Public. One may see a great Number of them in the *Answer of Mr. Keyser to Mr. Thomas* *, signed by many Physicians and Surgeons.

“ The Patients to whom these Testimonies relate, had Gonorrhœas, Cancres, Buboës, Phymoses, Fici, Pains of the Limbs, swelled and indurated Testicles. By a Month's Treatment, or thereabouts, these Symptoms disappear. Immediately after which, they have the Assurance publicly to attest the Cure of these Patients, by authentic Certificates, in the following Form:

“ Present *A. B. C. D.* Physicians and Surgeons. We attest, That the State of the underwritten Patient was conformable to Truth; and after *having examined* this Disease, and the Course of its Treatment, we

* See *Parallel*, Pag. 189. where he says, the Reputation of an honest Man was sacrificed in this *Answer*; of which 6000 Copies were distributed.

declare

declare him to be well cured. In Faith of which, &c.

“ One may judge, from what hath been said in many Parts of my *Traité des Maladies Vénéériennes*, touching the Disappearance of the pocky Symptoms, that these Attestations merit little Confidence, since Experience proves they are often Lies in the Event.

“ I shall not speak of the Accidents which these Pills are said to cause in different Patients, because I have never used them in my own Practice; but as they are exhibited by Mr. *Keyser* universally, in every Stage of the Disease, there must necessarily result from them Accidents more or less grievous, and very frequently the Pox itself*.

“ It appears from Mr. *Keyser*'s printed Directions, they are very liable to salivate the Patient; for he orders them to be continued till the Mouth is affected; then to suspend their Use, till that Effect is removed by Purges, which are to be repeated more or less Times, according to the Obstinacy of the Disease. But this Method is injudicious, and counteracts the Designs of Nature in a great Number of Venereal Diseases. During this Course of the Remedy, he permits his Patients to go Abroad, manage their Affairs, eat, drink, and exercise as usual, without Regard to a proper Regimen, so necessary to a radical Cure.

* See Page 7.

“ Never-

“ Nevertheless, all things being considered, they are rather more active than Mercurial Frictions, and very efficacious in certain ancient Poxes, where the Poison is degenerated, and incapable of being subdued by the specific Action of Mercury.

“ He says, (Vol. II. Pag. 353.) the Pills of Mr. *Keyser* are less active than the *Sublimate Corrosive*, and of Consequence may be given with less Danger. (*Here he relates the Case of Dubois, as it may be read in Mr. Keyser's Narrative and Letter, and then makes the following Reflection:*) Mr. *La Motte* from hence judges, this Remedy superior to all others; a Mistake the most egregious in a Physician! For Experience ever informs us, the same Remedy never can be properly prescribed in every particular Case. It is absurd, therefore, to say that this Medicine is superior to others, or indeed that it is absolutely inferior*.

“ This Patient, according to the Certificate of M. *La Motte*, had been before treated with Frictions, taken the Turbith Mineral, Decoctions of the Woods, white Præcipitate, and the coralline Mercury †. I shall

* See my Observations, Pag. 48. Sect. 76.

† Mr. *Keyser's Narrative and Letter* also inform us, that his Body became emaciated to the greatest Degree; and that he was reduced to the last State of Weakness. He was therefore as fit a Subject for a mild Mercurial, as the Person whose Case is related by M. *Le Cat*. Indeed, no other of that

shall not enquire whether these had been judiciously administered, since we know for a Certainty, were they so applied, that Friction, the Sublimate Corrosive, &c. have at least equal Success with Mr. *Keyser's* Remedy."

I shall conclude this Abstract from Mr. *Faber*, with a Reflection which does me too much Honour, *viz.* That there is the greatest Concordance between his Sentiments of this (and others) Mercurial Medicine, and my own.

He appears to be a thorough Master of the Subject he writes on; but the Impartiality and Generosity he has discovered, notwithstanding the injurious Treatment he complains of *, is truly admirable, and what I would ever wish to imitate.

Class, could be given him at that Time, without the utmost Hazard. I have myself frequently experienced the happy Effect of very mild Mercurials, in Cases similar to this; but especially in Conjunction with the Sarsaparilla Decoction: And there are many Instances where this last Medicine alone has, in such Circumstances of the Disease, performed the most surprizing Cures. See my Translation of *Boerhaave*, Pag. 356.

* Our Author says, Mr. *Keyser* had lately attacked him in a Manner the most unjust; and that in a Letter he wrote to a respectable Person, he had charged him with a Falsity, which he had not as yet condescended to answer. It seems from him, as if Mr. *Keyser* would not suffer any of his own Countrymen, however eminent, to speak their Sentiments of his Medicine, with Impunity. I have, to prevent his charging me with selecting random Passages, translated, or given the Sense of all that Mr. *Faber* has said. I refer our Readers to this celebrated *Traité des Maladies Vénériennes*, in Proof of it. I shall pursue the same Method with our anonymous Author.

We shall now permit the anonymous Author of the *Parallele des differentes Methodes de traiter la Maladie Vénérienne*, to produce his Evidence. He divides his History of your Medicine into two Periods: The first comprehends all the Manœuvres made Use of for its Establishment. The second commences from its Introduction into the Royal Hospitals.

FIRST PERIOD.

“ This Medicine, like all others of the Kind, commenc’d its Reputation by the Assistance of proper Persons, who were employed continually in different Circles, as Places of Entertainments, public Walks, and Coffee-Houses, to extol its Merit, and to cause its Encomiums to be inserted in the periodical Works, with which *Paris* is overflowed, that a *Medicine* was discovered of such admirable Properties, as would cure *infallibly* the *Veneral Disease* without *Delay*, without any Manner of *Inconvenience*; but above all, without *Salivation*; that *eight* or *ten* Days was sufficient for a *radical Cure*, and that without any Sort of *Precaution*; since the Patient might *eat, drink, and follow* his ordinary *Occupations*.

“ These Promises, so flattering, and published with so much Effrontery in the Face of the whole World, must of Necessity draw
the

the Attention of those, who, consulting only the Benevolence of their own Hearts, thought they should do themselves Honour by patronizing and supporting, with all their Credit, a Remedy so truly serviceable to their Fellow-Creatures.

The *Parallel* then demonstrates how false those Promises were, by informing us that the Soldiers, treated by those Pills, were restrained by the strictest Injunctions, from all the Liberties so publicly allowed; and says, that the Dispensors and Attendants of the Hospital of *French Guards* in the *Rue de Burgogne*, behind the *Val de Grace*, declare always that the Patients were salivated by these Pills, and for the most Part very copiously. He then asks (*reasonably enough*) how those thus salivated could eat and drink as common, and follow their ordinary Occupations without Restraint?

He next informs us of what passed in the Hospital of *Bicetre*, *Anno 1756*, where they were tried by Mr. *Thomas*, at the Request of a Friend of his, whom he was desirous to oblige. *His Report* of their Inefficacy, that they produced Vomitings, Gripings, Cholics, and Dysenteries; *the Methods* taken to discredit Mr. *Thomas's* Testimony, and his Ejectment from that Hospital, in Consequence of those Manœuvres. *The Favour* and Protection he met with from the Archbishop, the chief Magistrates, and other respectable

Personages, who, resenting his unjust Treatment, procured him the Place of Surgeon in Chief to the general Hospital, which he possessed till his Death, which happened in 1761.

We come now to three Cases, published in the *Journal OEconomique*, 1757, said to be cured by Mr. *Keyser's* Pills: But this is denied by our Author; and in a Letter published at *Paris*, wherein, says he, the Falsity of this Article, is exposed. The second of these Cases was authenticated by Mr. *Guerin*, July 30, 1757. This Patient had, amongst other Venereal Symptoms, a Bubo, which Mr. *Keyser* said was cancerous, thus expressed by Mr. *Guerin*, *Qui avoit un coup d'œil cancéreux*. All these were common Cases. If therefore they were not cured, it was shameful; and if they were, I cannot conceive what Honour or Reputation could be derived to Mr. *Keyser's* Pills (or any others) by their Publication. Page 199, produces an Instance of the Advantage taken by the Author of the *Journal of Medicine of the great and learned Astruc*, who for some Reason or other happened not to put his Name to a Book of *Tumours*, then published by him. I just mention this, as it is so *a-propos* to our anonymous Writer.

He next produces the Testimony of a Man, whose Evidence will scarcely be excepted

cepted to by any one acquainted with the Name and Character of the great Dr. *Astruc*; who asserted, 1759, That the Remedy Mr. *Keyser* administers, under the Name of *Dragées*, cures as little as others. “ It is a Fact well known, and which also I can myself attest, that I have seen within this last Year more than twelve Persons, who after having taken this Remedy for three or four Months, had the Pox as bad as before; nay, worse, on Account of the Loss of Time sustained by taking them. Nevertheless, says he, one cannot deny that *Keyser’s* Pills do sometimes palliate the Disease; nay, even efface the Appearances of it for some Time, and thus deceive those who patronize them: But then the Disorder not only returns again, with greater Violence, but it is also more difficult to cure than ever.”

If this Testimony was really given by Dr. *Astruc*, I cannot help thinking he was rather more severe than he ought to be: For it is certain there is no Kind of Mercurial Preparation whatever, but what will sometimes cure, even the worst Species of the Venereal Disease, when properly administered. We are very sure that Mr. *Keyser’s* is of that Species, and that it is entitled as such to some Esteem, though in an inferior Degree to most others, considered in a general View.

The latter Part of this Period is filled with an Account of the Methods practised, to

procure the Admiffion of this Medicine into the Military Hospitals of the Upper and Lower *Rhine*, during the laft War.

S E C O N D P E R I O D,

Finifhes the History of its Eftablifhment in the Military, and its Introduction into Royal Hospitals: He recites a long Letter, dated *Verfailles, Sept. 1762*, figned by the Name of *M. Le Duc de Choifeul*, and fent to the Intendants of the Army. In this Letter Orders are given to caufe the Phyficians and Surgeons to make Ufe of *Mr. Keyfer's Pills*, for which many Reafons are urged: Amongft the reft, that of *leffening the Expence*, fince it was now become the Property of the King, and of Confequence an Article of the *Finance*.

One Expreflion contained in this Epiftle is, *I am determined to punifh, and alfo remove thofe Surgeons, who do not comply with thefe Orders*. Thofe who did not were *discarded*, and thofe who had ufed a Box or fo of *Mr. Keyfer's Pills*, fupplied their Places; that is, were *rewarded**.

From Page 223 to 246, is principally occupied with Extracts from, and Reflections on, *Mr. Keyfer's* Inftuctions for the taking of his Pills, impreffed by Order of the King,

* See Introduction to my Observations.

1762. From which it appears, that they produce all those Effects (*whenever they do any Service*) peculiar to every other Species of Mercurials, even to Salivation; and that these Effects are brought about, by gradually increased Doses, till the Quantity of Pills taken become enormous, and continued a long Time. That they produce oftentimes Vomitings, Gripings, and violent Dysenteries, he appeals to these Instructions of Mr. Keyser, to the Hospitals of *Besançon, Montpelier, Strasburg, Metz, and Mezieres, &c.* in Proof of his Assertions. He now asks again, How these Patients can eat, drink, and manage their Affairs? and ridicules, what he calls a Finesse of Mr. Keyser's; where he says, *It is not the Treatment, but the Disease, which prevents their enjoying those Privileges.* He compares Mr. Keyser's Pills to the *Panacea Mercurius Dulcis*, Turbith Mineral, and many other Mercurial Preparations, which have at one Time or other had a Reputation equal to his Medicine. He considers them all as insufficient to cure a confirmed Pox; but that Mr. Keyser's is so, he declares from his Experience: For, says he, I have seen it with my own Eyes at *Montpelier*, where Mr. *Sarrau*, who treated many Patients with the Venereal Disease, had one who had taken these Pills for eight Months without any Benefit, that was afterwards cured by Frictions. The *Registre of Bicetre*,
and

and the *Petite Maisons* at *Paris*, are filled with the Names of those who had taken them without Success.

An eminent Surgeon who attended on the Administration of these Pills at *Besançon*, says, that the Soldiers treated there were cured in Appearance; but that the Usage of this Remedy caused violent *Gripings* and *Dysenteries*; that the common Dose rarely sufficed; that those who took two Boxes were always *salivated*; that the Treatment of Buboes was very long and dangerous: Those that were opened did not suppurate well; the Discharge was ichorous, their Edges callous, and the whole Sore terrible to behold. They might be said to be *cancerous*, although they were true *Venereal* Buboes; *c'est le coup d'œil*, &c. All which, &c. might have been avoided by other and better Treatment.

A Surgeon in the Country, says he, writes me Word, that he had lately a Patient under his Care, who had taken 1000 of these Pills, without Benefit; and that he had cured him by Mercurial Frictions. Another Surgeon writes thus from *Besançon*, where Mr. *Bernier* has the Care of the Venereal Patients: "This Medicine does not succeed in the *Gonorrhœa*; it renders Buboes cancerous; where it succeeds, it salivates, according to the Instructions of Mr. *Keyser*."

PARTICULAR CASES.

Jean Vower Soldier, of the Regiment of *Nice*, of the Company of *Chandepy*, remained four Months and a half at the Hospital of *Montpelier* for a Venereal Bubo, which was open when he was admitted. He took 1160 of *Keyser's* Pills, and was not cured. He was sent to breathe his natural Air, but remained the same, till he was again presented to the Hospital of *Montpelier*.

A Man, named *Arnaux*, Soldier, of the Regiment of *Lyonnois*, of the Company of *Maupertuis*, was taken into the Hospital of *Montpelier*. He took 730 of these Pills for a Cancre under his Prepuce, which re-appeared with many Pustules, eight Days after his Dismission from the Hospital. He was afterwards sent to the Hospital of *Metz* to be cured.

George Vidame Soldier, of the same Company of *Maupertuis*, took 960, at the Hospital of *Montpelier*. He had Cancre and a Gonorrhœa: The Cancre disappeared; the Gonorrhœa continued. Forty Days after his Dismission, Condyloma's appeared upon his Anus. He was then sent to *Metz* to be cured, where the Pills were again used: And though the Physicians and Surgeons did then authenticate his Cure, it is nevertheless certain, that his Disorder returned in a few Days, and that he underwent a third Treatment

ment on that Account: Then it is, he says, *Ou feroit un Volume, &c.* *

Mr. *Lucé*, Intendant of *Strasburgh*, ordered, in the Month of *July*, 1765, the Surgeon Major of the Troops garrisoned in that City, to represent the State of their Soldiers in each Regiment, who had been treated by these Pills.

In the Regiment of *Picardie*, out of twenty-three Soldiers, four had Pains of their Limbs, without any other Symptoms when they entered. These Pains continued the same. Six others were not cured. They either had Cancries, fistulous Buboës, with indurated Glands, or Condyloma's. All those who had taken the Pills for the Gonorrhœa, were not at all relieved.

One Soldier of the Royal Artillery, after having taken 3000 of these Pills, had an Exostosis of the Tibia. He speaks nearly the same of the Regiment *de la Marche Prince, &c.* whose *Venereals* remained from 50, 60, to 78 Days in the Hospital of *Mezieres*; and says, these Instances afford the most positive Proofs against the contrary Attestation of the Surgeon Major at *Mezieres*. He thus proceeds:

After the Informations received from all Parts concerning the bad Effect of these Pills of Mr. *Keyser*, what Credit can be given to

* See Mr. *Keyser's* Letter, Pag. 4. and my Observations, Pag. 14. *Introduction.*

the Lists every two Months in the *Mercury of France*? As that of *January* 1764, where they say thirty Soldiers were thereby cured; of which twelve had before used Frictions, without Effect. This is averred without Proof; but we (says our Author) can give a hundred Instances of Gentlemen cured by Frictions, where the Pills have failed.

In the same *Mercury*, *Jan.* 1764, Vol. I. Pag. 129, is an Extract of a Letter wrote by M. *Dubarquies*, Commissary of War at *Toulon*, to the *Duc de Choiseul*, giving an Account of a cancerous Tumour of the Lip cured by these Pills. Our Author exclaims against this Account, as a gross Imposition on the *Duc de Choiseul* and the World. The Patient's Name was *Claude Guichard*, Cannoneer to the Corps Royal of the Company of *Charpoussin*, who entered the Hospital of *Toulon*, on the Account of two Buboes. This *Cancer* broke out a Month after he had taken 400 Pills, and increased till it had corroded the Cartilage of the right Ala of his Nostril. On the 27th of *December*, 1763, he was admitted to the Royal Hospital of *Montpelier*. How then could M. *Dubarquies* give this Attestation in *January* 1764? Or Mr. *Keyser's* Medicine cure a true *Cancer* of the Lip, when it had failed in a Venereal Bubo, whose *Aspect only* was cancerous?—*Un coup d'œil, &c.*

He next relates the Cases of a Nobleman and a Gentleman of our Country, where these Pills failed. Their further Use was prohibited by Mr. *Cæsar Hawkins*, who afterwards cured both these Patients. He says, the Surgeons Major of the *French* Troops are fully convinced of their Inutility, but that they are obliged to give their Certificates, and keep up the Deception, or lose their Employments.

I have now done with our anonymous Author, from whom I might have selected much more to the same Purpose. But this is sufficient for my present Design, which was to show what Kind of Evidences he produces against Mr. *Keyser's* Medicine.

I have just received the following Anecdote from a Gentleman of the Faculty at *Leyden*, who was a Student at *Strasbourg*, in *Alsace*, for several Years; where, says he, "They are obliged, by Order of the King of *France*, to follow Mr. *Keyser's* Method in the public Hospitals, though it is contrary to the Judgment of most of the Surgeons; who object, that the Cure is by no Means certain."

The following Fact happened while he was at *Strasbourg* * : "In the Beginning of the

* These are his Words: "*Initio anni, 1763, jussu regis Galliarum omnibus luc Celticâ laborantibus, & in nosocomio Gallico argentine decumbentibus exhibebantur pilulæ Kyseri. Ade-*
rant

the Year 1763, more than two hundred Soldiers were at one and the same Time put under Mr. *Keyser's* Method for the Cure of the Venereal Disease, and were soon dismissed the Hospital as perfectly cured: But in a few Weeks the Disorder appeared again in most of these Patients, who were admitted a second Time; when, convinced of the Insufficiency of Mr. *Keyser's* Pills, they petition to be salivated. Which being granted, they underwent that Process about the Month of *August* the same Year." My Correspondent then informs me, the Advocates for Mr. *Keyser* alledge, that these Fellows had received a fresh Infection; but that of this there was no Proof *pro* nor *contra*.

As to affirmative Proofs of this Kind, it is needless to require them, because they are seldom or never granted; nor are they at all necessary here: For if all these Soldiers had acquired a fresh Infection, they must needs be sensible of it, or at least that they deserved it, which is the same Thing (as it respects their Consciousness and Conduct:) I say, why then should they request to be salivated for a fresh Complaint? which at the worst could

rant tunc temporis plus quam 200 milites, quorum plurimi solo hoc remedio brevi ad pristinam redibant sanitatem. Vix aliquas septimanas reliquerant nosodæchium cum morbo recrudescente, in plurimis, nosocomium iterum salutabant. Horrebant remedium Kyseri & petebant salivationem, & versus mensem Augustum incipiebant frictions mercuriales adhiberi illis qui per Kyseri remedium non curari poterant.

not be more than a real or spurious Gonorrhœa, in so very short a Space as a few Weeks, when they had so lately experienced the *Sweetness, Ease, Pleasure, and Profit* of the *Dragées*, to the perfect Cure of all their former Venereal Symptoms, of what Degree or Kind soever. I will therefore venture to *assert*, without *Hesitation*, that either the old Complaints were not cured, or that a Majority of two hundred *French* Soldiers were downright Fools or Madmen. If what has been said from my own Experience, from *M. Faber*, the *Parallel*, and the above Fact, should not be thought sufficient to prove, *That Mr. Keyser's Remedy is more slow, uncertain, and dangerous* (as a general Medicine) *than other more common Mercurial Preparations to be met with every where*, it is in my Power to favour the Public with many more substantial Evidences to that Purpose; but these appear to me at present unnecessary, and would greatly exceed the Limits of a Letter.

F I N I S.

