

**Observations on the general bills of mortality / by W. Hawes, author of the preceding address, &c.;**

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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

*General Bills of Mortality,*

BY

W. HAWES, M. D.

AUTHOR OF THE

PRECEDING ADDRESS, &c.

Manway Co.

The Author's respect com  
he is  
is ever anxious  
to merit his approbation



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## OBSERVATIONS, &c.

THE General Bill of Mortality, as prepared and stated, renders it an Insult to Common-sense and a gross Indignity to the Throne.—Could we suppose that the Report seriously engaged the Royal Attention, we should indeed feel much for the Father of a Kingdom thus misinformed of the Situation of his Subjects.—From such a Misrepresentation he might be led to lament his Weakness when he ought to triumph in his Strength, and on the contrary to exult in the Increase of his People, when he should rather regret their Devastation. But the Evils attendant on inaccurate Bills of Mortality do not affect Majesty alone.

As it is promised in the Title Page to add something more to the present Edition than



was contained in the first and second, it may be hoped that the Consideration of a Circumstance so dangerous and interesting will be approved by our Readers.

The chief End originally intended by the Reports of Christenings and Burials was to ascertain the State of Population and Fatality of Diseases. This properly effected would be an important Benefit, and in the Attainment of it, another of equal Consequence would be included.—By a strict and judicious Examination of those who are absolutely or apparently dead, the Concealment of Murder would be frequently prevented, and the Interment of such as have yet a Spark of Life remaining in them would often be obstructed. Thus would the Hand of the Assassin be checked by the Certainty of Discovery, and the Mistakes of the Ignorant corrected by the Interference of the Wise. Thus would Innocence acquire



acquire greater Security, and the Human Race be guarded from the unspeakable Horrors of premature Interment. Such and so great would be the Advantages of Bills of Mortality judiciously formed.

Let us see how they are now collected, and thence draw our Conclusion on their probable Effects. With whom does this Business commence? With Women advanced in Years and indigent in Circumstances. Age in general is attended with a Decrease of Faculties; and even if it were not so, the Habits and Education of Women in the Prime of Life seldom enable them to pronounce positively that a Person is dead, much less to explore the Cause of Death. With respect to the first, the Mistakes that are daily committed are more than sufficient to prove it; as to the second, a slight Examination of their last



Report will we trust place that beyond the Possibility of Dispute.

What we have hitherto said affects only the Judgment of the present Searchers. It is disagreeable for candid Minds to impeach or question the Integrity of others, but Justice in certain Cases demands it, and this is one of those Cases.—To say that Poverty necessarily leads to Dishonesty and Inhumanity would be cruel and unjust, but where Necessity impels, and Temptation invites, there Virtue undergoes a severe Trial. If such is the Case with respect to enormous Crimes, we cannot expect to be otherwise as to inferior Deviations from the Paths of Rectitude.

Let us for a Moment consider how this Reasoning will operate as to the Searchers. They are indigent; they take upon the Office for the Sake of Benefit; the Rich as well,



well, and as often, in Proportion to their Numbers, as the Poor, die. The Friends of the former have large Fees to present. If they wish to preserve the Deceased from Examination, the Hand of Poverty is open to receive the offered Gift, and the Heart is disposed to comply with the desired Concealment.—This is a Circumstance truly alarming, for those who thus may easily be concealed have Fortunes that may tempt the Murderer to his dreadful Purpose. Witness the Case of a late unfortunate young Baronet ! *Cum multis aliis.*

Thus fares it with the Wealthy. How with the Indigent ? Their Friends have *no Bribes* to bestow. Here then is no Motive to impel the Searchers to discharge their Duty, the Poor therefore must frequently be consigned to the Grave by Violence unknown and unsuspected.

Another



Another Consideration is worthy Regard, It is notorious that, within the last six or seven Years, a Practice has been adopted which it seems continually increases, and if not put a Stop to, will render the Bills of Mortality of very little Use,

Private Burial Grounds *in different Parts of the City have been opened.* The Interments in these, which are never entered in the parochial Registers, and of Course find not their Way into the public Bills, have from the Smallness of the Burial Fees, been increasing during the Time now mentioned, with an astonishing Rapidity. In Mr. Howlett's "Examination of Dr. Price's Essay on the Population of England and Wales," Page 93, we find that the Dissenting and Methodist Burials alone, in the Year 1780, amounted to almost 6000; and I should not be at all surpris'd, if upon  
on



on Enquiry, it should appear that in 1782 they rose nearly to 10,000.

In the first Volume of Dr. FOTHERGILL's Works, by Dr. LETTSOM, under the Head of Observations on the Weather, &c. in June, 1751, is the following Remarks.

“ The Town in general has been and  
 “ continues very healthy, as appears from  
 “ the Weekly Bills, if their Testimony  
 “ may be the least relied upon. That these  
 “ Bills are not correct is not entirely the  
 “ Fault of the Company of Parish Clerks,  
 “ who it seems want Power to compel  
 “ those who ought to be under their Di-  
 “ rection to do their Duty. But wherever  
 “ the Omission is, 'tis Pity but it was rec-  
 “ tified, since nothing could contribute so  
 “ effectually to demonstrate the Influence  
 “ of the Seasons on Human Bodies, as a  
 “ just



“ just and regular Account of those Parti-  
 “ culars, which properly made a Part of  
 “ the Bill of Mortality.”—See p. 156  
 and 157.

But we shall quit Argument and proceed  
 to Facts, thereby proving incontrovertibly  
 the fallacious Nature of Bills of Mortality  
 as at present collected and reported.

In the General Bill of Mortality for the  
 last Year, it is stated that the BURIALS  
 are increased 2791, whereas a public Wri-  
 ter has shewn that the Fact is directly the  
 Reverse.

*The first Head in the List of Diseases is,*  
 “ ABORTIVE and Still - Born,” the  
 Number of which is set down - 566

Of this Class the Searchers could not  
 possibly obtain an accurate Account, though

it may be safely affirmed that triple the Number have gone to the Grave in this State.

*The next Article is,*

“AGED;” these are said to amount  
to - - - - - 1193

Before it is possible for the Reader to determine any thing with Propriety on the present Head, some Criterion should have been affixed to the Term; as many Persons by Intemperance bring on the Characteristics of Age at an early Period; while others by Abstemiousness ward off the natural Decay incident to Human Beings.—To have enabled the Public to judge, the respective Ages ought to have been recorded.

“AGUES,” are said to have carried off 5



Considering how numerous the Poor are, to whom principally and almost solely this Disease proves fatal, the Number stated evidently appears grossly inadequate and hardly sufficient for a single Parish. Few die of genuine Intermittents in the Country, though many are carried off by the Consequences when neglected or improperly treated, viz. Remittent and Continued Fevers, Schirrosities, Dropsy, &c. but these should be entered not under Agues, but the Disease which succeeded the Ague.

“ APOPLEXY and SUDDENLY,” are next mentioned at - - - - - 276

Whoever reflects on the Ravages made by Apoplexy after a Lord Mayor's Day, or a City Election, will readily acknowledge the whole Number might have been placed to that Article, including those only so cut off



off between Temple Bar and Whitechapel Church \*. The Term “*Suddenly*” is so extremely vague that it comprehends three Parts of the General Bill of Mortality.

“*ASTHMA* and *PHTHISICK*,” are represented at - - - - - 228

The first is a Disorder that is extremely frequent among all Classes of Mankind; and I am convinced from repeated Experience both among the Rich and Poor, but particularly the latter, that not Half the Number who die of Asthma are stated.—“*Phthisick*” should have been classed in the Catalogue of Consumptions.

“*BEDRIDDEN*,” are set down 39

The State now mentioned is generally a Concomitant of Old Age, Palsy, Rheu-

\* Habenda ratio valetudinis, utendum exercitationibus modicis; tantum cibi et potionis adhibendum, ut reficiantur vires, non opprimantur.—Cic. de Senectute.



matism, or some other long continued enfeebling Malady; and therefore should not be considered as a Disease in itself; but as a Consequence of other morbid Affections of the System.

“ BLEEDING and BLOODY FLUX,” are  
estimated at - - - - - 9

FIVE are placed to the Account of the *former*, and FOUR to that of the *latter*.— If by Bleeding is meant blood-letting, let the Surgeons of Hospitals and public Dispensaries tell how many fall Sacrifices to the unskilful Performance of that Operation; or if the Enumeration leads to profuse Hæmorrhages, the Addition of a hundred would hardly be sufficient. With Regard to the “ *Bloody Flux*,” fatal Experience proves that the Number of Lives lost by this Disorder, is far more extensive *monthly* than the Searchers have calculated *annually*.

“ BURSTEN

“BURSTEN and RUPTURE,” are  
 stated at - - - - - 13

Under this Head Judgment superior to  
 that of the Collectors and Reporters is  
 requisite, consequently they must be very  
 inaccurate, as a *Rupture* can scarcely prove  
 mortal unless in the incarcerated State.

“CANCER and CANKER,” stated  
 at - - - - - 62

The Term *Canker* has been sometimes  
 applied by the Vulgar to denote Excoria-  
 tion or slight Ulceration of the Tongue  
 and Mouth, but in the ordinary Bills of  
 Mortality is often erroneously confounded  
 with the *true Cancer*, as if they were syno-  
 nimous Terms ; whereas the former Com-  
 plaint is destitute of Danger, while the lat-  
 ter has hitherto baffled all the Efforts of  
 Art,



Art, notwithstanding the boasted Panaceas of modern Impostors \*.

“ CHICKEN POX,” is next presented as the Destruction of “ *Five*” of the Human Race.—The Searchers who set down so small a Number, have most probably augmented its Fatality, it being an eruptive Affection, generally destitute of Danger.

“ CHILD BED,” are mentioned as 140

Midwifery is at this Time so well understood and successfully practised by the Fa-

\* The Writer conceives at this Time there will be no Impropriety in giving his Readers the following Extract.  
 “ It is well known that experienced and able Surgeons  
 “ daily cure the worst Ulcers; and it is equally well known  
 “ that the humane and worthy Part of the Profession lament the many Impostors who are every Day starting up  
 “ to deceive the Public with their pretended Nostrums,  
 “ and which too often, by their corrosive Applications,  
 “ increase the Misery, and hasten the Death of the unhappy Sufferer.”——See P. 26, *An Examination of the Rev. John Wesley's Primitive Physic*, published by the AUTHOR.

culty,



culty, as not to admit of so cruel and unjust an Assertion. Under Childbed I presume they rank Flooding, Puerperal Fever, &c. and then the Number seems much short of the Truth.

“ CHOLIC, GRIPEs, and TWISTING of the GUTs,” are set down at the small Number of - - - - - 6

For the Sake of Humanity the Writer would have been happy if the Searchers Declaration had been a true one: but in such various Morbid Affections of the Intestines, there is too much Reason to think that a single Parish produces weekly more Instances of Mortality.

“ COLD,” is moderately stated at 18

Cold, *quatenus*, Cold is no Disease and never amounts to more than a remote Cause, *Ergo*, in this Place is highly absurd.



“ CONSUMPTION,” — — — 4861

That many of the Human Race are cut off by the Disease termed *Consumption* is a melancholy Truth, but by no Means in the Proportion alledged in those erroneous Accounts. Perhaps the real Number of those who those who die of the genuine Phthisis Pulmonaris, would not amount to a third Part of the Sum opposite to the Article of Consumptions. I have been present where the Reports of some of these Common Searchers have been produced, and know that Persons who have died of mere Old Age, have been reported consumptive. Children wasted by glandular Diseases, without the least Symptom of a Pulmonary Affection, have been placed in the same Catalogue, and others yet still more remote from a genuine Consumption, have been added to their List. The Enumeration therefore in my Opinion



nion is vastly enlarged, beyond what it ought to be, to the Reproach of our Country ; Foreigners imagining that this Disease is much more frequent and destructive amongst us than it is in reality.—Dr. Arbuthnot observes that, in his Time, *Consumptions* made up above one tenth Part of the Bills of Mortality in and about London.

“ CONVULSIONS,” are stated at 4333

Here we are sorry, for the Sake of our Country, to be obliged to give Credit to the annual Bill of Mortality. But surely it would be both politic and humane to appoint GENERAL RECEIVING HOUSES for suspended Animation, as recommended in the preceding Part of this Address; as thus judicious Means would be adopted for the Reanimation of the apparently Departed. The Author ventures to affirm that immediate and skilful Medical Efforts would be frequently found successful in the



Recovery of those whose Lives are seemingly extinguished by Convulsions.

“ COUGH and HOOPING COUGH,” we find rated at - - - - - 78

*Cough* is only to be considered as a Symptom of various Maladies, and by no Means a Distemper in itself.—In the incipient State of most Affections of the Breast it is a Symptom that is present, and is generally occasioned by a *thin saline Defluxion*, irritating the Membrane that lines the Trachea, so as to induce Spasm of the neighbouring Parts; and thus the Stimulus is dislodged and discharged. *Cough* is likewise attendant upon Inflammation of the Bronchiæ or Lungs, and may be produced by one or other of the general Causes of inflammatory Affections of the Thorax.

If the Catarrhus Cough should be neglected, or is repeatedly induced or augmented

mented by those Causes from which it usually originates, it may excite Inflammation, and Suppuration ; in the former no great Pulmonary Injury arises ; but the latter is generally productive of melancholy Consequences,

*Coughs* may either advance so far as to be productive of alarming Appearances ; or when removed by Medical Art, so much Relaxation of the Parts about the Breast may remain as to occasion frequent Returns and in the End prove fatal.

The Writer has ventured to observe thus much at this Time in order to convince his Readers that a Cough is a Symptom of Disease which should be early attended to and speedily cured. The Establishment of PUBLIC DISPENSARIES in this Metropolis affords the lower Class of Mankind the important Advantage of a speedy Recovery of



Health in many trying Calamities; and vast Numbers of the Indigent apply, particularly for the Removal of Coughs and other Pulmonary Affections; and fortunately thereby escape premature Death.—This new Species of Charity introduced amongst us within these 20 Years is an Honour to the 18th Century, as it is productive of saving the Lives of many Thousands of the People annually.

“ DIABETES,” cuts off it is said I

The Reporters might as well have contented themselves with a Cypher; for it is not the Malady but its Consequences that induce Fatality. It is acknowledged to be by no Means a frequent Disease.—GALEN in his whole Course of Practice saw but one Instance.—There is Reason to believe that this troublesome Disorder has increased in modern Times since the Abuse of Tea and Spirituous Liquors has been so frequent.

“ DROPSY,”



“ DROPSY,” is mentioned as putting an  
End to the Existence of - - - 962

This is a Distemper that generally evinces itself so well both before and after Death as to be rarely mistaken, even by the Searchers ; their Wisdom cannot lead them to be acquainted with two Kinds of Dropsy, viz. the *Hydrops Pectoris* and *Hydrocephalus internus* ; so that their Fatality is ascribed to other Causes, and indeed if Error only occurred in such Cases, there would have been no Occasion for the present Reflections.

“ EVIL,” or more properly SCRO-  
PHULA, - - - - - 15

An Affection of the System which is unfortunately too prevalent, is only stated at a very small Number, nor can it be expected otherwise, as the present ignorant  
Reporters



Reporters can have no Ideas concerning purulent Absorption and universal Irritation, which generally close the Scene of Life in such unfortunate Persons.

“ FEVER, MALIGNANT FEVER, SCARLET FEVER, SPOTTED FEVER and PURPLES,” are calculated to the Amount of - - - - - 2552

The Female Examiners have again shewn their Inattention; they seem indeed to have devoted much Labour to the Distinctions of Fevers, and therefore have divided and subdivided this acute Disease.—It gives Pain to the Writer to observe that the Number cut off by pretended Remedies, by injudicious Treatment, and by the Violence of the Distemper, are infinitely superior to that stated.—*The AUTHOR'S Sentiments on Fevers may be perused in his Account of the late Dr. GOLDSMITH'S Illness, so far as relates*

4

*lates*

*lates to the Exhibition of Dr. James's Pow-  
ders; and also in his Examination of the  
Rev. JOHN WESLEY's Primitive Physic;  
which is interspersed with Medical Re-  
marks and Practical Observations.*

“ FISTULA,” is mentioned as the De-  
struction of - - - - - 2

The Number is extremely small, but it  
is well known to the Faculty that this  
painful Disorder generally terminates in a  
hectic State of the System, and therefore  
many of the consumptive Cases originated  
from this Cause.

“ FLUX,” is set down as cutting off 3

The Inaccuracy of the Searchers, &c. to  
an important Subject is astonishing; but it  
is more so that the General Bills of Morta-  
lity



lity pays annually at least a Visit to the Houses of PRINCES, MINISTERS, and LEGISLATORS, and yet no Reformation brought about in an Age truly philosophic, and in which it can boast of the most valuable and important Discoveries.

VIRTUE is again predominant; for the "FRENCH Pox," we are told has killed last Year only - - - - - 58

It is the Wish of the Writer that the Consequence of Vice proved as little destructive as is represented; but the many wretched Beings constantly received into Hospitals make him fear that its Havock is much greater\*.

"GOUT,"

\* To shew how little Security the Searchers afford against the Concealment of Murder, and how shamefully they neglect their Duty, the following melancholy Facts are stated. A young Woman, whose Parents reside a few Miles



“GOUT,” we are informed destroys 52

Who is the Public to believe, the  
Searchers or Nostrum-Mongers? Con-  
ceiving

Miles from the Metropolis, cultivated an Affection for a young Man who offered her Marriage. Being under Age her Parents opposed and prevented the Union. Love overcame Prudence and she fled to the Arms of her Admirer. Possessed of her Virgin Charms, and cloyed with Enjoyment, he changed his Intentions and turned Deserter. Her Parents were inexorable, and nothing presented itself for Subsistence, but Prostitution. To that most wretched Mode of living she applied. Distress and Disease followed as necessary Consequences. The latter soon made horrible Advances. She was taken by the Parish Officers from the Street in a most melancholy Situation; they sent her to Prison, with a View of having her conveyed to her native Place. Every Kindness and Assistance was afforded, but all in vain; she was incapable of being removed, and was therefore taken to St. Dunstan's Workhouse; here she languished in a most dreadful State; clean Linen drew away her Flesh; her Shrieks at every friendly Touch tortured the Ear; her Knee Pans, the Calves of her Legs, the Soles of her Feet, her Fingers and Toes dropt off, and her other Joints were attached together merely by Sinews and Ligaments; near one Quarter of her wretched Carcase was buried before she died. When the happy Moment of Dissolu-  
lution



ceiving them to be equally well skilled in the Distemper; it is not in our Power to decide when *such Doctors* disagree.—The infallible Remedies of the one, and the Death Warrant of the other have similar Authority.

lution arrived, the Searchers attended for their Fees, and reported that the Body was whole. They must have forfeited their Duty either by misrepresenting her true State, or by neglecting to examine it; as to be guilty of Falsehood is more criminal than to be neglectful. Charity bids us attribute their Error to the latter.

It is necessary to remark, that this affecting Narrative would not have been presented to wound the Feelings of the Reader, if the Writer had not flattered himself that it might be productive of beneficial Consequences. It was inserted to prove that Bodies in the most injured State may be consigned to the Grave without an Examination on the Part of the Searchers. The Facts are authenticated by the Parish Officers, the Case is striking, and the Author trusts that its singularity will attract the Notice, and turn the Thoughts of some Persons in Authority to the Removal of an Evil of so dangerous and alarming a Tendency.



“ GRAVEL, STONE, and STRANGURY,”  
are set down at - - - - - 42

The *Stone* perhaps in a Year may be productive of the fatal Termination here mentioned ; but the excruciating Pain attending on *Gravel* and *Strangury* obliges the *Affluent* to apply early in such Disorders for judicious Advice, while the *Poor* are necessitated to obtain Relief through the Skill and Humanity of the Physicians appointed to Hospitals and Public Dispensaries.

“ GRIEF,” that fell Enemy of Human Nature, has the last Year only killed 3

It would be pleasing to the Writer if Mortality from this Cause was at the low Ebb reported ; but if in the Article of Grief, *Suicides*, and those who go sorrowing to the Grave are to be enumerated, it is an unfortunate Truth that as many



Thousands may be added. Even *Excessive Joy*, in certain Temperaments, has in all Probability been fatal to 3 Persons in the Course of a Year, though it is not mentioned as a Cause of Animal Extinction in the General Bill.

The Reporters have next exhibited the Nicety of their distinguishing Faculties by mentioning that "HEAD ACH" have proved destructive only to - - - 2

Their usual Accuracy would not have been impeached by placing them to the Disease of which this Affection must be considered as a Symptom.

"HEAD-MOULD-SHOT, HORSE-SHOE-HEAD and WATER in the HEAD." 16

My ingenious Medical Friends perfectly coincide with me in Opinion that such Diseases as the first and second are totally unknown ; as to the third, in some Cases



it is so self-evident that the Calculation may be tolerably accurate. In other Cases of the *Hydrocephalus internus*, or *Water in the Ventricles of the Brain*, it is so very obscure in its Nature as to be mistaken for other Maladies; and there is no Evidence of it after Death without opening the Brain.

“ JAUNDICE,” - - - - - 67

If the various Causes of Bilious Disorders, with their dismal Consequences, were accurately stated, Men of Judgment will agree that the fatal Number should have been considerably augmented.

“ LETHARGY,” is stated at - - 7

Apoplexy and Palsy are generally the Diseases that kill and not Lethargy; therefore, though *seven* Persons only are mentioned to have died within the last Year of this morbid Affection, it is not the Fact,

as



as the Paralytic or Apoplectic State are the fatal Terminations of Lethargy.

“ LIVER-GROWN,” is put down at 2

The good Women in their Report meant Enlargement or Schirrosity of the Liver.

“ LUNATICK,” are mentioned at 56

If the Opinions of the ingenious Physicians who attend Bedlam and St. Luke's, were asked, there is hardly a Doubt but they would add the Searchers to the Catalogue, for making an Assertion so derogatory to their Honour and successful Practice.

“ MEASLES,” are rated at - - 176

The Number destroyed, and in all Probability the greater Part *Children*, must give Concern to every Man of Philanthropy.—The ingenious and learned Dr.

HOME

HOMER of Edinburgh introduced *Inoculation* for the Measles and practised it successfully 20 Years ago; it is to be lamented that so little Attention has been paid to so valuable an Improvement of the healing Art; for if it had been generally prosecuted there is hardly a Doubt but the Measles in the List of Mortality would have appeared a Blank.

“MORTIFICATION,” is calculated  
at - - - - - 199

Why not add one more and make the even Hundred? The Number would not have been over-rated, as Mortification is well known to be the Consequence and fatal Termination of many melancholy Accidents as well as various Distempers.

“PALSY,” - - - - - 73

As Apoplexy genenerally degenerates into Palsy, it is not in the Power of the  
Searchers



Searchers to determine precisely which is the Cause of Animal Diffolution.

“ PLEURISY and QUINSEY,” we are told, annually carry off only 24; the former 17, the latter 7.

This Assertion must be erroneous, and in Truth the small Number stated might have been with tolerable Propriety added to the Article of Inflammation.—Although the Calculation is under the Mark, it serves in some Degree to shew how very seldom Pleurifies, Quinseys, or genuine inflammatory Fevers occur in modern Times.

“ RHEUMATISM,” is set down at 7

Mortality to be equal in Quinsey and Rheumatism in a whole Year is an extreme Absurdity in the Reporters.—If Readers of the Account are to understand *Rheumatic Fever*, the Calculation is by no Means adequate



equate to its Fatality. On the other Hand, *Chronic Rheumatism* is a Malady that is tedious and painful, but rarely cuts off Mankind, unless by Metastasis to the vital Organs.

“ RICKETS,” - - - - - I

This is a State of Body peculiar to young Children and originates from bad nursing; it gives the Writer Pain to declare that a thousand Deaths from this Cause would have been much nearer the Truth than a single Instance.

“ STOPPAGE IN THE STOMACH,” 9

Obstructions in the Bowels is a frequent and alarming Complaint; but Stoppage in the Stomach has not perhaps been heard of by the Faculty since Dr. *Dover's* Quicksilver Days.



“ SWELLING,” kills we are informed 1

The Public are to find out whether the mortal Tumour is the Consequence of Rheumatism, Gout or Dropsy.

“ TEETH,” are rated at - - 496

This Kind of Death is peculiar to Infants, and it is not a little probable that other Causes of Mortality in young Children are often erroneously ascribed to Teething.

“ THRUSH,” is charged with killing 82

This Affection being a Consequence of Fevers and other Maladies, should have been placed to their Account.

“ VOMITING and LOOSENESS,” are  
 set down at - - - - - 3

The small Number of three should undoubtedly have been classed with Cholick, Gripes, Twisting of the Guts, or Flux. If the Searchers possessed sufficient Wisdom, it should have induced them to set down as many Thousands.

“ WORMS,” destroy only - - 12

But there is great Reason to think that these Insects are far more successful in their Prey upon Children. The infant Race should therefore be vigorously assisted by their Attendants against so powerful an Enemy to their Existence.



“ SCURVY,” has cut off - - - 5

The Term being extremely vague, its Fatality is not much exaggerated, this Article will pass without farther Notice,

“ SMALL POX,” we are told has proved destructive to - - - 636

Had the Dispensary for General Inoculation received the same public Countenance as other benevolent Institutions; the Writer is certain that 630 would have been subtracted from this fatal Catalogue,

“ SORE THROAT,” is stated only at 5

The very small Number recorded might have been ranked among Fevers, or under the Head of Quinsy. It is a Matter of Surprise that the Putrid Sore Throat has not made an Article of considerable Fatality;



lity ; but the most evident Things to others,  
are not to be taken Notice of by modern  
Searchers.

“ SORES and ULCERS,” are set down  
at - - - - - 10

The Assistance which the Affluent can  
always procure under such Circumstances,  
and the Indigent have provided for them in  
Dispensaries and Hospitals, renders the  
Number stated rather improbable.

*The Remainder of the incongruous Cata-  
logue is devoted to the Numbers that have  
been destroyed by Imprudencies, occasional Ac-  
cidents and sudden Death.*

THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THIS  
ACCOUNT, IS,

“ BIT BY A MAD DOG,” or rather  
Canine Madness, - - - - - I

For the Purpose of making The COURSE  
of LECTURES ON ANIMATION generally  
useful,



useful, I studied to discover whatever in the most distant Degree might throw Light upon the Subject: among a Variety of other Matter the General Bill of Mortality engaged my Attention. I have observed that for these twenty Years past, there has seldom been more than 1, 2, or 3 inserted, as carried off by that dreadful Calamity called the Hydrophobia. Indeed the Venders of Prophylactics would make the World believe that their Success in this Way is very great, though perhaps very few of the Cases would have terminated in Canine Madness, had they been left to Nature without any boasted Preventative.

“BROKEN LIMBS, BRUISED, CHOAKED, FRIGHTED, STARVED,” altogether we are told, make up no more than a Blank.

Let those who chuse to abandon Reason and melancholy Facts believe the Assertion, for none but such will give it Credit.

“ BURNT and SCALDED,” are rated  
at - - - - - 28

This Catalogue, shocking as it is in Point of Number and Circumstances, is in all Probability too much contracted.

“ DROWNED PERSONS,” are menti-  
oned as - - - - - 125

Public Benevolence having enabled the HUMANE SOCIETY to give such liberal Rewards for the Recovery of the Drowned, and the Preservation of Human Life from such Accidents, this Account must therefore be greatly exaggerated, and as void of Truth as many other Parts of the Catalogue.

“ Ex-



“ EXCESSIVE DRINKING,” has killed  
we are informed only - - - - 4

It has been just remarked that with regard to the Drowned the Account must be very fallacious, and there is hardly a Doubt but that every Week Spirituous Liquors bring a greater Number to the Grave, than is mentioned in the annual Report\*.

\* There are too many Instances of this Practice to admit of so small a Calculation. It prevails in a most alarming Degree and gives Birth to a Variety of most painful Diseases.---Peace is now restored to this Island, and domestic Concerns should employ the Attention of Government.---None can possibly be more important than those which have a Tendency to preserve the Health and Lives of the People. For this Purpose the Number of retail Gin Shops and Public Houses should be diminished.---The too frequent Use of Spirituous Liquors heightens the Misery and shortens the Existence of Thousands of the Human Race. The Retrenchment of them would tend to the Prevention of Murder and Rapine, would decrease the Number of Prisoners in our Jails, and render the Inhabitants of England once more famous for their Longevity.



“ EXECUTED,” - - - - - II

Three Times the Number would have approached somewhat nearer the Truth.—What must the reflecting Part of Mankind think of Reporters so devoid of Information on Circumstances of such public Notoriety!—More than this Number are often executed at a single Session of the Old Bailey by the Laws of their Country; not to mention a numerous Class of *Suicides* who fall by their own Hands, and who are for Reasons mentioned in the Introduction omitted by the Searchers.

“ FOUND DEAD,” only the small Number of - - - - - 4

It were to be wished that the Account was the whole Truth, but the Watchmen in the City of London, &c. can best inform the Reporters another Year of the

M

many



many Instances of those who perish through extreme Poverty during the inclement Season.—If GENERAL RECEIVING HOUSES upon the Plan recommended were established, many of the apparently dead from intense Cold, the free and imprudent Use of Spirituous Liquors, the suffocated, &c. &c. would be recalled to Life, as then it would be in the Power of the Faculty to apply *instantaneously* the most judicious and skilful Efforts.

“ KILLED BY FALLS AND SEVERAL  
OTHER ACCIDENTS,” - - - 67

It would give infinite Satisfaction to the Writer, as he regards the labouring Poor, if this Account were accurately stated; but there is too much Reason to think that a much greater Number lose their Lives in their daily Occupations,

“ KILLED THEMSELVES,” - - 25

These with the “ *Executed, Poisoned, and Excessive Drinkers,*” make the small Number of 42.—It must be allowed to be a horrid Catalogue even if the Number mentioned were the Truth; but when the Circumstances of *Premature Death* are thus classed, it is to be feared that 442 would have been nearer the distressing Fact. It may be proper to hint on the present Occasion, that the Searchers take an official Oath to make a true Declaration; but in a Variety of other Instances the Oaths of Office are as little regarded as by the Reporters of the Dead List.

“ MURDERED,” - - - - 4

Without including those that have fallen as Duellists, we fear this Article is underrated, and that our Reporters are not total



Strangers to Hush-Money on certain melancholy Occasions.

It is not only painful to reflect that the Number of Persons murdered far exceeds this Calculation, but that the Commission of this most horrid and alarming Crime, has of late Years considerably increased. The Writer is well informed, that the Number of these dreadful Events which have occurred within these five Years past is as six to one of those that took Place in the ten preceding them. A terrible Consideration for the Man who is awed by Religion, affected by Humanity, or sensible of the Terrors of Cruelty !

“ OVERLAID,” the very small Number  
of - - - - - 2

It gives the Writer great Concern to declare it as his Opinion, that many Hundreds

dreds of young Children are sacrificed annually to Carelessness and Inattention.

“ SHOT,” - - - - - 1

Accidents neither private, military nor naval can be included under this Head ; if they could, it would be glad Tidings to the feeling Mind.

“ SUFFOCATED,” are only set down  
at - - - - - 9

If the various Kinds of Death in Consequence of Suffocation are to be understood by the Reader, the Number is greatly under the Mark ; if only those who are generally termed suffocated, it is too many ; as by immediate, judicious Medical Aid, the greater Part might have been restored to public Utility.



## C O N C L U S I O N.

Such are the Errors of the modern Bills of Mortality. Is it possible for the Calculator, Philosopher, Physician, or the Public to be better informed, while the Searchers are commonly two as poor and ignorant Persons as the Parish affords? These are to see all dead Bodies, and report to the Company of Parish Clerks of what Disease they died; if the Body is emaciated, which may happen even in Fevers, 'tis enough for them to place it to the Article of Consumptions, though the Death of the Party was perhaps owing to a Malady specifically different; and thus an Account of Mortality is framed in the highest Degree erroneous.

Various are the Advantages that would accrue from a correct List of Births and Burials, accompanied with an accurate Account of the Diseases that proved fatal.



MEDICALLY, they would ascertain the Increase or Decrease of various Maladies incident to Humanity.—The Effects of different Climates, Seasons, and Situations on the human Frame would be accurately known,—Such Bills of Mortality would point out those Employments and Occupations which caused the Premature Death of Individuals : and likewise, those that were followed without any bad Consequences to the Constitution would be perfectly ascertained,

A Variety of other beneficial and curious Circumstances, interesting to the Medical Art, and the Safety and Happiness of Mankind, would inevitably arise from the Catalogue of Deaths being conducted on an unexceptionable and well-digested Plan.

POLITICALLY, they would point out the real State of Population, and most materially



terially assist those who calculate the Value of Annuities and Reversions.

MORALLY, the Progress of Virtue and Vice, by the State of Luxury and Intemperance, would be clearly ascertained.

The Modes to obtain such important public Advantages are as follow—Let Tables of Christenings, Marriages, Births, and Burials, be most faithfully kept, including the Still-born and Unbaptized.—Let the Ages of the Dead *under five* be specified by single Years, those *above*, by Periods of five or ten Years.—In the List of Diseases should be put down not only those who die, but how many died of each Disorder, at what Age and Period of the Year.

These are the Heads of a Plan sanctioned by high Medical Authority.



In the second Volume of the Works of the late justly admired Dr. FOTHERGILL, who was *Dulce medicorum decus*, published by the ingenious and learned Dr. LETT-SOM, at Page 109, you will meet with the following Observations.

“ In order to render that Part of this  
 “ Account which related to Diseases more  
 “ advantageous, some Physicians met to-  
 “ gether, and attentively considered the  
 “ List of Distempers, rejected all synoni-  
 “ mous and obsolete Terms, and proposed  
 “ to give such an Explanation of those  
 “ that were retained as might enable those  
 “ whose Duty it might become to make  
 “ Report, to do it with more Precision  
 “ than it has been done hitherto.

“ The Affair was brought into Parlia-  
 “ ment, and the Bill was ordered to be  
 “ printed and seemed to be in a Way to



“ pass very favourably. Unfortunately  
 “ however the Gentleman\* who undertook  
 “ the Conduct of this Affair in the House  
 “ of Commons insisted on a Clause being  
 “ inserted in the Bill which totally over-  
 “ threw the Design, and was the princi-  
 “ pal Cause of its being rejected by a great  
 “ Majority.

“ The Clause was, “ for numbering  
 “ the People of both Sexes and all Ages,  
 “ before the Act took Place.” Those who  
 “ were not the Friends of Administration  
 “ at that Time laid hold of this Clause,  
 “ and nothing but the *Sin of David* was  
 “ heard of, till the Bill was laid aside.”

Dr. FOTHERGILL was not single in his  
 Opinion, for a similar Scheme was earnestly  
 recommended about the same Time by Dr.

\* The late THOMAS POTTER, Esq;

PERCIVAL of Manchester; Dr. HAYGARTH, of Chester; and has been since adopted by Dr. PULTNEY, of Blandford; Dr. WHITE, of York; and Dr. ANTHONY FOTHERGILL, of London.—It was also approved of by the learned Dr. PRICE, Mr. HOWLETT and others; all Physicians and Gentlemen reputed for their Skill, Integrity and Humanity.

Can we then hesitate a Moment to adopt a Plan approved by Wisdom, suggested by Policy, and dictated by Philanthropy?



*\* \* The Writer of the preceding Address is happy to find the beneficial Tendency of his Design obvious to Dr. LETTSOM, whose Ability and Judgment render his Opinion a Recommendation of whatever it supports, and in whose Friendship and Approbation the Author esteems himself highly honoured.*

“ I consider myself, with many others, indebted to Dr. HAWES, for his very useful Enquiries on Animation. I am happy to observe, novel as the Subject is, and difficult to familiarize to the Public, that his Ardour in endeavouring to resuscitate is not abated. One principal Source of successful Recovery in sudden and apparent Death, is the early Application of the Means. — To render, therefore, these Means familiar to People in general, and to establish Places of immediate Reception for the unfortunate Victims, seems peculiarly calculated to ensure Success, where Success can be the Result of Care and medical Art.

J. C. LETTSOM.”

Sambrook House, May 29, 1782.

To Dr. Hawes.

*The Author would also be wanting in Gratitude to Dr. FOTHERGILL, were he to omit acknowledging the high Sense he has of the Honour and Favour conferred upon him, by the Communication of his ingenious Sentiments on so interesting an Enquiry as Animation.*