

A dissertation upon the gutta serena, the paralysis of the retina, and the progress of cataracts : Together with a new method to cure these disorders, and check them in their origin / By Dr. Chalibert, Oculist.

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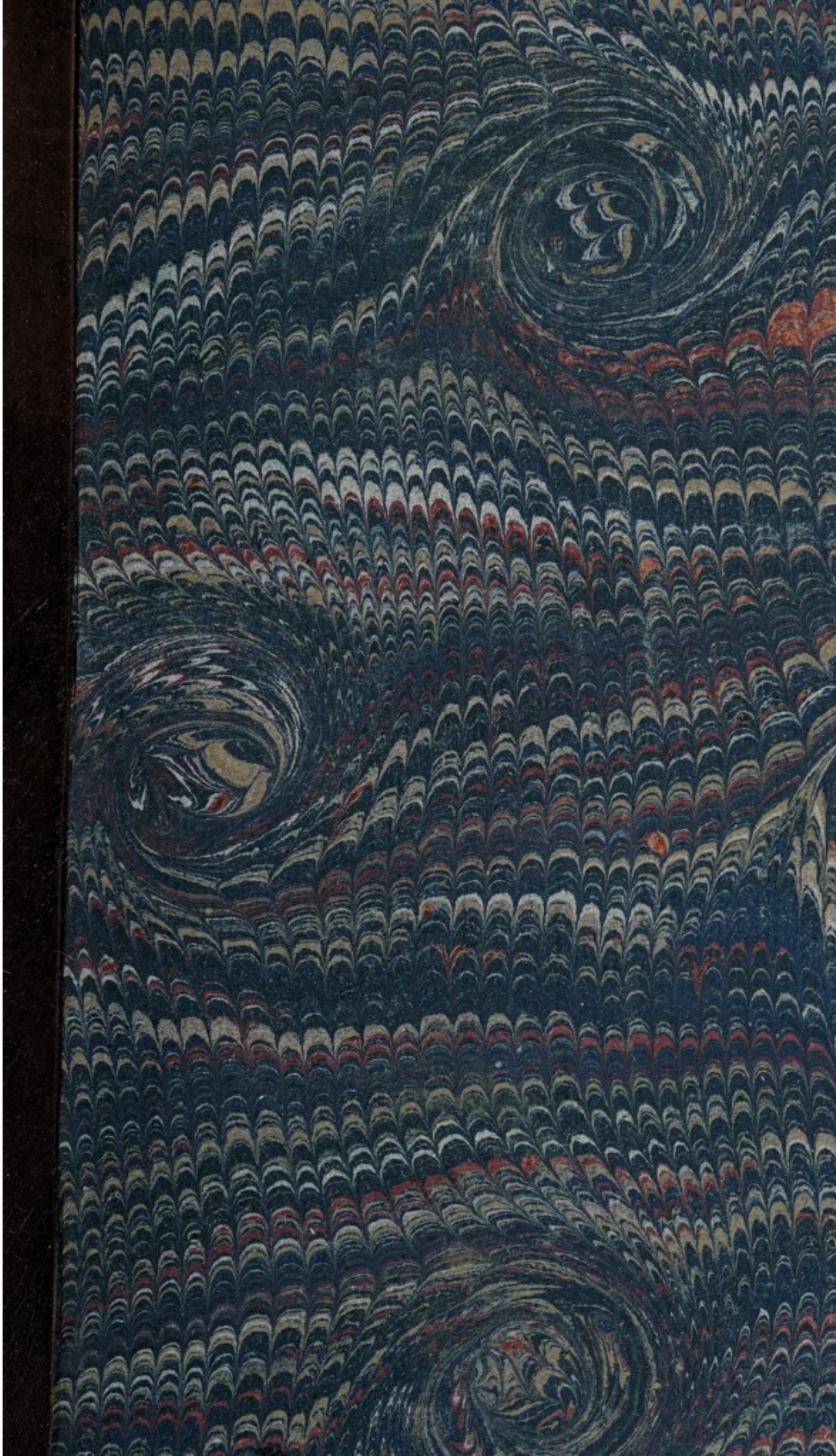
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A
DISSERTATION
UPON THE
GUTTA SERENA,
THE
PARALYSIS OF THE RETINA,
AND THE
PROGRESS OF CATARACTS.
TOGETHER WITH
A NEW METHOD
TO CURE THESE DISORDERS,
AND CHECK THEM IN THEIR ORIGIN.

By Dr. CHALIBERT, Oculist,
Settled in King Street, Soho, London.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. RIDLEY, in St. James's Street,

M D C C L X X I V .

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A
DISEASE

FROM THE

GUTTA SERENA

ANALYSIS OF THE RETINA

AND THE

PROGRESS OF CATARACTS

AND THE

A NEW METHOD

TO CURE THESE DISORDERS

AND OTHER AFFECTIONS OF THE EYE

BY DR. CHARLES J. COCHRAN

Author of "The Eye and its Diseases"

LONDON

Printed by J. RIDLEY, 25, Abchurch Lane



T O T H E

R E A D E R.

TO render it plain to every capacity, the following Dissertation has been freed, as much as possible, from Technical terms. As it is also an uncustomary thing for Physicians of this kingdom to perform the operation of extracting the Cataract, I think it necessary to inform the Reader, that it is by no means unusual among the Physicians of France; and that particularly Mons. PETIT, who is a Physician of the greatest eminence at Paris, is celebrated for his skill in performing this operation.



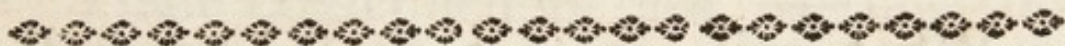
T O T H E

R E A D E R .

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DISSERTATION.



On the GUTTA SERENA.

I AM convinced, from the answers I received from those I have cured of the Gutta Serena, that it is often the consequence of emission of blood from the arm, the foot, the neck, and the temporal arteries; of issues made by

B

caustics

caustics on the coronal suture ; the application of leeches to the temples ; blisters behind the ears, upon the head, the nape of the neck, and brisk purgatives ; of setons, scarifying cupping-glasses, issues in the arm, and many other means, which, besides torturing the patients with excruciating pains, generally ruin their constitutions, and throw them into a perfect blindness.

What evils are not caused by indiscriminate bleedings ! Many and fatal accidents have I had opportunities of observing to have been the effects of this practice. But I may go farther, and say, that it must necessarily have occurred to men of observation, that evacuations of blood are pernicious to the sight, and that they are never made use of without subjecting the patients to weaknesse and dazzlings of the eyes,
the

the consequence of a relaxation of the fibres, and a change in the humours of the organ; in fact, the sudden discharge from the vessels deprives these weak and delicate parts of the nourishing juices which are necessary to support the humours of the eyes in that state of fluidity, the least failure of which would be fatal to their action.

These consequences are particularly obvious in bleeding in the Gutta Serena. In this disorder numberless are the degrees of decay caused by repeated emissions of blood.* What reproach there-

B 2 fore

* I must confess, however, that bleedings in some cases are necessary, when, for example, the Gutta Serena is the consequence of a sanguine apoplexy: in this circumstance bleedings should be used to diminish the too great quantity of blood, which causes obstructions in the vessels: but I must remark too, that the ease received during the time of, or immediately after, the bleeding, is not always of a long duration; and

fore will not the practitioner have to make to himself, in adopting a method which certainly in the end establishes and fortifies the disorder!

Every man of feeling must be touched by the fatal instances caused by this conduct; and every man of observation must be convinced, that what I have advanced is not less consistent with truth, than that it is an object important in itself. But it may be said in answer to this, How is it possible, without

and that sometimes the patient relapses into his former state: this is because the blood vessels have been too much relaxed, and that their spring, which is weakened, has not strength enough to sustain, for any length of time, the motion of circulation. To remedy this inconvenience, immediately after the evacuation of blood, the vapour of a spirituous and electrical fluid should be applied to the eyes, which strengthens them, and puts them in a situation to reassume their former vigour.

out the ordinary method of evacuation, to remove obstructions in the vessels, and to quicken the circulation of stagnant humours; as likewise what other method can be proposed to assuage the violent head-achs? To this I shall answer, that the intention of bleeding being to give a spring to, and excite to circulation, blood which is become thick, viscous, or too abundant; why might not one employ remedies which not only are not inimical to the principle of life, but whose success is more speedy and sure? for of all the sanguinary vessels which spread themselves over the human frame, those of the eyes are the most susceptible of impressions caused by steams extracted from the juice of vegetables, the effect of which is to open the pores, to penetrate and dissolve coagulations, and force them again into the circulation.

The

The more the optic nerve and the small vessels which surround it, are deprived of the nourishing juices, the greater degree of insensibility will these nervous parts acquire ; which will end in a Paralysis of the Optic Nerve and the Retina, the ordinary forerunner of the perfect Gutta Serena.

My principle therefore is, that in endeavouring to counter-act such dangerous consequences, it is necessary to attend to and investigate the operations of Nature with watchfulness and precision ; and that, amongst her wholesome productions, there are few ills for which remedies are not to be found ; and that it is our duty to avoid operations as much as possible, the prevention of which must be by checking the disorder in its origin. We must be patient and perseverant in adopting wholesome remedies,

remedies, and rejecting those which owe their reputation to guess-work and the blindness of chance.

The cure of the Gutta Serena cannot be perfected till the capillary tubes of the nerves of the eyes have been freed from their obstructions, by a motion communicated to the fluid which occupies their calibres.

The more I examine the causes and effects of this malady, the more am I convinced of the possibility of its cure; not indeed by any one of those numberless remedies, many of which deserve no better names than tortures; but by the vapours of a spirituous, penetrating, and electrical composition, the action of which gives a new spring to the languishing state of the nervous fibres, and re-establishes the functions of the optic nerves and retinae.

It is now two years since I have made a successful application (in France) of this composition to the Gutta Serena, which has hitherto been deemed incurable; and the cures which I have since brought about by this new method, have still confirmed me in my opinion.

I flatter myself, by this method, the success of which has never failed me, that it will be unnecessary to have recourse to these torturing and fatal applications, the usual causes of a Glaucoma, for which there remains no cure.

On the PARALYSIS of the RETINA.

THE Paralysis of the Retina may be the effect of some particular causes: for instance, it may arise from a blow on the eye, by which the web of its organisation is injured; or from a superabundance of ferous and phlogistic

phlogistic humours, which disturb and impede its functions: either of these causes may act more or less, and produce the Perfect or Imperfect Paralysis.

I make no distinction between the generality of the disorders of the Retina and those of the Optic Nerves, as to the effects which are produced by them; for whether the Paralysis exists absolutely, or dependently on the optic nerves, blindness is the never-failing consequence.

Remedies which are employed for the cure of the Paralysis of the Retina are generally applied to the Gutta Serena; but what I have already said under that article, renders the repetition here unnecessary.

On the CATARACT.

THE Cataract must be considered under three heads; to wit, in its infancy, in its second state, and in its maturity.

The Infant Cataract is no obstacle to the perception of objects; in its Second state, it admits only the distinguishing of large bodies; and in its Maturity, it leaves the eye the power only of discerning light from darkness.

The Infant Cataract is susceptible of being remedied by an aromatic spirituous composition, the strength of which must be proportioned to the degree of the malady: in its two latter states no resource is left but the operation, which is practicable but in its maturity.

In order to counteract the symptoms
of

of the Infant Cataract, it is customary to have recourse to colliriums of several kinds ; evacuations of blood ; and often to the application of leeches to the temples, as well as to blisters behind the ears, setons, &c. These means are not only ineffectual, but almost always firmly establish the disorder.

I have now in a concise manner treated of the three most afflicting maladies to which the organ of sight is commonly subject, and the pernicious effects of the applications which are generally adopted, as likewise of the preferable method of proceeding. It remains then only for me to convince the public by irrefragable proofs ; which I shall do, by laying before it the success I have met with since I have established myself in this metropolis.

That I might have some title to the
con-

confidence of the public, (who are but too often dupes to a set of men, whose proceedings are as dishonourable to themselves as they are detrimental to society) the first step I took was to give a general invitation to the Gentlemen of the Faculty to be present at the operations for the Cataract, which I performed the 25th of March, 1774.

On the same day I introduced to these gentlemen many persons afflicted with the Gutta Serena, and several others, labouring under different disorders of the eyes, whose cure had hitherto been despaired of. An account of the cure of some of these people I now offer to the public; and it is on this that I hope to establish the reputation of the method above described.

OBSERVATION I.

I Have had under my care George Ruffel, five and forty years old, living near the George Yard, on Little Saffron Hill, at Saint Andrew's Workhouse, afflicted with the Gutta Serena. He told me, that the disorder was caused by a violent fever. In the beginning of that malady, which was eleven years ago, evacuations of blood from the temporal arteries by leeches and the lancet, applications of blisters upon the nape of the neck, and issues in the arms, were recommended and made use of at several times: these proceedings, instead of benefiting the patient, besides torturing him threw him by degrees into a perfect blindness, (which he has laboured under nine months,) and caused a Glaucoma on his right eye.

In

In this state of blindness he became my patient; and my treatment of him was so successful, that in three weeks time he was able to walk without a leader; and since that time, by closely attending to my prescriptions, his sight has been stronger and stronger.

This will be certified by Mr. Cartridge, in Queen's Head Yard, Saint Margaret Street, near Blackman Street, in the Borough.

OBSERVATION II.

MR. SINGLEZ, eight and thirty years old, living in Exeter Street, near Exeter 'Change, in the Strand, at Mr. Nicholson's, stay-stitcher, was afflicted with a Gutta Serena upon his right eye, and the beginning of another upon the left. The disorder began by an inflammation on the right eye; and

and some time after the left became afflicted with the same malady, and continued growing worse and worse these six years past.

Evacuations of blood from the arm, and by leeches applied to the temples, were used without benefit; applications of blisters behind the ears, and colliri-ums of several kinds, were recommended, as likewise scarifying cupping-glasses upon the sternum: These means caused violent pains to the patient, who was at last given over as incurable.

In that situation he came under my care, and now he is able to read small print. This will be certified by George Keate, Esq; in Charlotte Street, near Great Ruffel Street.

OBSERVATION III.

JOHN KEEDWELL, a pilot, one and thirty years old, was afflicted with the Gutta Serena upon both eyes these five years past. This fatal malady came after a violent fever, as he told me; as likewise, that evacuations of blood at several times were used for the recovering of his sight, but to no purpose.

He is now in a situation to see his hands, fingers, and pipe, very plain. So great an alteration leaves no room to doubt of his perfect cure in a very little time. As he is still under my care, any body may be convinced of this fact, by calling at my lodgings, at 12 o'clock, which hour I set aside for the relief of indigent persons.

OBSERVATION I.

I Have had under my care Mrs. Lemoine, of King Street, St. James's Square, afflicted with a Paralysis on the Retinæ. The disorder has been coming, by degrees, for these two years, after a cold in her eyes.

In reading with attention, she perceived the words as if they had been long black strokes, without being able to distinguish them; infomuch that she had been obliged to give over not only reading, but her business. She is now in a situation to follow her profession, and can even read small print.

OBSERVATION II.

MR. Samuel Turner, five and forty years old, living in Brook's Meuse, between Brook Street and Grosvenor
D Street,

Street, was afflicted with a Paralyfis on the Retina of his left eye. He has had the misfortune to lose his right eye from a blow ; and since the disorder of his left, colliriums of several kinds, and the application of leeches to the temples, were used, but without benefit.

When he came to me he could not distinguish colours, which he can now not only do, but sees objects perfectly well. This will be certified by Mr. Francis Dowle, butcher, in Grosvenor Street.

OBSERVATION III.

THE wife of Mr. John Whiteman, taylor, St. Martin's Street, Leicester Fields, No. 39. was afflicted with a continual inflammation upon both eyes, a scirrhus in the eye-lids, (which were

were as thick as a finger) and a morpew all over her face, these nine years past, in consequence of a lying-in. To remedy this general disorder, evacuations of blood from the temporal arteries by leeches and the lancet, applications of blisters upon the nape of the neck, upon the back and behind the ears, an issue in the arm during six years, and a great many brisk purgatives, were used ; till at last these cruel proceedings produced a Paralysis upon the Retinæ, which obliged her to discontinue her business.

She is cured of all these complaints without any torturing methods, and is capable of attending to her affairs without any impediment. This will be certified by Mr. Kluft, heretofore private secretary for the French language to

her late Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of Wales, living in Rathbone Place, No. 19. near Soho Square.

OBSERVATION I.

I Have had under my care Thomas Macune, apprentice to Mr. Marriott, at No. 110. Fetter Lane, near Fleet Street, afflicted with Infant Cataracts. The disorder, which has been coming these five years, began with a dimness upon both eyes: he was very often obliged to discontinue his work on account of filaments and other little objects that continually dazzled his sight.

He is now in a situation to look at every thing, with the greatest attention, without any appearance of these little specks above described.

OBSERVATION II.

MRS. MARIA LEACH, one and thirty years old, living in Stanhope Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields, No. 17. was afflicted with an Infant Cataract upon her left eye, which has been coming these two years: the pains she has suffered are not to be described.

She came for my advice, being under apprehension that her left eye would become equally cataracted as the right. In this situation I undertook her, and now she is free from all her pains and the symptoms of a cataract.

OBSERVATION III.

JOHAN RIDDING, one and twenty years old, was afflicted with Infant Cataracts these two years past: evacua-
tions

tions of blood from the temporal arteries and the arm were used, as likewise blisters behind the ears, and issues, without success.

The symptoms have all disappeared, and the patient is in a fair way: this will be certified by Mr. Peren, in Adam-and-Eve Court, No. 14. Oxford Street.

EXTRACTS from the NEWS PAPERS.

Morning Post, 22, &c. 1774.

To the Physicians and Surgeons of London.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ **T**HE continual motion of the
 “ eye, during the operation of
 “ the Cataract by extraction, renders it
 “ very difficult, and often raises an ob-
 “ stacle which cannot be overcome,
 “ even by the ablest oculists: num-
 “ bers

“ bers of instruments have been con-
 “ trived in order to fix the globe of
 “ the eye, but all to no purpose, because
 “ of the accidents which have happened
 “ during or after the operation.

“ I have contrived an instrument
 “ which fixes the globe of the eye with-
 “ out pricking or bruising it, and an-
 “ swers every way my wishes, even for
 “ the most moveable eyes. I cannot,
 “ Gentlemen, submit my discovery to
 “ better judges than ye; therefore I in-
 “ treat you, with the greatest sincerity,
 “ to be present at some operations of
 “ the cataract, which I will perform
 “ on Friday next, March 25, at one
 “ o'clock in the afternoon. I am, with
 “ the greatest respect,

“ Gentlemen,

“ Your, &c.

MORNING CHRONICLE, MORNING POST,
and PUBLIC LEDGER, April 18, 19,
&c. 1774.

“ A peculiar and faithful account of
“ the public operations of the Ca-
“ taract, performed by Dr. CHALI-
“ BERT, Oculist, the 25th of last
“ month, with a new instrument,
“ of his own invention, which in-
“ fures the success of the opera-
“ tion by fixing the globe of the
“ eye.

“ **T**HE 22d of last month the
“ Physicians and Surgeons of
“ London were invited to be present at
“ the said operations, by public adver-
“ tisements. Dr. HUCK, Mr. CHAFY,
“ Surgeon, and many other Physicians
“ and Surgeons, were present, when

“ Mrs.

“ Mrs. Curvis, of Kent Road, the
 “ bottom of Kent Street, a woman 70
 “ years old, who was blind of Cataracts
 “ upon both eyes, (the left these seven-
 “ teen years, and the right these six
 “ months past) was operated upon, and
 “ has now the sight of both eyes.

“ Mr. Charles Wallot, Tottenham
 “ Court Road, near the Black Horse,
 “ who had a Cataract upon his right
 “ eye, was operated on, and has reco-
 “ vered the sight of it.

“ Mr. John Birchall, sixty years of
 “ age, living in St. James’s parish infir-
 “ mary, Poland Street, who was blind
 “ of membranous Cataracts (the shoals
 “ of oculists) and who had undergone
 “ the operation, without success, by an
 “ oculist of this metropolis, five times
 “ upon his left eye, and once upon his
 E “ right,

“ right, was operated on, and now sees
“ with both eyes.

“ The Physicians and Surgeons, who
“ were so obliging as to be present at
“ the operations, are intreated to give
“ themselves the trouble to call again
“ on Saturday, the 30th of this month,
“ in order to see the persons who un-
“ derwent the operation in their pre-
“ sence.”

Several of them came, and were wit-
nesses to the happy state of the pa-
tients.

It will be needless to dwell on the
unhappy situation of the victims to the
disorders of the eyes. The horror of
that condition, which subjects the suf-
ferer to be deceived by all who surround
him, and which involves every thing
in darkness, exceeds the power of de-
scription.

It is then of the greatest consequence to inform one's self particularly of the tokens of these disorders, that one may be capable of checking them in their origin.

The following observations, which are submitted to the public, will render every one a competent judge of the signs of these different maladies of the eyes.

In the infancy of a Cataract, flakes of snow, little black spots, filaments which follow the motion of the globe of the eye, and a thousand small objects, whose forms are so varied that none but those who perceive them can describe them, seem to float before the sight. It often happens, that in a little time after these appearances, the Cataract begins to form itself, and then there is no resource but in the operation.

The

The Paralyfis of the Retina announces itself by a weaknefs, or a diminution of fight, by a weight in the eye-lids, by shooting in the globe of the eye, by pains above the eye-brows, upon the temples, behind the head ; particularly, as the night advances, clouds feem to appear before the fight : it feems as if one looked through a piece of gauze or muflin, after having fixed one's eye upon an object for a length of time : it happens too, that, after a long application to reading, the words appear confufed, like long black ftrokes, without diftinction or feperation ; this fign is particularly dangerous, and the Paralyfis of the Retina is to be feared in proportion to the number of thefe figns.

If it has been judged neceffary, by men of the greateft difcernment, to reject all together the fpirit of fystematizing,

tizing, and to pay attention to no works that are not founded upon observation and experience, I have every reason to hope that this Dissertation will be favourably received: if, however, I should be disappointed in my endeavours to obtain the suffrages of the public, I shall have, at least, a satisfaction in having done my utmost to deserve them.

F I N I S.

D I S S E R T A T I O N

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 relieve them.

Printed by B. I. N. I. 1784.





