

A letter from J. Campbell, a physician in the country, to his friend in town : occasioned by the Case of the Right Honourable Thomas Winington, lately published by Thomas Thomson [i.e. Thompson].

Contributors

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LETTER

FROM

J. CAMPBELL, M. D.

A Physician in the Country,

TO

His FRIEND in TOWN,

Occasion'd by

the CASE of the Right Honourable
THOMAS WININGTON, Esq;

Lately Publish'd by

Thomas Thomson, M. D.

L O N D O N :

Printed for *L. Raymond*, and sold by
A. More, near *St. Paul's*.

M DCC XLVI,

8

A

LETTER

FROM

M. D. CAMPBELL,

A Physician in the County,

TO

His Friend in Town,

London,

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LONDON,

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M DCC LXXV

A
LETTER, &c.

S I R,

I H A D the Favour of yours, with the
C A S E of the Right Honourable Mr.
Winington inclosed, of which you are
pleas'd to desire my Opinion ; I know it
must be esteem'd a Piece of unpardonable
Presumption in a Country-Physician, to
pretend to meddle with the Practice of any
of your City-Dons ; the Gentlemen of the
Faculty, and every Dabler in your Metro-
polis look upon us Practitioners in the
Country

Country with the utmost Contempt ; they esteem us only as a regular Kind of Quacks ; since we sometimes take upon us to kill or cure a Country Fox-Hunter by Rules which we have not received from the College ; or happen to differ a Scruple or two from the Recipe of the Physician in Fashion at *St. James's* : But, as I know your Design in putting me upon this Task, is perfectly free from any Malice to any Party that may be directly or indirectly concern'd in the Question, and is founded upon the Love of Truth and Justice ; I shall venture to expose my Sentiments to you on that Subject without Reserve, being fully convinc'd that you'll judge of them with that Candour which is always inseparable from a Man of Honour and Learning.

I own to you, upon first reading that Pamphlet, especially the Introduction and Conclusion, I had some Difficulty to persuade myself that Doctor *Thomson* was the Author of it ; I was about to conclude it the Offspring of some of those buzzing Tribe of Pamphleteers, whose Business (as
he

he observes) is to asperse; who had pick'd up something of the CASE from the Apothecary, and made free with that eminent Name to promote the Sale of their Labours; and I had certainly continued in this Opinion, if I had not cast my Eyes at the Bottom of the Title - Page, and found that the Printer had put his own Name to it at Length; which I am convinc'd he would not have ventur'd to have done, if he had not Doctor *Thomson's* Permission to father that Pamphlet upon him.

My Doubts arose from several Considerations; I judg'd that learned Gentleman had more Prudence than to encourage this newly-introduced Method of exposing Patients to publick View, after they are rotten in their Graves; and plaguing the Publick with Cases wherein they have not the least Concern; nor can reap the least Edification from; what is it to the Publick, whether a great Man dy'd of a natural Death, or of the Doctor; and it is still of less Consequence, when the Que-
tion

tion is only, whether he dy'd of this, or that Doctor, it is all one to them whether he dy'd of the Doctor in Fashion, or any other; whether he was kill'd by Rules prescrib'd by the College, or the empyrical Conceits of some singularly conceited obstinate Quack.

All that can be learned from such publick Enquiries, is, that the Science of Medicine is governed by no fix'd Principle, since the Professors of it differ so widely, both in their Opinions and Practice; and Mankind must, in a little Time, be argued into such a Notion of the whole Profession, as to think themselves happier and safest when out of their Hands.

The Pretence, which the Doctor makes for justifying a Practice, which he himself condemns, is far from giving me that Satisfaction which he expects from it.

He supposes he has a Right to vindicate his Reputation, which is attack'd by private Whispers; but I cannot imagine that the Publick is concern'd in every Article

cle of private Scandal that is propagated in this great City, to the Prejudice of private Persons; nor do I see that any Man has a Right to appeal to the Publick, unless the Scandal is notorious, and the Person's Character so publick, as he may reasonably suppose himself known to the greatest Part of the Community; or, when the Question concerns the Interest of the Society.

Now I cannot think so meanly of Doctor *Thomson*, as to suppose that he looks upon himself as entitled to make his Appeal upon any of these Considerations; the Scandal he complains of must be confined to a few of his own Acquaintance and Profession; and I believe I may affirm, without Offence, that the Doctor's Name and Character is so far from being publick, that neither the one nor other is so much as known to one Hundredth Part of the Inhabitants of the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*; and I'm sure, the Question, as it is circumstanc'd, no ways concerns the Publick, whether he followed a rational Practice, or not, or

whether his Patient suffer'd by his Ignorance, or that of any other: Could the Doctors be brought to a legal Tryal, and suffer for their Mismanagement, like other Criminals; in that Case, the Publick would be concern'd in the Question, and the Doctor might be justify'd in his Appeal: But as the Case now stands, I cannot help saying, that the Publick has a Right to reject the Appeal, and leave the Doctor to carry on his Suit in the private Courts where it first commenc'd.

Had his Enemies, his fancy'd Calumniators, attack'd him first, and charged him with Male-Practices in his Profession in a publick Manner, to be sure, he had a Right to have justify'd himself in the same Manner; but, as it is, Numbers of ill-natur'd People will conjecture, that there is no such Thing as the Calumny he speaks of; but that the Doctor either fancy'd that such Things were said of him, or might be said of him; or had a Mind to take this Method of raising his Reputation, by acquainting the Publick, that there was such an eminent Person in Being, who had it

his Power (if he was so inclin'd) to have kill'd a Right Honourable Person, and would be glad to have the like Opportunity of serving every Right Honourable in the Kingdom.

Ill-natur'd People will be apt to make such a Conjecture upon the Doctor's publishing the Case; for besides, that most Men are apt to put the worst Construction upon Things, we are naturally suspicious of a Man, who seems over and above sollicitous in clearing his Innocence, especially when it's not attack'd; the Consciousness of having discharged his Duty to the utmost of his Skill and Knowledge, to an honest Mind, is always a Shield sufficient against the Effects of private Scandal; and such a Man thinks the Author of such low Practices so contemptible, that he does not think them worth his own Notice, much less of that of the Publick.

There runs through the Introduction and Conclusion of that Piece, such a Spirit of Resentment, and such an Acrimony of Style, that gave me still more Reason

to doubt of Doctor *Thomson's* being the Author; for I consider'd that a Person, who appeals to the Publick for a Justification of his Character from private Scandal, took a very preposterous Method to obtain his Ends, by taking that Opportunity to spew out Reflections against a whole Body of learned Men, and by indirect Insinuations endeavour to wound the Reputation of private Persons much more eminent in the Profession than himself.

The Doctor has wrought himself up to a Belief, that these Calumnies (which he phrases *poison'd Arrows*) comes from Men of his own Profession, whom he dignifies on this Occasion with the genteel Epithet of *Assassins*: And in the first Paragraph, lets the Publick into some Secrets, which he should have concealed with great Industry: First, that the Question in Dispute relates to, or is chiefly actuated by private Interest on both Sides; in the next Place, that the Doctor has introduced a new Method of Practice, differing from all the rest of his Brethren; and lastly, that he imagines himself of such Significancy, as to
alarm

alarm all the Faculty with Fears of the Danger of their Profession from his Innovations.

These Conclusions are easily drawn from these Words, Page 6. "Private Interest evidently points out the Assassins; nor is it to be wonder'd, when the Shrines are in Danger, that the Watchmen should clamour in Support of the Craft." Now I cannot help thinking that such an Introduction must leave but a very indifferent Impression upon the Minds of the Publick, who are, upon this Occasion, to pass upon the Doctor as a Jury.

New Doctrines, against a long establish'd practice, are received but slowly, however just they may be; nor can the Maintainers of such new Doctrines complain of the Treatment they meet with from the Publick, since they have a Right to know their Utility by Experience, before they reject Opinions, which a long Tract of Years have made familiar to their Apprehensions; Men naturally abhor the Thoughts of trying new Experiments in Physick; an honest
Phy-

Physician is cautious of introducing a new Practice, however well he may be convinc'd of its Rectitude in Theory ; and, if he has any Degree of Modesty, he will never appear dogmatick in Opinions wherein he stands single, and opposes the Voice of all the rest of his Profession.

I agree with Doctor *Thomson*, that the modern Practice of Physick requires a Reform, and that there is sometimes more Strefs laid upon a *Diploma* than ought to be ; yet I own that Reform to be too arduous a Task for both the Doctor and me, and that we shall never argue the World out of the Respect they show to a *Diploma* until we convince them, that Envy has no Share in our Contempt of them, or that we have something more solid to build our own Reputation upon.

The Doctor has given a fair Challenge to the Faculty, to attack his Practice ; which I hope none of them will be Fools enough to accept ; for what can any of them gain by the Event of the Combat ; Conviction is never the Consequence of these Paper-Trials : A

doubt if any of the eminent Physicians, in and about *London*, would think the Victory, though obtained, any considerable Addition to their Reputation; which they know depends more upon the Success of their Practice with their Patients, than in supporting their Method against the Conceits of one Man; and besides they are fairly warn'd, that whoever takes up the Gauntlet against the Doctor, must expect to meet with a Reply, loaded with Recriminations and personal Scandal; these are some of the Conditions of the Combat; that the Doctor shall have Leave to prove, that his Antagonist, whoever he is, has kill'd more than he, and has not one Grain of common Honesty. What is that to the present Question? how many the Doctor and his Brethren have killed; or whether they are Knaves or Fools; the simple Point in Issue, is only, as the Doctor has stated it, no more than if the Method observed by him, in treating his Right Honourable Patient, is consistent with Reason, and the acknowledged Principles of the Medical Science.

If the Doctor, in the Course of the Debate, had an Intention to keep to that Point,
 he

he might have spared himself that ungentleman-like Reflection, “ That common Honesty is not always essential to the present Practice of Physick, nor Omniscience the Characteristick of some eminent Professors of it.” He who throws out private Scandal against his Neighbour deserves severe Punishment; but he who, as it were, throws Stones into a Multitude, and vents Scandal by Wholesale, should at least be treated as a Madman, and like them deprived of all sharp Weapons.

But I apprehend, the Doctor threw out that Threat of Recrimination to deter People from entering the Lists with him; and may have given the Challenge, like the Champion at a Coronation, when he is sure nobody dares take him up.

But however, I believe I may venture to trust my Sentiments with you, without any Danger of being exposed to the Resentment of this medical Champion, who has thus boldly bid Defiance to all the Sons of *Galen* and *Hipocrates*.

In considering this CASE, I am obliged to take the Symptoms, as stated by the Doctor ; of which I am bound in Charity to believe he has given us a just and accurate Account, and shall only enquire how far, according to his own State of the CASE, he has follow'd a rational Practice.

As to his Treatment of the Patient for the first three Days, that is, from the sixth till the ninth, I have nothing to object ; bleeding, purging, and cooling Medicines were very proper in that State of the Disorder ; but I apprehend that the Doctor ought to have consulted Nature, and endeavour'd to have assisted her in that Kind of Crisis, which she seem'd to point out ; sweating is as natural a Crisis as any in all Kind of feverish Disorders ; and it is my Opinion, had the Doctor administer'd Diaphoretick Medicines, and stopp'd Bleeding, the Fever might have been more easily conquer'd : A Physician, in all Cases, is but the Servant of Nature, and it is his Business to cooperate with, and assist her in her Motion, and not to pretend to obstruct

struct her in her Actings : Sweating was as natural as Evacuation to the feverish Symptoms as any other ; and therefore I can see no Reason the Doctor had to discourage it, much less to take it as a bad Indication.

The Distemper we are now treating of did not arrive from the Quantity of Blood, nor is the Design of any Evacuation of that Kind any other, than by lessening the Quantity to increase the Velocity of the Fluids, that they may have greater Force to remove any Obstructions that are in the smaller Vessels : But, tho' it is true, that lessening the Quantity, increases the *Momentum* of the Blood, yet it is equally true, that we may decrease the Quantity so much as to destroy the natural Tone of the Vessels, which must be kept up to a certain Degree, otherwise they cannot perform their Functions in the animal Oeconomy.

The Fever, of itself, preys upon the Patient, and wastes his natural Strength ; Bleeding and Purgings will weaken the strongest and most healthy Constitution,
how

ow then are we to expect that Nature
 in effect her Designs, when the whole
 process of the Cure seems calculated to
 weaken her Faculties, and obstruct her
 natural Motions.

If bleeding too much was necessary in
 the present CASE, the Doctor should have
 continued it during the whole Progress of
 the Distemper, and never desisted while
 the Patient had a Drop of Blood left: He
 was obliged to desist at last, because of
 the Weakness of the Patient; and I ap-
 prehend, he had better have desisted soon-
 er, while the Patient had Strength left
 sufficient to assist Nature, in her Attempts
 towards a Crisis.

On the 11th I find the Symptoms a-
 bated, and there was some Remission of
 the Fever, which I should have taken as
 a proper Indication for administering the
 Bark, to which I think the Doctor could
 have no just Exception, except that he
 was obstinately resolv'd to obtain a Cure
 by no other Means than Bleeding and
 Purgings.

And accordingly we find on the 13th that more Bleeding is order'd; tho' we must believe, from the Violence of the Distemper, the frequent Purgings, that the Patient must have been exceedingly much exhausted.

As to the Thrush, I must observe, that it's very odd, that the Doctor should take no Notice of it till the 17th, when we find it arriv'd to a considerable Pitch and that in all the History of the CASE there is no Mention of a fore Throat from the 6th: I think it very odd, that there should be no Complaints of that Kind during that Space; if there was, that they are not mention'd in the CASE, and that the Doctor did not make an early Inspection into the Patient's Throat.

As to the Bleeding at the Nose on the 17th I cannot think that a sufficient Justification for taking away more Blood, considering the weak State of the Patient, and the Quantity taken already; since I am apt to believe, that if Nature had been sufficiently strong, it would have effected a Crisis that Way,

whil

which this feeble Attempt (as the Doctor calls it) was a plain Indication.

However, that, and the Continuance of the Thrush, determined the Doctor to order 14 Ounces to be taken away on the 18th, and on the same Day 7 Ounces more; all which left the Distemper in the same State, but I believe must leave the Patient little or no Strength, to co-operate either with Nature or Medicine.

I own to you, upon the first Appearance of the Thrush, I should have inclined to have order'd a Blister to the Back of the Neck, which would have stimulated the Blood, kept up the Circulation, and perhaps diverted the Humours to a less dangerous Part of the Body; and would not half so much have weaken'd the Patient as those excessive Bleedings, which must have ruined his Constitution, had he had the good Fortune to have got the better of the Fever.

We find him now so low, that Bleeding must be desisted, and even Purges administered

tred with uncommon Caution, tho' the Symptoms of the Thrush still increas'd ; so that I think I may naturally conclude, that the frequent Bleedings had no other Effect but to weaken the Patient to a Degree, which his Distemper would not have effected in double the Time.

As to the Draughts, which *Sir Edward Hulse* prescribed, I think the Doctor has not informed us if or not the Patient took them ; but, in my Opinion, it's nos material, since, according to the State of the CASE, and the Doctor's Sentence pass'd upon him, the Fate of the Patient no Way depended upon his taking these, or any other Medicine.

Upon the Whole, I shall freely confess, that I wish the Doctor had attempted that Crisis, which Nature itself seem'd to point out, and had sooner desisted from Bleeding, since he was obliged to do it at last, after he had deprived Nature, to which he was obliged, in the End to have Recourse of all Assistance from the Strength of the Pa-

atient's Constitution, which, indeed, must have been a good one, to bear so long such repeated Bleeding and Purging, together with the Weight of an acute Distemper.

I have open'd my Mind to you on this Occasion, with the Freedom of a Friend; and submit my Sentiments to your Judgment, being fully convinc'd you'll put a candid Construction upon them: I am sorry I should differ with the Learned Doctor *Thomson*; but I do it without any Mixture of Malice, or any private View whatever; my Practice can never interfere with his, therefore, I must not be included in the Number of the Craft, that are alarm'd at the Danger of their Shrines, I only wish, that Gentlemen concern'd in the Medicinal Way would live so with one another, as not to give the World Cause to hold them all in equal Contempt; and I wish that Doctor *Thomson* had not given the present Handle for the Ridicule to which the Profession is at present expos'd: I am satisfy'd in my own Mind, that whatever Opinion Men of Letters may entertain of
the

the CAse of Mr. *Winington*, that neither
Learned Men, nor Wise Men, will have a
better Opinion of him for the publishing
of it. I am,

S I R,

Your most Humble Servant.

F I N I S.