

**The old man's guide to health and longer life: with rules for diet, exercise, and physick; for preserving a good constitution, and preventing disorders in a bad one / [Anon.] by J. Hill, M.D.**

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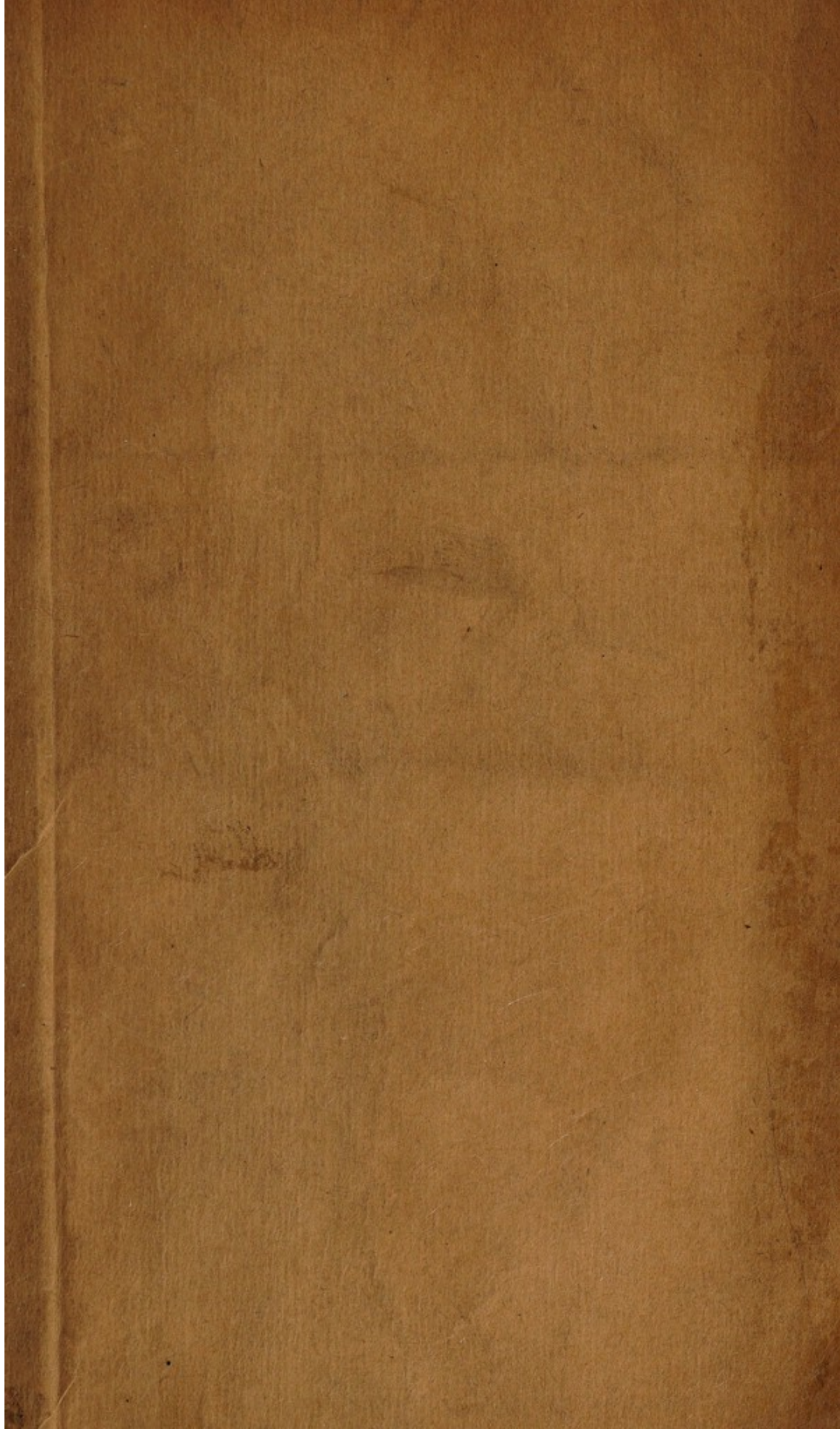
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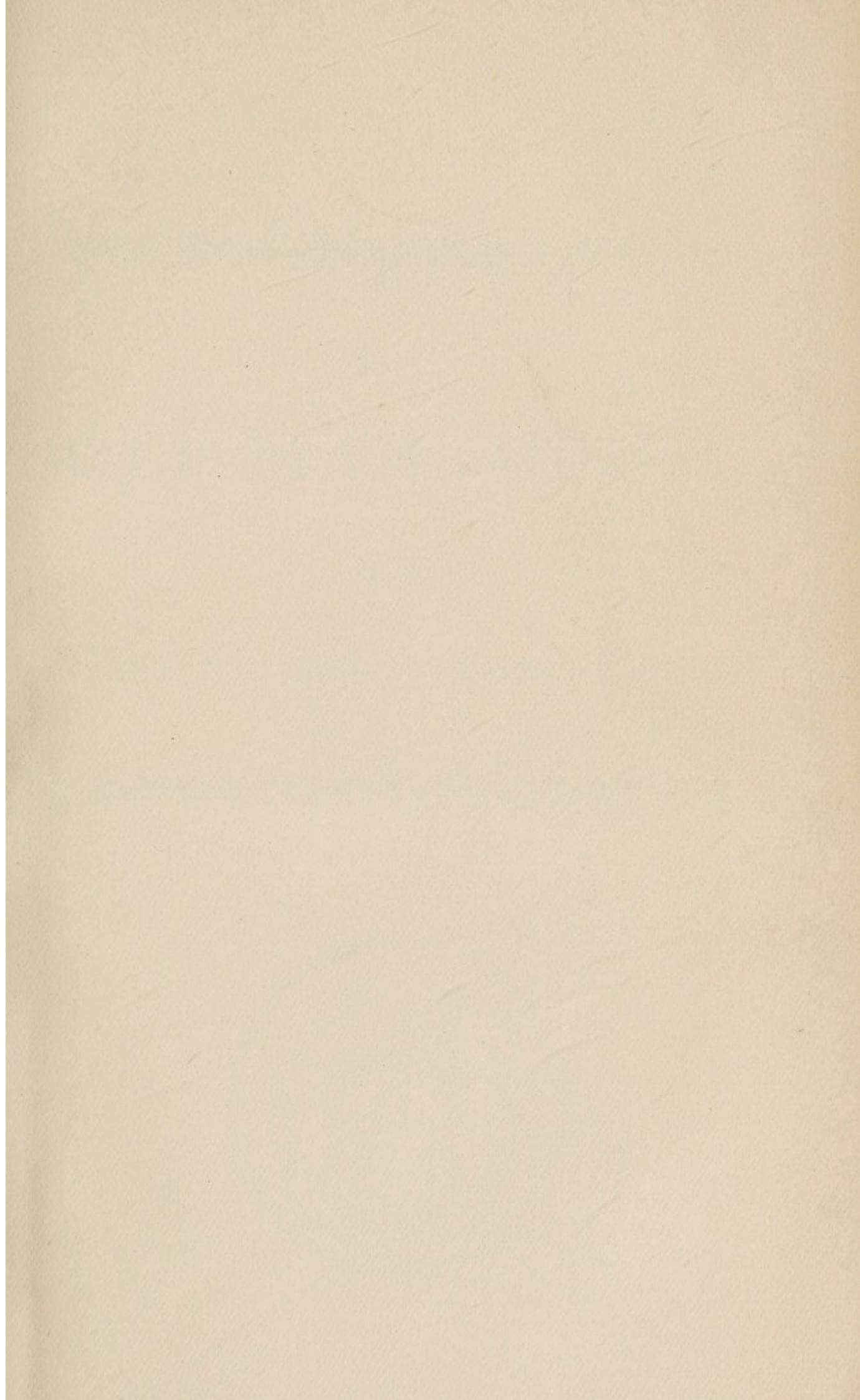
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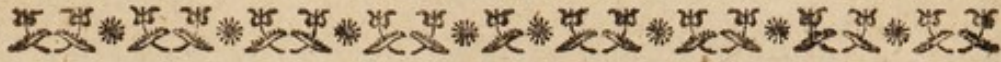






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THE  
OLD MAN'S GUIDE

T O

HEALTH and LONGER LIFE.





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TO

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THE 47494  
OLD MAN'S GUIDE

TO

HEALTH and LONGER LIFE :

WITH RULES FOR

DIET, EXERCISE, and PHYSIC;

FOR

Preserving a good CONSTITUTION,

AND

Preventing DISORDERS in a bad one.

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BY J. HILL, M.D.

MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL ACADEMY.

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THE SIXTH EDITION,  
CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

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LONDON:

Printed for E. and C. DILLY, in the Poultry.

M.DCC.LXXI.

OLD MAN'S GUIDE

TO

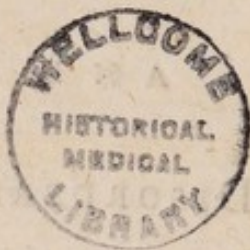
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Preventing a bad one

By J. H. L. M.D.

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Printed by E. and C. Dyer, in the Strand

1844



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T H E

## O L D M A N ' S G U I D E .

**H** EALTHFUL old age is the most valuable period of human life : Experience has rendered the antient more able than those who have seen less, and felt less, to conduct themselves, and their descendants : and being freed from the empire of the passions, they enjoy quiet.

Philosophy pretends to this condition ; but age gives it truly : Whatever our heirs may think, it is worth preserving ; and in that sense I write the present Treatise.

A hundred are cut off by disorders which a regular course of life might prevent ; for one who dies of age, or its unavoidable effects : Many fall by accidents ; to one who is fairly called away by nature. The purpose of this Treatise is to direct the means, by which these accidents may be avoided, and those disorders timely obviated.



Old mens diseases are hard to cure ; but they are easy to prevent. It must be a good natural fabric which has preserved itself so long ; and the same strength may keep it much longer well, under good regulation.

Moderate diet, and due exercise, are the best guardians of health in all : but in the advanced period here considered there are two great preservatives besides ; these are Ease, and Cheerfulness : both are the natural offspring of health ; and they will continue the blessing to which they owe their birth.

It may be expected, I should now say, at what period of Life the state of it that we call aged, begins : but nature has herself left this undeterminable. The weakness and infirmities of age come at different years, in different constitutions : I could at this hour point out a very young man of eighty-seven : and the purlieus of Covent-Garden abound with very old men at seven-and-twenty : but to speak in general terms, it may be said, that the period of Life, for which we are giving rules and regulations, begins about fifty-eight ; tho' the greater Infirmities of age do not advance till several years after.



## C H A P. I.

*How a person in Years is to know he is  
in Health.*

**I**T is allowed, we know so little of nothing, as of ourselves : it has been said often of the mind ; but it is not less true of the body. Fancying we have certain diseases will sometimes bring them upon us : and there is as great danger in forcing ourselves to believe, against our feeling, that we are well ; when we have some disorder.

To avoid both, let the elderly man read here, with a free mind. Let him not suppose, because God has blessed him with long health, he is above the reach of sickness ; nor neglect the care which may conquer, in its beginning, a disease that would in the end conquer him. Let him be as ready to acknowledge real disorders ; as careful to avoid imaginary.

Health consists in a good digestion of the food ; and free circulation of the blood. The appetite, and the condition of the stomach after eating, will shew the first ; and the latter may be known best by the pulse.



That old person's digestion is always good, who has a sharp but not voracious appetite ; and who feels no pain, nor sickness after food. To preserve this, let him be content with somewhat less than he could eat at every meal : to keep the stomach in order, do not overload it.

The best time to feel the pulse is in a morning : a little after getting up ; and before breakfast. It should be a rule never to omit this examination. A constant and regular attention to the pulse will shew its slightest variations ; and when any such happen, let care be taken of the health.

There are methods of counting the strokes by a watch ; but 'tis idle and mechanical : a repeated attention in the plain way is better.

A frequent examination will inform us what is the condition of our pulse in health ; and all deviations from this shew or threaten sickness.

While an old man feels his pulse regular, finds his digestion good, and with a mind at ease can take his usual exercise freely, he may be certain he is well. We shall tell him how to keep so : and when a fault is seen in time, 'tis easily remedy'd.

If



If the pulse beat too quick and high, the diet must be lower; if too slow, and weak, the food must be somewhat richer. This short direction will prevent half the diseases of mankind.

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## C H A P. II.

*The means to preserve a healthful state in old age.*

**T**HE diseases of aged persons differ, according to their state of body, and natural constitution: the corpulent, are in danger of asthmas; the lean, of stranguries: both should be guarded against with extreme care; but most the first, because many sudden deaths have happened from it, that might have been prevented easily by a timely care.

That care, and all the necessary help, will be shewn in a separate chapter on this disease. With respect to suppressions of urine, beside all that has been written of Burdock root, I may add here, that if as much had been known of its virtues but a little while ago, as is now notorious, we might some years longer have enjoyed that excellent man Peter Collinson. Mr. Josiah Soames, near dying the same way, was saved by it.

Exercise has thro' the younger part of life  
been



been very instrumental in preserving health: when we grow old we cannot use so much; and we must therefore be more careful in our food. That will go off well with motion, which will overload when quiet: that will nourish while we walk abroad; which, when we stay at home, breeds fevers.

We must not make a change of diet violently; for all sudden alterations are dangerous. Our strength for exercise will leave us by degrees; and we must reduce our nourishment accordingly.

Old men are least healthy in winter: therefore they should then be most careful. They are colder than the young; and therefore cold more affects them. They will perceive the cold has hurt them, when they find the pulse weaker and slower than usual: and they must recover the new damage, by more warmth of cloathing; and a somewhat richer diet.

If perspiration has been stop'd by the cold, and no other ill effect follow, that will be seen by the urine being paler, and more in quantity than usual. In this case let flannel be put on carefully: this will soon restore the perspiration; and the urine will return to its due colour, and quantity. And after that let the flannel be carefully left off again.

Health



Health consists in the evacuations having all their proper course and quantity : and flannel will diminish one as much as it encreases another.

No disorder is more troublesome to old men than costiveness : and the use of flannel unadvisedly will sometimes occasion this.

A careful attention to health is the only way to preserve it : and many things are excellent when properly used ; which may otherwise be destructive.

If the appetite fail ; or wind oppress the stomach after meals ; then take more air, and exercise ; and read or study less. Much study always hurts digestion.

The different seasons affect persons in years very greatly, and they should always be prepared for the changes. The old man is always best in summer, and grows more spirited and free from his complaints as that period advances toward autumn : winter we have said hurts age, for age is cold and dry ; and for that very reason youth feel summer most hurtfully, and are best in winter.



## C H A P. III.

*Of the fittest diet for persons in years.*

**L**IGHT diet is most proper for aged persons.

Beef and pork should be avoided : for the stomach will rarely be able to digest these, when it is not assisted by good exercise.

Lamb, veal, pig, chickens, rabbits, and fish, are excellent ; and out of these, if there were no others, a tolerable management may produce sufficient variety.

No aged person should eat more than one considerable meal of solid food in the day. The stomach will manage a dinner when breakfast and supper have been light : otherwise the load of one meal not being gone off before another is brought in, neither will be digested.

Dinner should not be eaten too early ; that the appetite may not be violent for supper : The older we grow, the more our food should be diminished. This was the practice of Hippocrates ; and by the observance of it, Cornaro lived to his extreme age.



With respect to supper, the lighter it is the better: though we do not agree with those who advise the omitting that meal intirely. Moderation is the rule of health. They were in the right who declared the mischief of heavy suppers; but the poets have long since told us what sort of people those are, who, in avoiding a fault, rush into its contrary. There is a medium sure between a heavy supper, and emptiness; and that is best. Let the old man eat liquids; and of all liquid diets, those which are partly composed of milk are best for him.

The digestive faculties in an old man are weak; but milk is in a manner ready digested. He wants an easy nourishment; and this affords it; without loading the stomach, or oppressing it during the hours of rest.

Asses milk is most easy of digestion: a pint of that, with a small toast, eaten two hours before bed-time, will be nourishing; and fit easy on the stomach. The value of asses milk is its lightness: that of the cow is richer and heavier. Those who use the latter in the country, should mix it first with an equal quantity of soft water: in London this care is unnecessary, those who sell milk do it for them.

There



There are many other methods in which milk is proper: milk pottage, and thin rice milk, will give a change. But some farther pleasing variety need not be denied. Weak broths of veal, chicken, and mutton, may be eat occasionally; and Jellies honestly made at home, are proper, safe, and wholesome.

These things will answer the two purposes of nourishing, and moistening; for aged persons are naturally too dry.

The breakfast is not very important. Those who eat no supper are too hungry in a morning; and the stomach being loaded with what they take at that time, is the less able to digest a dinner. This is the reason we advise old persons to eat suppers, of a right kind; these take off the too keen edge of the morning's appetite; and there will remain just so much desire to eat, as will lead them to get a little into the stomach without loading it.

Men may fast away their appetite; and their power of digestion goes with it. The conduct of the appetite regulates the health; and this is a point not enough regarded.

It is as essential not to keep the stomach empty, as it is not to overload it. Wind is



the consequence of emptiness; and this always disturbs its office. It should be constantly kept at its due employment in advanced periods of life; and this by small quantities of proper food.

Therefore breakfasts are as necessary as suppers: only those who are troubled with phlegm should eat less at this meal than others. A cup of chocolate, not made too strong, is a good breakfast. Coffee I cannot advise generally: but the exceptions against tea are in a great measure groundless.

If an elderly person likes tea, he need not deny it to himself for breakfast. Let him use the plain green sort of sixteen shillings a pound, and make it well; taking care the water boils, and allowing so much tea that it may be of sufficient strength, without standing too long upon the leaves.

Let him drink three moderate cups, with a little sugar and a good deal of milk; and take it neither too hot, nor mawkishly cool. Let him eat with it a thin slice or two of good bread, with a little butter: and he will find all this nourishing and excellent.

The virtues of tea thus drank are as  
consider-



considerable, as its bad qualities when ill managed. In this manner, it strengthens the stomach, and assists digestion: it keeps the body from emptiness, without loading it: the appetite for dinner will be the better for it; and the digestion will be also more perfect. Tea in this quantity is sufficient also for the great purpose of diluting; and it refreshes the spirits more than any other liquid.

The best drink at meals is malt liquor, not too strong: small ale is better than table-beer; because it will keep to a due time for safe use.

Some wine is necessary to old men: and according to the constitution, and former manner of life, more may be born by some without inconvenience. Of all wines sack is the best, if it can be obtained genuine; and the next best is mountain.

As occasion shall require, the supper foods here directed may be used by way of dinner; and broths may even be necessary sometimes for breakfast. When the stomach cannot digest solids, these liquid nourishments should supply the place: and when more nourishing things are wanted, a broth breakfast is excellent. Vipers are extolled, but 'tis an  
idle



idle fancy: I have found, on repeated trials, broth of veal, and chickens, is much better.

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#### C H A P. IV.

*Of the foods persons in years should avoid.*

**E**VERY thing that is heavy, and hard of digestion, must be avoided. Tho' vegetables may be thought innocent; too much of them will in some cases prove hurtful: and there are certain kinds that should be let alone entirely.

Carrots are to be avoided, no weak stomach can digest them: turnips are innocent; and parsnips are nourishing.

Salads should be shunned: cabbage, and all its kinds, breed wind; but asparagus is diuretic; and is excellent against that common old man's complaint, the gravel.

Bad cheese should be avoided; and there is nothing worse than eating too much butter: but very fine Cheshire cheese; or the Parmezan in a small quantity after other food, are not amiss.

All sharp-tasted things, whether in food  
B
or



or drink, are carefully to be shunned. They cannot be neutral upon the stomach; and they are much more likely to do harm than good.

Fruits of a due ripeness, are innocent; and much more good than this may be said of them: unripe, they hurt the stomach, and often bring on dangerous cholics.

Cucumbers weaken the digestion; and greatly prevent the natural and necessary secretions.

The pine-apple, the most pleasant of all fruits, is one of the most dangerous: its sharpness fleas the mouth; and we know what effect such a thing must have upon the stomach and bowels, when weakened by age. I have known it bring on bloody fluxes, which have been fatal. There are several kinds of this fruit; somewhat differing in quality; and a perfect degree of ripeness, in a great measure, takes off its worst effects: but these are nice distinctions: he who is wise will judge as he does of mushrooms: where many are dangerous; avoid all.

Beside rejecting things which are hurtful in themselves, those who are advanced



in years would be upon their guard against all such as they are not accustomed to.

Particular constitutions will shew unforeseen aversions to peculiar medicines ; and it is the same in foods. Let him who knows what agrees with him stick to it. Change is always wrong ; and it may be hazardous : and 'tis idle to run into the way of danger, where there is no advantage.

All mixtures of food upon the stomach are bad : and there is not a greater error in an old person than to eat of many dishes at one meal. He must not deceive himself by arguing that they all are innocent : for two things of known qualities will often, on mixing, produce a third that is perfectly different from them both : and these are dangerous trials in an aged person's stomach.

Right management in these articles is nearly as important as a right choice. A regularity of eating is the next care to the selecting proper food ; and fixing on a right quantity.



## C H A P. V.

*Of air for elderly persons.*

**N**O T H I N G contributes more to health and long life than pure and good air : but by pure we are not to understand bleak ; nor are aged persons at any time to chuse that kind.

It is strange so many should live to a great age in London, where the air has neither of these characters ; where we breathe smoke, and the mixt stench of a thousand putrifying substances ; which cannot evaporate through the thick and foul atmosphere of the place.

But though none will question the superior excellence of a clear country air, yet let not him who has attained to a healthy three-score and ten in London, think of leaving it, as a way to continue his days to a longer period. They say use is second nature. It really becomes nature itself : and bad things, to which an old man has been very long accustomed, are often better than sudden changes. It is well known, that many who have reached an uncommon date of life, have perished



rished at last by a rash alteration in their food: and 'tis certain the air is scarce of less consequence.

He who would extend the period, and encrease the healthy condition of his days by a country air, should begin at an earlier time: when his constitution can better bear the alteration.

In regard to a choice of air, the reason we declare against that which is too bleak is plain; for bleak and cold are always found together. Cold air chills the blood; and in old men we want rather to warm it. This sharp air is natural at the tops of hills: and such situations all old men should avoid.

On the contrary, the mildest air of the country is that of vallies; sheltered by rising grounds: but this is usually damp; and more mischief may therefore arise from it than good.

The choice rests solely then upon a gentle ascent; the best place of all is toward the bottom of a piece of ground, which does not in any part rise to a very great height: and if there be a running water at the lowest part, it is so far perfect.



More than this should be consulted for the country residence of the aged man, or of any who would live to be aged. The soil is of vast consequence; and so is the exposure. A clayey bottom must be avoided; because it is always cold; and the air about it consequently raw, and damp. Rains cannot get thro' it, and they lodge till they are evaporated; chilling the ground, and loading the air with their fatal moisture.

A clean gravel is the best soil of all. The air over this is always warm, and naturally dry; for rain soaks through it.

The north and north-east winds are the worst for old men: therefore let them shelter themselves from these by a proper choice of situation. Let the descent of the ground face the south-west; and then the natural rise behind will keep off the bleak and sharp air from the opposite quarters. This may be assisted also by plantations of trees: and thus the true seat of health and pleasure may be established; so far as these great points concern them.

He is happy who has made such a choice in time: and he's still happier who finds himself now in good time to make it. The later such a residence is chosen, the more carefully



carefully and gradually must the owner accustom himself to it: first in summer; and by degrees; and at times, at other periods of the year. An air thus chosen, will then assist in all the great articles of health which age wants; appetite, digestion, and a free circulation.

Exercise will be easy; and it will be always pleasant in such a spot: but let this also be under the regulation of good sense. Nothing is better than walking; but let not the old man do himself more hurt, by a rash and careless indulgence in this point, than it can do him service.

Let him never enjoy the air but when it is in a condition to do him good; nor venture upon the ground but when it is fit for his feet.

No country house is without a garden; and the best part of this will be a good smooth gravel walk. Let this be open to the south-west, and well defended from the dangerous quarters. Let it be laid tolerably round, that the water may not lodge; and let it be kept well rolled, hard, and even.

In very favourable weather he may walk in pathways in the fields: but in such as is not so fair, this garden-walk will be highly useful:



but let him never come upon it till the dew is off the grass; and let the setting sun be the last object he sees there: even in the best weather.

The air of early morning and of late evening are both cold and unwholesome; but some hours of the foremost part of the day, passed constantly on such a walk, will add many years to life; and what is much better, will give health with them.

## C H A P. VI.

### *Of exercise for old men.*

**A**IR has led us to mention already the first of exercises, which is walking; and for those who have strength to indulge themselves in this, there is none better: but feeble limbs, and various accidents, often deny its use to those who most of all want motion.

In this case, riding on horseback is the next in excellence: and the fittest hours of the day must be chosen for that, in the same manner as for the other. In severe weather it will be necessary to ride under shelter; and at all times to avoid damp or bleak places.

Many



Many diversions afford also excellent exercise: bowling is one: but the same care must be taken, that this be done at a proper time.

A chariot may supply the place of a horse, to such as are more feeble; and for those who are so weak as to find even this too much, there will arise a great deal of good from being driven along in those chairs which are made to run upon gravel walks.

To such as are fond of gardening, nothing affords so happy, or so constant exercise. We do not mean that they should dig, or weed the ground: but to use such employment as will give exercise without labour; and such as no hand will so well perform as that of the master.

Such are the trimming of shrubs, and flowering plants; the management of espaliers, the removal of seedling flower-roots; the thinning of fruit upon the trees; and the following and overlooking the other several works. Here will at least be more, and brisker walking than would be otherwise; and in many things the little use that is made of the hands will complete that exercise, by continuing it perfectly through the body.



The only danger in this healthy and happy course, is, that it is too alluring. Let him who delights in it take an invariable resolution, never to let his fondness for the garden carry him out too early ; or keep him there too late.

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## C H A P. VII.

### *Of succedaneums for exercise.*

**T**HE benefit of exercise all know ; but all cannot enjoy it : nor can it be had at all times. The very weather will some days deny the use of those kinds we have named to such as are most able to take them. In this case, any bustling about within doors, whether in the way of business, or amusement, will in some degree answer the purpose. The adjusting an escritoire ; or the new arranging the volumes in a book-case, have often produced this good effect : and billiards, or other entertainments which afford the means of stirring within the house, all answer the same purpose.

To those who are too weak for exercise, even the mildest, and in the best weather, the great relief is a flesh-brush ; and the effects of this, when used with care and constancy,



stancy, are more than can be imagined. We know what we expect from exercise; and in old men, the greatest of its advantages is the assisting circulation. The flesh-brush does this nearly in as great a degree, excepting only for the immediate time: but to have the full benefit, it must be regularly and frequently repeated.

Another excellent succedaneum for exercise is washing the body with warm water, and then rubbing it very well with repeated dry cloths. This has many peculiar advantages: the warmth assists perspiration; the washing opens the pores; and the rubbing afterwards is nearly equal to the effect of the flesh-brush. The warmth and moisture join also in softening the skin, and rendering it supple; and this is a great point; for all are apt to grow hard and dry with age.

Great care must be taken to avoid taking cold after this. The best time for it is therefore evening, in a warm bedchamber; and the bed should be ready immediately; that the person may go into it while he is yet hot.

The hands and feet should have their full share in this washing and rubbing; for the circulation is weakest there; and the pores  
most



most liable to be stopped. The hot bath answers, in some degree, this purpose; and will be spoken of hereafter: but that is rather to be used as a remedy than a preservative; and we are here treating of aged men in health.

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### C H A P. VIII.

*Of a regulation of temper; and of the passions.*

**W**ITHOUT entering into the province of the moralist or preacher, we may affirm here, that the passions demand great regard in preserving the health of old men. The motion of the blood in circulation is greatly affected and altered by them: and the nerves may suffer yet more. The whole frame is disordered by violent passions: and I have often seen diseases; and sometimes immediate death has been the consequence of giving full scope to them.

Nothing in this world is worth the trouble and distress men bring upon themselves by giving way to immoderate passions. Life is the greatest blessing; and health the next; and these both suffer by that fond indulgence.



That the circulation is disordered by passions, we know from the true and certain indication of the pulse. In anger, it is violent and hard; in grief, faint, and slow; terrors make it irregular; and shame impedes its motions.

These are sure notices of a disordered circulation: and old men cannot bear this, even for a time, without damage. The strength of youth restores all to its former state, when the sudden gust is over: but age is weak, and cannot. Philosophy teaches the governing our passions; and that is true wisdom. The old man should love himself too well to indulge them: it is not worth his while. Quiet and regularity of Life in every respect are his business: and as he is past the fluttering pleasures of youth, let him place himself above its troubles.

Good humour, and a happy satisfaction of mind, will give the aged many years; and much happiness in them. Discontent and disturbance wear out nature: but the quiet we advise, preserves her in good condition.

Of all passions let the old man avoid a foolish fondness for women. This never will solicit him: for nature knows her own time; and the appetite decays with the power: but  
if



if he will solicit that which he cannot enjoy, he will disturb his constitution more than by any other means whatever: and while he is shortening his life; and robbing the poor remainder he allows, of peace; he will be only making himself the ridicule of those who seem to favour his vain, and ineffectual desires.

In passionate people, what we blame as their fault, is often their misfortune. Some indeed, from a tyrannical disposition, have fixed this humour upon themselves by custom; with no other cause; but for one of these, there are a hundred whose fury of temper is owing to a disorder in their body.

We know madness is a disease: and violent passion is a temporary madness. This also arises often from a redundance of humours; and medicines will cure it.

Let the passionate old man consider, that he hurts himself more than any body else, by his anger; and he will then wish to be cured of its tyranny. Let him examine himself, whether it be a disorder of his mind; and then his physician, whether it lie in the body. In the first case the remedy is philosophy: but in the latter, a few medicines will restore him to temper; to that temper on which his life and happiness depend.

Let



Let the haſty old man cool himſelf by phyſic and a low diet : and let him who is melancholy and gloomy, baniſh the everlaſting fear of death by warmer foods, cordial medicines, and that beſt of cordials, wine.

Theſe will drive away much more than the apprehenſion of death ; they will put off the reality : for melancholy would have funk the feeble, long before his time.

Of all ſtates of the mind, a diſturbed hurry of the ſpirits is moſt to be avoided. The blood and the nerves are diſordered by this much more than by labour, or bodily motion ; and they are much longer in coming to themſelves again. Labour ceases abſolutely when 'tis over : but the ſtorms of the mind leave a ſwelling ſea, which ſtrength of body alone can calm ; and in age this ſtrength is faint.

No diſeaſe is more miſchievous to weak old perſons than a purging : and I have ſeen this brought on inſtantly by a fit of paſſion ; or by a fright. Medicines have attempted to relieve the patient in vain. That flux which would have been ſtop'd, if natural, by a ſpoonful of chalk julep, or a doſe of diacordium, has in this caſe reduced the perſon to  
a ſke-



a skeleton, and funk him into the grave in spite of all help.

Why should the old man disturb his mind with anger? or what should he dread? death is his great terror; and he is very absurd who brings that on by lesser fears.

Joy, tho' it be only a greater share of satisfaction, is, in a violent or outrageous degree, as hurtful as the other passions: it hurries the circulation vehemently and irregularly; it exhausts the spirits; and when excessive it has often occasioned sudden death. It is a violence of youth; it belongs to that period of life more properly: that can bear it; and to that let us leave it. Let the old man be as the Quakers in this point; always chearful but never merry.

Last let us caution also the aged man who would be happy, and would live longer, to combat with all his power that dangerous enemy covetousness. 'Tis known universally, and we have sacred attestation of it, that too great carefulness brings age before its time; and in age it brings death prematurely. The old are in no danger of extravagance; and the care of heaping up for others, when it shortens their own life, is more than any heir deserves.



Ease and good humour are the great ingredients of a happy life: and the principal means of a long one. Our whole lesson extends but thus much farther; that the old man love his life so well; and value so little all the accidents which belong to it, that he do not give a vain attention to a part, which may rob him of the whole.

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## C H A P. IX.

### *Of sleep for old men.*

**I**Ntemperance has now converted day to night in the course of the gay, young world; but this needs not, nor should influence those in years. Midnight entertainments are no part of the œconomy of their peaceful lives; and therefore they may come nearer to the course of nature.

The degree of sleep is a material article: and the time of it not less. The old man has been cautioned against the cold air of evenings; and we may now add, that after a light and early supper, and an hour of social conversation with his family and his neighbours, bed will be his best place.

Sleep was intended to recruit nature, and



to restore the wasted spirits. This is necessary to all persons ; but to the aged most ; because they can least bear the waste of them. The passions will disturb all constitutions, but those of old men most of all. Sleep composes these : therefore 'tis of excellent use to them : and they may safely indulge in it longer than the young.

Six hours is as long as a person in the prime of life should sleep ; but in age, eight, or even ten, according to the peculiar constitution, may be more proper.

The natural season of sleep is night ; and let the old man therefore go to bed in such time, that he may pass these hours of rest without breaking in upon the morning. In general, the most healthful custom for age, is to go to bed at ten ; and rise at eight in the morning.

If the mind be hurry'd ; or from any other cause the person finds he cannot compose himself to rest soon after going to bed ; or get so much sleep during the night ; let him still rise at the same time the following day : and the next evening prepare himself thus for better sleep : let him go into a warm bath ; and indulge himself with a glass of wine, beyond his ordinary allowance, a little



tle before bed time. This will take off his watchfulness ; and he will sink into the most pleasing slumber.

The contrary practice, that of lying in bed in the morning, to make up for want of sleep at night, is every way extremely wrong. As nothing refreshes like seasonable sleep, nothing weakens and dejects a person more than indulging in bed in the day : there is also this farther ill consequence from it, that the person is never sleepy, at the due time of the succeeding evening ; and thus what was at first an accident, becomes by indulgence a custom ; and is then the more difficult to be conquer'd, and the more hurtful.

The old man who has observed a temperate diet ; and has gone to bed regularly at ten o'clock, will naturally wake towards eight. And when he wakes let him get up. He will then be in spirits for the day. If on the contrary he lies dosing, he will get into a weakening sweat. He will then be low spirited during the whole following day ; and waking and watchful at night.

On these little circumstances do the health or sickness, the happiness or uneasiness of old persons depend, in a very great measure. We often do not perceive them, or we easily



overlook them : let us be for the future more careful. There is no pain in living regularly in old age ; and the consequence of it is certain ; a longer life, and every day of it more agreeable.

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### C H A P. X.

*Of the particular faults in old mens constitutions.*

**I** HOPE it will be easy, by the preceding and the following directions, for any man of sense, not vers'd at all in physic, to know the state of his own health precisely : and 'tis a most important knowledge. Hippocrates, who knew physic better than all who have followed him, declares it to be an easy science, tho' it requires length of time to learn it ; and Boerhaave, the Hippocrates of our succeeding times, lectur'd for ever publicly on the simplicity and ease of physic. They perplex themselves who think it difficult : only let the plain considerate man attend to what he feels, and believe what is here told him will result from it ; then he may keep his mind at peace, which is a great ingredient in the health of the body : but this full credit is necessary ; for the origin of his disorders is often very distant from their apparent effects.

Hitherto



Hitherto we have treated of the condition of persons advanced in years, who are healthy : and the rules we have laid down are for preserving and continuing that state : and he who observes them duly cannot well fail of success.

We now shall consider the several more frequent faults of the constitution at this period of life ; and the diseases arising from them.

The old man may be so far his own doctor, as to amend the general distemperature of his body ; and often he may prevent those diseases : but if he fall into them, whether by neglect of these cautions, or in spite of their force, let him then call in a physician.

We can advise him how to preserve health when he has it ; and how to remedy general disorders, so as to prevent more particular ones ; so far as a due regimen may do that : but he is a very ill judge of the human frame, who will pretend to remedy its diseases without a knowledge both of its structure, and of the qualities of remedies : and he would be a bad member of society who gave such advice to any. It were as easy to teach some other art by writing ; and as rational to attempt making a watchmaker, or a shipbuilder, by a description of the tools. The whole  
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life



life of a physician, spent in attention and experience, hardly qualifies him for the undertaking: how then should a few light words give sufficient information?

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## C H A P. XI.

### *Of a fulness of blood.*

**A**N overfulness of blood naturally brings on a redundance of the other humours: for as they are separated from the blood, they naturally encrease with it in quantity. The one or the other of these excesses may, and naturally will, occasion disorders; much more both.

The old man may know when he has too much blood in his veins from these plain symptoms: his pulse will be full and strong, and somewhat quicker than it should; his complexion will be more florid; and his urine higher coloured. The veins also will be swelled, and his breathing will grow difficult.

The occasion of all this has probably been too high feeding, and too little exercise; therefore the plain method to abate the symptoms, and prevent the mischief which they



they threaten, is by more motion; and an abstemious diet.

This is plainly the change which should be made: but it must not be too sudden. We have observed before, that all hasty alterations are dangerous: but as this is slowly, let it be also determinately and regularly brought on. If therefore no disease be come on as yet from the fulness, there will not any come during a gradual course of emptying the vessels by this practice. Nature will be relieved in a satisfactory manner; whereas she would have been too violently disturbed by any sudden shock.

The first rule is to retrench one third part from the flesh eaten at dinner, of whatever kind that be. We have advised the abstaining from beef and pork, but in this case mutton should be also let alone, or very rarely eaten; and the dinner being made solely of the tender and young meats in this reduced quantity, the next care must be, that these are always well and thoroughly dress'd. It is a fashion to eat meat almost raw, and doctors have advis'd it; but they would be better physicians for bears and wolves, than men.

Let the person rise an hour before his usual



usual time in a morning ; and every day encrease the quantity of exercise a little ; but great care must be taken not to go out at improper hours, to endanger getting cold. In getting rid of one evil, let us not run into another. This fulness is a state in which diseases are most easily brought on, and they will be most violent in it. Colds are most dangerous of all, to people in this condition, and therefore are very carefully to be avoided.

The pulse will shew whether or not this method reduces the redundance of blood : if it do not take a visible effect in four days, it will be proper to be blooded. After this the same regimen will probably complete the business ; and there will be no need for medicines.

But if all should fail, an addition of the warm bath every other day will probably answer the purpose. In all old mens cases 'tis best to avoid medicines, if it can be done with safety : for they disturb the constitution ; and the best guard of their health is quietness,



## C H A P. XII.

*Of wasting and decay.*

**W**HEN old persons fall into this declining condition, it generally carries them off: but many may be saved by timely care; to whom no remedies will be of service after a first neglect. While the stomach is able to digest any thing, there is hope of recovery: but when its power is lost, both food and physic are poured down the throat in vain.

When an aged person perceives his flesh wasting, and his strength and spirits failing; let him take good nourishment; and adapt it to the condition of his stomach.

If it be too strong, or if he takes too much, the digestive faculty, already impaired by general weakness, cannot manage it: and he will hasten his death by such a conduct.

The rule is to eat only innocent, tho' the most nourishing things, and these only in moderate quantities: chicken, young lamb, and veal, boiled down almost to a jelly, are the proper foods for dinner; but  
even



even of these let him eat less than his appetite demands.

Two hours before dinner, let him take half a pint of chicken broth; and as his stomach afterwards grows stronger, veal or mutton broth; and let him take the same again one hour after his light dinner.

Let his breakfast be a yolk of an egg, beaten up with half a pint of asses milk, and a quarter of an ounce of conserve of roses: and his supper veal broth nearly boiled to a jelly.

Every afternoon let him take half a pint of asses milk alone: and while all this is doing, let care be taken that there be no violent evacuations. A purging would be destructive; and morning sweats are very hurtful. Let him therefore rise early: and to complete the cure, let him believe these methods will perform it. An easy mind will do more than food and physic.

Quiet, good humour, and complacency of temper, will prevent half the diseases of old people: and they will cure one half of the others.



## C H A P. XIII.

*Against sharp humours*

**T**HE first sign of sharp humours, in the bodies of old persons, usually is an uneasiness at the stomach; then comes on a want of appetite, with sour belchings, wind, purgings, and defluxions; and last, thirst, and a feverish disposition.

The fault lies originally in the stomach; and generally an irregular diet has been the cause; particularly high sauces, bad wines, and spicy foods. The first step to a cure is to abstain from all these; and life depends upon it. For to aggravate those symptoms is to destroy the constitution utterly. Incurable fevers; or fatal purgings, follow.

The best beginning is by a vomit: and after this the diet should be all of the mild and cooling kind. Every morning let the person take two spoonfuls of syrup of snails, made by bruising them with sugar, and hanging them up in a flannel bag till the juice runs out. At meals, let his drink be a tea, made of marsh-mallow and liquorice-root, with one third part milk, drank just warm. if the skin grow yellow,



yellow, or the white of the eyes appear of that colour, a dose of rhubarb once in three days will be needful. The best method of taking it is by chewing

This is as much physic as we would have an aged man use in such a case: the rest must be done by a proper regimen.

First let him regulate his passions. Violent anger will increase this disorder more than the most improper foods. Let him also banish fear: if he thinks himself in danger; he will bring it on.

He must never overload his stomach; nor must never suffer it to be empty. Once in two hours he should constantly swallow something. Jellies of hartshorn, truly made, are excellent; but they must be prepared at home: for cheating is so easy, and the method with hartshorn only is so tedious; that few who make them for sale will do it honestly.

Often this mischief rises from a stoppage of perspiration in some part; particularly in the feet. Then the business is to bring that evacuation on again by additional warmth: by flannel socks and yarn stockings. This will in many cases alone perform the cure; and in all others, where such a stoppage  
of



of perspiration has been a part of the cause, it will assist the other methods.

The pulse, which was at first too quick, will grow moderate as these methods of relief take place; and this promises a cure. To complete it, the patient must go to bed in time: and use moderate exercise in the best hours of the day. He must eat no fat meats, drink little wine; and avoid care and uneasiness of mind.

If he do not sleep well, he must take a small dose of syrurp of diacodium every night.

This method will probably restore him to health; and it must be preserved with a due care afterwards; else relapses in this case are frequent. A vomit once in six weeks, and a dose of rhubarb every ten days, with a careful diet, will usually make this a very healthy constitution

The great care is taking the defect in time; for new disorders are easily conquered; but long established ones are too obstinate for such weak bodies.



## C H A P. XIV.

*Of pains and inflammations.*

**I**T is proper to treat of these together, because they generally come one with the other. We need not tell the old man when he is in pain : but he must examine carefully whether there be inflammation with it.

This he will know to be the case by his pulse beating hard and quick; and by high-coloured urine: his flesh also will be hotter than usual. When pains come on without these symptoms, warmth in the part, and patience, are the remedies: they must be considered as the lot of age, and endured accordingly: but when other symptoms join with them, they threaten dangerous consequences.

The first step in this case is bleedng: and this with abstinence from all hot foods often performs the cure.

If this give no relief, the next day but one a vomit will be proper. If the body be costive, that inflames all the symptoms; and if purges be given, they increase the violent motion of the blood, and therefore do more hurt than service. Cooling and oily glysters  
are



are the proper method, and the only proper one; and they should be repeated regularly every morning.

The diet must be light and cool: all solid foods should be omitted for the first four or five days, and in their place asses milk should be taken. Chicken broth and jellies must be the chief nourishment during this period.

After this, as the disorder abates, the strength must be considered; and by degrees the usual diet, such as is here recommended for healthy old men, should be introduced. But this must be done gradually, and with great caution: otherwise, a sudden change, from low to richer diet, will certainly bring on the complaint again; with more and worse inflammation.

## C H A P. XV.

### *Of fluxes*

**A**GED people bear a too costive habit much better than they do fluxes or purgings: for they are easily weakened; and nothing does it more than these discharges.

The great rule, in all the disorders of aged persons,



persons, is to take them in time. A purging will be cured by proper diet, when it is regarded early: otherwise medicines must be called in; and perhaps they will be ineffectual.

The quantity of solid food must in this case be reduced: but it should not be left off wholly. A drink should be made of burnt hartshorn and comfry root, two ounces of each boiled in two quarts of water to three pints, the liquor poured clear off, and drank warm with a little red wine. This should be the common drink.

Rice-milk, with some cinnamon boiled in it, is excellent for breakfast; and rice-pudding best of all things for supper; and this two hours before bed-time. Sea-biscuit should on this occasion be eat instead of bread; and the patient must use more than ordinary exercise, to promote perspiration.

## C H A P. XVI.

### *Of the gravel and stone.*

**O**LD persons are very subject to obstructions in the urinary passages; and often the various degrees of the gravel and stone follow.



follow. These are disorders difficult of cure : but they are easily prevented in most constitutions.

Let those who are subject but to slight complaints of this kind avoid wine ; and supply its place by clear malt liquor, of a due strength.

Let the diet be cooling : and in regard to exercise, the great and golden rule is moderation. Violent motion, or rest for a long time together, are equally wrong. Let the patient walk, or ride out every day at the proper hours ; and when the weather does not permit that, let him use the same exercise in his chamber.

When the fits come on, let him take manna and oil : this is an easy and effectual medicine. Two ounces of manna should be dissolved in half a pint of water, and six spoonfuls of salad oil added to it. A spoonful of this taken every half hour will stay upon the stomach, assuage the pain, stop the vomitings which usually attend these complaints ; and at the same time procure stools : and while it eases the cholicky pains, it will give passage to the stone.

This is the course in the violence of a fit. When it is perceived coming on, an infusion  
 D of



of BURDOCK ROOT slic'd, is the safest, best, and most effectual remedy. Two ounces of the fresh root, with a pint and half of boiling water poured on it, makes this infusion. The liquor is to be strained off as soon as cold: and half a pint, a little warmed again, with a quarter of a pint of milk, and sweetened with honey, is to be taken every four hours.

This is the medicine lately published also for the gout; and which many are now taking for that disease with very great success. The gout and gravel are nearly ally'd, and it is not strange the same remedy is so effectual also in this case. The wonder is, that a plant of so great virtue, and so common, has been so long neglected by the practisers of physick.

Of the gout it would be vain to treat here. 'Tis a peculiar subject, and requires a larger compass than any single article can be allowed in this work: and it has been considered separately in that treatise.

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## C H A P. XVII.

### *Of weakness.*

**O**LD men must expect a decay of strength: and it would be as idle to call it a disease, as it were vain to think of remedies.



remedies. But, besides this which is natural and necessary, weakness is sometimes accidental, and it may then be remedied.

Great evacuations, intense study, violent passions, or a too low diet, will sometimes bring it on before the natural time; and then a proper care and regimen may in a great measure remove it.

A weakness of the pulse, feebleness of the limbs, a paleness of the face, waste of flesh, and low spirits, are the symptoms by which this is known: the remedies are cordial medicines, and a somewhat richer diet.

The medicine I have found most effectual is this: a quarter of an ounce of saffron, a dram of cinnamon, and an ounce of confection of al-kermes, put into a quart of white wine: when this has stood two days it should be poured off, and half a wine-glass of it drank once a day.

Rest of mind and body are also in this case very essential articles toward the cure. Let not the patient think he is in danger: let him venture to eat somewhat richer meats, but in a moderate quantity; and indulge in one extraordinary glass of wine at every meal.

Let him rise early: but not go out 'till the  
D 2 air



air is well warmed by the sun ; and the dews are dispersed. If he resides in London at the time, let him immediately go into the country ; if he be too loose in his bowels, let him check it moderately by the means we have before directed ; and let his malt liquor be strong of the hop.

Between breakfast and dinner let him every day take a yolk of a new laid egg, beat up in a glass of strong white wine. The company of agreeable friends will be the best medicine in an evening : and good broth his fittest supper.

## C H A P. XVIII.

### *Of an asthma.*

**T**HIS is a common complaint with aged persons ; and there is none more troublesome. 'Tis difficult of cure ; but some relief is easy : and that will depend as much on the place as on all other considerations together.

The great care in this respect is that the air of his residence be neither thick nor damp.

The smoke of London is very bad ; and  
the



the ill smells from many of the trades carried on there are likewise hurtful. No person subject to an asthma should live near tanners in the country, nor tallow chandlers, or the like offensive trades, in London.

Exercise at proper times is highly beneficial in this case. Walking or riding before dinner and supper are particularly useful.

Frequent washing the feet in warm water, and good rubbing with dry cloths afterwards, is also highly serviceable.

All cold and viscous foods must be avoided. The stomach must not be suffered to be empty, nor must it be loaded. The food should be of the richest kind that can be proper for persons advanced in years; and to assist digestion, two or three dishes of good green tea, made carefully and taken with little sugar and without milk, should be drank constantly, two hours and a half after dinner.

Vegetables must be avoided: and one great caution should be, not to drink too much of any liquor whatsoever.

Bleeding is usually necessary; and the condition of the blood will shew whether it should be in larger or smaller quantity; and whether



whether or not it will require to be soon repeated.

If the blood be fizy, several bleedings will probably be wanted; and the same condition of it shews that the body can spare those quantities. It shews also, that without these bleedings medicines can take no effect.

After all this, the greatest preservative against sharp or repeated fits is the famous gum ammoniacum. A quarter of an ounce of this being dissolved in half a pint of water, two spoonfuls should be taken, according to the symptoms, every night, or every second or third night.

This method will prevent many fits, and abate the severity of those which cannot be avoided.

Thus the old man, even against the fury of this worst disturbance of his life, as well as all the rest, may live happy: and he ought to value that happiness the more, because he will owe it to his own discretion.



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