

Medical arguments, approving Clare's mode of absorption.

Contributors

Clare, Peter, 1738-1786.

Publication/Creation

[London?] : [publisher not identified], [1780?]

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/g25nff5x>

License and attribution

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

MEDICAL ARGUMENTS,

APPROVING

CLARE'S MODE OF ABSORPTION.

“ **P**EOPLE with very tender bowels, may bear the Calomel much better in this form, than when given in pills, bolusses,” &c.
Dr. Hunter.

“ How many, originally vigorous, deduce their present weak bowels and debilitated constitutions, from the mischief occasioned by the action of Mercury on the primæ viæ !”
Mr. Cruikshank.

“ There are few persons who have been so unfortunate as to take large quantities of Mercury in the usual way, who do not exhibit melancholy Proofs of it's baneful effects on the stomach and bowels. By your mode of administering it, these effects are obviated, while it is much more cleanly, and agreeable, than the common method of applying it to the skin.”
Dr. Buchan.

“ I prescribed your Mercurial liniment to a patient, the benefit of which he very soon experienced, by recovering in the space of a fortnight, perceiving not the smallest inconvenience from it's use : On the contrary, he found his bowels perfectly free from any attack on them, the usual attendants on former methods of treatment, which he had frequently experienced previous to this trial.”
Dr. Krohn.

“ A very

“ A very obstinate Siphylitic case occurred to me, (at the time I was Surgeon of his Majesty's Ship *Heart of Oak*) which had resisted a thorough Mercurial course, as recommended by Sir Wm. Fordyce, and other men of eminence; and yielded at last, to the elegant and agreeable mode discovered and recommended by you.—I have known on ship-board, and on shore likewise, but more particularly the former, dangerous fevers, and fatal Diarrhæas, supervene from mercurial friction on the extremities. The unavoidable exposure to the external air, for the space of half an hour, while the process of *rubbing in* the ointment is performing in the Cockpit, occasions an obstructed perspiration, which too frequently terminates in a dangerous febrile affection, and that of the putrid kind; and we are all sensible how fatally that disease ends on ship-board, by, perhaps, being communicated to half the crew.”

Wm. Turnbull, jun.

“ I shall not trouble you with a narrative of particular Cases, of which you have had many, from different Correspondents; I can, however, from several Instances, assure you, that I have seen more speedy and salutary effects from your method, than from any other yet held forth to the public. With regard to the doctrine of Absorption, I do not suppose any person acquainted with the animal System, and the history of Physic, will refuse their assent to it. This being taken for granted, wherever the Friction can be moderately used *to the thin cuticular inner surfaces* of the body, every person, conversant with the subject, must rationally conclude, that *there* it will prove most effectual. Much might be said in support of your Hypothesis, but after what those ingenious Gentlemen, Dr. Hunter and Mr. Cruikshank have advanced, in support of the doctrine of Absorption, and in commendation of your discovery, it would be superfluous to urge any thing more upon the subject.”

Wm. Turnbull, M. D.

“ I sincerely wish you success in decrying the use of *large quantities* of Mercury in the cure of Siphylis. It is perfectly unnecessary, always injurious, and, I do believe, it has killed multitudes, and destroyed the health of millions. I hope to see the horrid practice of daubing with loads of extinguished Quicksilver laid aside; and I mean to assist in expunging a method founded in erroneous Principles.”

Dr. Kirkland.

YOUR PRACTICE recommends itself to me from several Considerations :

I.

That Calomel, rubbed on the inside of the mouth, may be absorbed, appears probable from Analogy.

The particles of blood seen in the simple Microscope, are larger than those of levigated Calomel; yet, as I observed, I have had many opportunities of seeing the absorbents turgid with red blood.

II.

The surface, on which you propose the Calomel should be rubbed, is, in its own nature, a better absorbing surface, than, perhaps, any other, accessible to friction, in the body.

III.

The absorption of Calomel from the inside of the mouth, appears, from the Testimony of many of your patients, undeniable :

For, if they rub Calomel every day on the inside of the mouth, and it does not gripe or purge; and if the common effect of it, taken into the stomach, is, that it certainly gripes and purges; then we must conclude that the Calomel, given in your way, has not gone into the stomach, whilst its producing evident effects on the disease, for which it was exhibited, shews, that it has certainly got into the habit, or, in other words, that it has been absorbed by the surface to which it was applied.

IV.

Calomel absorbed in your way, must be the most eligible method, because it is less apt to irritate the stomach and intestines, (and, by purging, to destroy it's proper effect,) than it would be, if it's first action was immediately on these parts.

V.

Your's is a less tedious, less laborious process, than the common one of rubbing mercurial ointment.

To be obliged to rub, with their own hands, half a drachm of mercurial ointment, is a labour only to be conceived by those who have experienced it. Nothing is more universally complained of. What then must it be when half an ounce, or even a whole ounce is rubbed?

VI.

Your method also recommends itself as a neater and more convenient one, than the rubbing mercurial ointment.

VII.

Your's is better, *cæteris paribus*, than the common modes of exhibiting mercury *internally*, as it employs friction.

VIII.

It appears preferable to the rubbing mercurial ointment, as watery fluids may be presumed to be more readily absorbed than oils; have not some of the disagreeable qualities of oils, and there are some reasons to believe, that Saliva, and mercury make a more efficacious compound than mercury and oil.

IX.

Your's appears to be a more expeditious way of giving the mercurial *Stimulus* to the System, and of eradicating the Venereal *Virus*.

X.

My Experiments, as far as they go, confirm your Practice."

Extract from Mr. Cruikshank's
Letter to Clare.

By James Macpherson
Laird.