

**Extracts from the reports of the Asylum ... upon the medical principles / and under the immediate superintendence of Mr. Charles Whitlaw, 14, Finsbury Place, South.**

**Contributors**

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# EXTRACTS

15

FROM THE

## REPORTS OF THE ASYLUM

FOR THE CURE OF

### Scrofula & Glandular Diseases,

UPON THE MEDICAL PRINCIPLES, AND UNDER THE IMMEDIATE

SUPERINTENDENCE OF

MR. CHARLES WHITLAW,

14, *FINSBURY PLACE, SOUTH.*

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ESTABLISHED FEBRUARY 28<sup>th</sup>, 1822.

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THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 1900

AND THE FIRST HALF OF 1901

PRESENTED TO THE PARLIAMENT

BY THE MINISTER OF THE CREST

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

ON 11th JANUARY 1901

BY MR. J. H. BURNHAM

MINISTER OF THE CREST

AND MR. J. H. BURNHAM

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AND MR. J. H. BURNHAM

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE following pages contain a brief extract from the Reports of a Committee, who have devoted a considerable portion of their time and attention to the remedies which Mr. Whitlaw has introduced into this country, for the CURE OF SCROFULA AND GLANDULAR DISEASES. For nearly five years they have witnessed an uninterrupted course of success in the use of those remedies, which will clearly appear from the documents themselves.

Mr. Whitlaw's letter, addressed to His Royal Highness the DUKE OF YORK, the Patron of the Institution, will be read by every philanthropist with deep interest. His application of the VAPOUR BATH to a numerous catalogue of diseases which afflict the human race, and especially his success in the United States of America, will be viewed with anxiety by every thinking man. The question naturally arises,—if a new discovery has been so extensively practised, and with uninterrupted success on the other side of the Atlantic, how does it happen that it has made very slow and inconsiderable progress in the metropolis of Great Britain? Can the



difference of climate impede its progress? Have its pretensions to assist in the removal of disease been proved fallacious? The former objection seems scarcely deserving of a moment's consideration; and all the proofs which have yet been offered, have ended in convincing the patients that the vapour bath, under proper treatment and regimen, is calculated to produce the most salutary effects in the human constitution.

Taking a comparative view of the success which has attended the use of the bath, as detailed in the American Reports to which the reader is referred, with the observations made in this country by those friends of Mr. Whitlaw who have had opportunity of witnessing his practice, or have themselves experienced the benefit of his system, the success is alike in both cases: and if a smaller number of patients have here experienced its benefits, the deficiency is not in the system itself, but in some counter-acting influence, operating in the shape of prejudice, against a new discovery. Those who are qualified by an attentive examination of its effects, are fully convinced that it is calculated to become one of the greatest blessings to mankind,—that it has fully realized, nay, very greatly exceeded, every expectation which has been held out,—and that the whole system may be considered as a safe, rational, and most efficacious way to the recovery of health, in a great variety of disorders,—in particular those which affect the organs of digestion, cutaneous diseases, rheumatism or gout.



The friends of Mr. Whitlaw, however sanguine they may be supposed in favour of a system to which they have devoted a large portion of their time and attention, and of the extraordinary efficacy and value of which they have had constant proofs before their own eyes, have not been, by any means, indifferent to such objections as have been made to it. But they must be allowed to state, that those objections, as far as they are known to them, have been made without due investigation, and are therefore by no means entitled, from whatever quarter they arise, to the weight they might otherwise claim. The Committee having witnessed the excellent effects of Mr. Whitlaw's remedies in many hundred cases, are confirmed by a body of facts which appear undeniable.

If the great proportion of cures effected in the Asylum be considered, and that in every instance, where hope could be fairly entertained, the patients have recovered and are now in health, pursuing their usual avocations; and that but for the relief thus afforded they would have proved a burden to society, while they themselves dragged on a miserable existence,—surely to stretch out the arm of benevolence, for their relief, is an act of the purest philanthropy, a duty absolutely imperative on their more fortunate and favoured fellow beings. The Committee, therefore, earnestly entreat the support of those who are blessed with the power, and also a heart to compassionate the sufferings of others. Funds are wanted to extend the blessing of reno-



vated health, to a number of persons who are constantly applying for relief. A donation of 20*l.* will constitute the donor a governor for life, and entitle him to an immediate presentation of a patient : and in rotation with other subscribers future opportunities of presenting will occur. Annual subscribers of one guinea are members, and present in rotation and in the order of their subscription.

The Committee, however, are at present prevented from extending the benefits of the Institution, by the want of funds, being nearly 300*l.* in debt.

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Subscriptions and Donations will be received by Messrs. COUTTS and Co., Strand ; Sir JOHN LUBBOCK, Bart., and Co., Mansion House Street ; Messrs. PRAEDS, MACKWORTH and Co., Fleet Street ; by Mr. WHITLAW, 14, Finsbury Place, South ; by Dr. PIDDUCK, 87, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury ; by each Member of the Committee, and by the Collector, JOHN WRIGHT, 40, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury.



TO THE  
COMMITTEE

OF THE

*Asylum for the Cure of Scrofula and Glandular Diseases.*

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GENTLEMEN,

Upwards of a year has elapsed since my return from North America, and I have great satisfaction in stating to you, who have so long paid attention to my practice both in town and at Bayswater, and also to the public at large, that every year's experience has most clearly confirmed the efficacy of the remedies which I have presented to public attention for upwards of eight years. Having greatly enriched my collection of vegetable remedies, and derived much aid from the practical observations of a number of medical gentlemen in the United States, which were not only most liberally communicated to me during my tour through that country in 1825, but are still regularly sent for my information.

Thus my system may be considered as extending throughout the United States of America as well as in this country ; and from the most attentive observation I feel competent to affirm, that four-



fifths of the long catalogue of diseases may be more effectually and speedily cured without the use of minerals, or the application of any vegetable poison. With respect to the use of narcotics, acrid or corrosive vegetable poisons, which have been employed in expectation of alleviation or cure, even when given in small doses and continued for a length of time, I am convinced, that their poisonous qualities become incorporated with the system, and often produce a worse disorder than that which they were intended to remove. On this ground alone I consider the safety of my remedies to be of primary importance.

The success of my improvements in the construction of my Patent Vapour Baths, and the medication which I have been enabled to adopt, has been such as to afford daily evidence of their superior efficacy. By these means I have been successful in many cases of acute and chronic inflammation in their worst form, without any ingredient of a poisonous or deleterious nature, and in a short time.

I may further request your attention to the success which has attended my remedies in the cases of children at the breast, affected with glandular swellings and cutaneous eruptions from their birth. These medicines have produced the most important effects on the constitution of the mother, and thereby improved the milk both in quantity and quality, whereby their children have, through the use of the Vapour Bath, and the improved constitution of



the mother, been completely cured. This effect I consider of great importance, and well deserving public attention.

To you, Gentlemen, I again return my most grateful acknowledgments for your unwearied zeal, and the valuable time you have devoted to the cause of suffering humanity.

And I remain,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient Servant,

CHARLES WHITLAW.

*No. 14, Finsbury Place, South ;*

*Dec. 26, 1826.*

P. S. My observations on the aphorisms of Linnæus, with my treatment of cases of scrofula, glandular swellings and cutaneous eruptions, are in progress, and I hope will be published early in the spring.

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country is a very fertile one, and well adapted  
for the raising of grain.

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for the raising of grain.

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for the raising of grain.



# ASYLUM

FOR THE CURE OF

## SCROFULA AND GLANDULAR DISEASES.

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**THIS** Institution owes its origin to the introduction of Vegetable Remedies from America, by Mr. Charles Whitlaw; whose anxiety to make them extensively useful to the British public has daily been increased by the numerous afflicted objects who apply to him for relief. These Remedies have hitherto been entirely dependent on the exertions of a few individuals for their countenance and support. In offering them as objects of general interest and public notice, the Committee have felt it a duty, in compliance with the wishes of many benevolent persons, to procure some account of Mr. Whitlaw, and of his Botanical researches, to accompany the Rules and Regulations of the Asylum. They have, in consequence, printed the following letter, as affording an interesting sketch of his past life.

*A Letter addressed to the Gentlemen of the Committee, who have undertaken to superintend the Administration of the American Vegetable Remedies, introduced by Mr. Charles Whitlaw, for the Cure of Scrofula and Cancerous Diseases.*

SIRS,

IN compliance with your desire I have drawn a brief sketch of those particular incidents in my life, which led to the discovery of the remedies, in the success of which you have taken so lively an interest.

Permit me to premise, that I was born of respectable parents, at Carnehaugh, in the parish of Yester, East Lothian; my father was employed in the management of a farm belonging to Colonel Carfrae, during that gentleman's absence



on service in the American war. When I was about thirteen years of age the following circumstance occurred, which, in a great measure, determined my future destination. The Rev. J. Innes, clergyman of the parish, had diligently studied Natural History and Physic, which enabled him to administer medicines to his congregation, prepared in part from herbs growing wild, and from others cultivated in his garden, as well as from a small dispensary established by government for the poor. His success in the treatment of disease was scarcely surpassed by that of the ablest medical practitioners; his letter, published by Sir John Sinclair in his statistical account of Scotland, corroborates this statement. My mother, whom I tenderly loved, being attacked by a severe disorder, a physician who attended was desirous of giving her calomel: to that, however, the clergyman objected, and desired me to accompany him home for some vegetable remedies which he intended to prepare for her. They happily effected her restoration, and I returned the next day to communicate the joyful tidings. The venerable pastor, well knowing the secret feelings of the human heart, took this favourable opportunity of impressing on my mind the bounty and goodness of that Providence which provides such efficient means for our good. He took me into his garden, and pointed out to me the great importance of the study of Natural History, and of Botany in particular; he explained to me the Linnæan system of classification, and in short gave me my first lesson in Botany. The impressive manner in which he recommended these pursuits to me will never be erased from my mind; and the more I have directed my attention to them, the greater has been my conviction of their importance to the welfare and happiness of mankind. I was now of an age to think of some employment, and my father designed me for an architect; but no persuasion could remove the deep impression made by the worthy clergyman's lecture. By his advice my father procured for me a situation under Hamilton, gardener to Mr. Newton, of Newton Hall. After remaining under his tuition for three years, I had an opportunity of acquiring a more perfect knowledge of landscape gardening, when the Marquis of Tweeddale, by whom I was afterwards employed, was laying out his grounds at Yester House. When they were finished I went to Edinburgh, for the purpose of acquiring a more intimate acquaintance with Botanical science, where I was introduced to the curator of the Botanic Garden, who shewed me a collection of plants recently imported from America, and pointed out to me the wide field for investigation in that



country, and the great variety as well as utility of the plants it produced. To this circumstance may be attributed the ardent desire which I entertained to visit those shores. I should, doubtless, have succeeded in the profession of a landscape gardener, but the misfortunes of my family determined me in the year 1796, when about twenty years of age, to seek my fortune in America; and setting off on foot for Greenock, I found on my applying for a passage a number of passengers who could not make up their passage money; I lent them all the money I could spare, leaving myself nearly penniless; I embarked from thence at the end of May and landed at New York on the second of July following. In stepping on shore I broke an old woman's oyster dish, for which I had to pay half a crown, the only remaining money I possessed. In this penniless situation Mr. Oswald, one of my fellow-passengers, relieved my immediate wants, and afterwards kindly took me home with him. In a few days I was employed by Colonel Burr in laying out his pleasure grounds. Just before completing this undertaking, I went on an excursion a few miles up the country; the weather being excessively hot, I ate a quantity of sour cherries and currants, which induced a violent inflammation in the stomach and bowels, followed by the bloody flux. After the usual means had been tried by two medical gentlemen of eminence, without any beneficial effects resulting, I was cured of this dreadful disorder by an old Dutch lady, who administered the following remedies. She placed a coil of rusty iron hoop over a vessel containing some brandy; upon the hoop she laid a quantity of lump sugar, and then set fire to the brandy. As the brandy burned the sugar melted, and passing over the hoop it became mixed with the rust of the iron, which was evident from the change of colour it underwent. Of this she gave me a wine glassful night and morning. Its effects were styptic; it stopped the hæmorrhage of blood from the stomach and bowels, and instantly relieved the pain. She completed the cure by giving me a decoction of Mallows, and other mucilaginous plants, to sheath the coats of the stomach and bowels, which had been injured by the violence of the disease. After planning several country seats I was engaged by Mr. Gracie, of New York, to lay out his gardens and pleasure grounds, in a situation, which, for picturesque scenery, probably is unrivalled. From the increase of business as a landscape gardener, in all probability I should have realized a fortune, but my reputation for Botanical science obtained for me a commission from the French minister, to execute an order he had received from



Josephine Bonaparte, for sending a collection of American plants to France ; I also received commissions of the same kind on behalf of the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, and some British nurserymen. So powerful a temptation to engage in my favourite pursuit induced me to relinquish the lucrative employment of landscape gardening for the investigation of Physical Botany. It was during the last year of my residence at New York that I married Miss Adger, a young lady in every respect calculated to ensure my happiness. Her brother, residing at Winsborough, in the back settlement of South Carolina, 175 miles from Charlestown, gave us a pressing invitation to pay him a visit, wishing us to settle in that part of the country. In January, 1803, I set out with my wife for that quarter as affording, from report, an ample field for Botanical research. During my abode there I had an opportunity of seeing numerous tribes of Indians, in their way to the seat of government at Columbia; and my attention was first directed to their medical skill, and their accurate knowledge of the virtues of plants, by a cure performed by one of their doctors on a child of about eleven years old, afflicted with a leprous disorder in its severest form. He gave her a decoction, and applied to the surface lotions prepared from herbs. The next day he employed a vapour bath, constructed in the following singular manner, which I particularize as one of their best, for there are other methods in use among the North American Indians of forming vapour baths. He dug a hole about six feet long, three feet wide, and two feet deep; placed a post at each corner about six feet above ground, and stretched a blanket and tied it by the corners to each post about five feet above ground; upon the blanket the fresh leaves of Oak, Tulip-tree, and Rhododendron were strewed, among which the patient was laid, and covered with a bear's skin up to the chin: hoops were bent over at each end, united at top by a cross-bar, and covered with a blanket like the canopy of a bed, to keep in the vapour: heated stones were rolled into the hole, (which was immediately surrounded by blankets), and water was sprinkled upon them to produce the vapour, which rose up through the blanket and leaves and enveloped the patient; who was quickly in a profuse perspiration, the leaves acting almost as an universal blister over the body, drawing out the acrid humours without producing excoriation. After this process had been continued for some time, she was plunged into a neighbouring pool, which, at the temperature of 76°. partially checked the perspiration, and she was then wiped dry. The heat of the climate and the



juices of the plants used render this second process safe and pleasant. The construction and arrangement, as well as the mere existence of such an invention among savages, cannot fail to excite admiration and astonishment. From all the accounts which we have of barbarous nations in other parts of the world, ingenious as they are in the destruction of life and disposal of the dead, it is among these persecuted tribes alone, which wander over the vast continent of America, that ingenuity is elicited in preserving life from the ravages of disease ; an ingenuity which, one may say, has produced a greater effect than all the combined inquiries of the most highly cultivated philosophy have ever attained. Of all the different species of vapour baths which I have either seen or read of, in ancient or modern times, this mode of medicating the bath appeared the most active, and decidedly beneficial in the treatment of disease. Curious at the same time to ascertain if this Indian, who applied his remedies with such decision, had any knowledge of pathology, as well as that of plants and their effects, I asked him what occasioned the disease ? He replied, she had eaten too much pork and too much sour. Unfortunately, I was then too inattentive to what the Indian said, and, in consequence, was visited soon afterwards by the severest of afflictions.

Mrs. Whitlaw disliking the solitude of Winsborough, and her repugnance to the system of slavery tolerated in that part of the country, induced me, at her solicitation, to set out on our return to New York, in the summer of the same year, with the intent to resume my business of landscape gardening. The weather being excessively hot on our journey, we mixed an abundance of acid with the water to conceal its nauseous flavour, and quench our burning thirst. The injurious effects of the acid we experienced on our constitution, although at that time we ascribed them to the unhealthiness of the climate. Before our arrival at Charlestown I was attacked with the malignant and putrid fever ; and, unhappily, my wife also sickened of the disease. On reaching Charlestown the delirium with which I was affected rendered it necessary to keep us apart ; but, notwithstanding the violence of her disorder, to which she fell a victim in seven days, nothing could restrain her from coming to my apartment during my paroxysms of frenzy, when she discovered that I was quieted by her presence. After paying the last sad duties to her remains, I embarked for New York, where I spent two years sinking gradually under a slow fever. The physicians who attended me prescribed calomel, Peruvian bark, and acids in profuse quantity, endeavouring



at the same time to support my strength with wine and porter, until I fell into a confirmed dropsy, and lost all hopes of recovery. At length one of my friends, Mrs. Graham, as a forlorn hope, proposed to take me to the country house of a friend of hers, at Throgsneck, eighteen miles distant, to consult an Indian doctor. When the Indian first saw me and was asked if he knew the nature and cause of my disease, he answered, "he take too much sour, too much bitter, and too much mercury:" but he declared his confidence in curing me. His medicines at first affected me strangely, producing a degree of stupor which lasted all night, succeeded towards morning by a copious perspiration; the first moisture felt on my skin during fourteen months. The remedies he administered soon removed the dropsical symptoms. The anxious care and unceasing attention of my kind hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Hammond, and of Mrs. Ogden and Mrs. Graham, deserve my warmest gratitude; of the latter lady in particular; the history of whose misfortunes and domestic sufferings is already before the public.

During my convalescence, and on recovery from the state of torpor to which I was reduced by the disease, my mind was actively bent on discovering the Indian's remedies; he would tell me nothing, however, but that they were very good. The particular kinds of food which he allowed and which he forbade, engaged my attention; which on this occasion was first awakened to the importance of the study of aliments, as essential to the preservation of life and health, and to guard us from premature death and disease.

On returning to New York I was at a loss to what subject or pursuit to direct my attention. My friends urged me to have recourse to my former profession of landscape gardening, but not having strength sufficient for that employment, Mr. Williamson, to whom I made my circumstances known, advised me to take a sea-voyage to the West Indies in the winter season to recover my strength; and he not only relieved my immediate pecuniary wants, but generously offered me a shipment of potatoes, plants, shrubs, and seeds suitable for that market. The potatoes were packed in dry sand in barrels, a mode of packing for which I afterwards obtained the medal of the Society of Arts in London; and they arrived in the West Indies in such perfection, that they were sold for treble the price of European produce. At Jamaica, I was introduced to Dr. Brown, with whom I made many important experiments to prove the truth of certain conclusions, which I had drawn



from the observations of the Indians and from my own personal experience; that in hot climates, most disorders which are generally but often erroneously ascribed to Marsh-Miasmata, may be attributed to the use of acids, acescent articles of diet, spirituous and fermented liquors, pork, fat meats, bad potatoes, and water impregnated with decayed animal and vegetable substances, and muriatic salts; which by destroying the tone of the digestive organs, and obstructing perspiration, induce torpor and congestion in the liver, and, consequently, the yellow, malignant, putrid and other fevers. The truth of this opinion was fully verified by the success with which we administered powdered charcoal and alkalis in those diseases. Finding, however, that the artificial alkalis of the shops injured the coats of the alimentary canal, I afterwards substituted certain native alkaline vegetables, which, in the cure of febrile diseases, produced salutary effects unrivalled in that country. In a conversation with Dr. Brown we agreed in opinion that the system of blood-letting in fevers, carried to so great an extent as is frequently practised, was often followed by hypochondriasis, great debility, consumption, and death; and that, since we possessed remedies much safer and far more efficacious, the practice ought to be discontinued. The favourable result attending our experiments, induced me to institute a series of experiments, which I diligently pursued for sixteen years, to ascertain the physical properties of plants on the animal economy and the laws of chemical affinity. The kindness shown to me by Mr. Wiles, curator of the Botanic Garden in Jamaica, was very valuable; he supplied me with the bread-fruit tree and various other plants, roots and seeds, with which I traded to great advantage at Havannah, in the island of Cuba, where I arrived in the autumn of 1806. These plants of the bread-fruit tree were the first introduced into the island, and sold for sixty dollars each. I became acquainted with Dr. Holliday, (*through the introduction of the Port Admiral and the General of Marines,*) who by his diligence and scientific inquiries had arrived at the head of his profession. To him I communicated the experiments of Dr. Brown and myself at Kingston, respecting the administration of alkaline and antiseptic remedies in fevers. He readily consented to give them a trial, and they succeeded infinitely beyond his expectation. He gratefully acknowledged the value of my information, and procured for me the liberty of travelling through the Spanish colonies; and so favourably were his introductions received, that I literally passed over the



island free of expense. He also favoured me with an introduction to Count Peralta, a gentleman who had studied Botany with no other preceptor than the works of Linnæus for his guide, and had made himself a perfect master of the three kingdoms of nature—with him I made a complete tour of the island. Its situation in the bosom of the Gulph of Mexico, stretching from east to west, in the vicinity of Florida, Jamaica, St. Domingo and the Bahama islands, affording a resting-place to numerous flocks of migrating birds, which scatter the seeds from all the neighbouring countries, makes it probably one of the richest fields for Botanical research in the world; with a climate also favouring remarkable fertility of soil, it yields two or three crops of corn annually, and many other useful productions spring up spontaneously.

The parish priests, in consequence of circular letters we obtained from the Bishop of Cuba, every where received us with the most marked kindness and hospitality; and, in a remote quarter of the island, we were entertained by a venerable ecclesiastic with a kind of food to which we were unaccustomed. It was prepared by cutting the flesh from the bones, separating all the fat, and subjecting it to the action of a powerful screw-press, by which all the blood and ichorous juices were pressed out. The cake was then broken, a little salt, sugar, and spices were added (when it was intended to be preserved), and again subjected to the press, or it was immediately boiled into soups, &c. which were very excellent and nutritious. The diet of his parishioners generally consisted of a small quantity of animal food, prepared in this manner, with an abundance of vegetables, and particularly of the leguminous seeds, as beans, peas, &c. of which we saw a very great variety. The above-mentioned practice is conformable to the Mosaic law, "Ye shall eat no manner of fat of ox, of sheep, or of goat," and again, "ye shall eat no manner of blood." There was this remarkable difference between the meat in which the blood and ichorous juices were suffered to remain and that from which they were pressed out; the former in that hot climate became putrid in a few hours, but the latter might be kept for a length of time.

European Christians consider the observance of these divine commands as a ceremonial peculiarly prescribed to the Israelites of old, and not necessary to be observed under the Christian dispensation; but these catholics of Cuba by strictly observing them, not only avoid most of the diseases incidental to a hot climate, but even protract their lives



beyond the usual period of human existence, in full possession of all their mental and bodily faculties. We saw assembled at church on Sunday a numerous congregation, many of whom were reputed to be upwards of ninety years old. We returned to Havannah enriched with a variety of seeds, roots, and Botanical specimens, which, together with those collected in Jamaica, were shipped to New York, where they arrived in excellent preservation. Every inducement was held out to me to remain and superintend a Botanic garden, but having some important objects in view in the United States, and particularly the discovery of a substitute for hemp, I embarked for Charlestown in 1808. On arriving there I found my Botanical collection much increased by persons whom I had employed during my absence; with them I proceeded to New York, where the ship was wrecked, and a large quantity of rice which I had on board, with my Botanical collection, was nearly all spoiled by the salt water. The cold was so intense when we suffered shipwreck, that my clothes were frozen on my back; and my feet, by incautious exposure to sudden heat, were dreadfully frost-bitten and ulcerated. After recovering from the effects of this misfortune, I travelled into the northern part of the State of New York, among the Seneca Indians, collecting plants, &c., where I met with a Mohawk chief, attended, according to custom, by his doctor; and I witnessed some wonderful cures which the latter performed in cases of scrofula, cancer in its scirrhus or incipient stage, liver complaints, and other chronic diseases, by means of remedies which I ascertained by their sensible qualities of colour, taste and smell, resembled those administered to me by the Indian doctor at Throgsneck. I offered them a reward of six hundred dollars to communicate these secrets, and the mordants which they employ to set their scarlet dyes, which are incomparably the most brilliant I ever beheld. They seemed inclined to listen to my proposal, but by the advice of a friend I broke off the treaty, as he assured me that they would more readily part with life; for they have a superstition that, if they divulge their secrets, they shall be deprived of a seat in the great wigwam, in which the Great Spirit presides, around whom all the great doctors are to be assembled. Thus disappointed, I employed other means to attain my wishes, and succeeded through a German shoemaker, who had already discovered many of their simples: I was, however, still unsuccessful as to the dyes, but succeeded in procuring another valuable secret. A lady who had a cancer in the mouth went one



morning to the doctor's wigwam for her medicines, accompanied by the shoemaker ; as they approached, a woman ran out with a child screaming in her arms from the effects of a burn. While they were busily employed in commiserating the distressed child, and dipping it in a neighbouring pool to soothe the pain, the shoemaker observed the pan containing the herbs preparing for the cancer, and took the opportunity to conceal a handful of them in his pocket, which he immediately brought to me. There were three different herbs contained in the sample ; which gave me a tolerable idea of the proportions of each ; and I instantly formed a decoction which I compared with the Indian's remedies. Shortly afterwards I left the Genesee for New Caledonia, a Scotch settlement. Here an opportunity was afforded me to make full trial of my new discovery, in the case of a woman afflicted with a disorder said to be cancer. I have since been enabled to ascertain in my late tour through the United States, that the disorder in question was occasioned by administering mercury to persons who were subject to acidity or acrimony in their stomachs, which produces a disorder nearly as fatal as cancer. The fore part of her upper jaw, her uvula and palate were destroyed by the disease, which was making rapid progress towards her complete destruction. The operation of the medicine was at first powerfully sedative, and allayed the excruciating torments under which she suffered, so effectually, that whenever the pains returned, she had recourse to the medicine. The rapid progress she made toward recovery was truly astonishing, and she was finally cured. This case so established the character of the remedy, that its reputation soon brought around me many similar cases from the neighbouring country. In addition to the discovery of this important secret, my inquiries were rewarded with the knowledge of many other plants, whose medicinal virtues had been ascertained by the natives, and accidentally discovered by the white inhabitants residing near their settlements. I made a very extensive collection of the plants, and transplanted them into a spot of ground prepared for their reception at New York ; whither I had already sent others collected for me in Virginia and South Carolina. In this garden I cultivated them for two years, continually adding to the variety, the productions of the Northern States collected in the summer, and of the Southern in the winter season ; and I carried on a series of experiments, to ascertain their medicinal properties.

In my pursuits and inquiries to ascertain the medicinal



properties of plants, I had every assistance from the active liberality of the physicians in the many quarters where I was known ; and they particularly afforded me opportunities of putting the virtues of my vegetable substances to the test of experiment, by sending me patients.

While collecting plants in the neighbourhood of Savannah I called on Mr. Young, of that city, whose science in general, particularly in chemistry, was of great service to me in prosecuting my inquiries. His man servant, from a wound in the foot, was labouring under tetanus in its most terrible form. The jaw was locked, and the whole body convulsed with violent spasms, returning at intervals of not more than five minutes.—Dr. Colleck bled him, but said the man must inevitably die in a short time. Under these circumstances, I thought some chance of restoring the man might be afforded by two or three very powerful plants which I had been gathering, but I had never made any experiment on their properties. Being perfectly fresh, I expressed about a table spoonful of juice from one of them, and with difficulty forced a tea spoonful down his throat, for he had lost the power of deglutition. The woman who nursed him soon after came to us full of amazement at the altered appearance of the man ; he was lying tranquil, the muscles of the jaw were relaxed, the spasms had left him, and the power of swallowing was restored. After the operation of an emetic, laying open the original wound, and applying stimulating dressings to it, a general perspiration broke out, he fell into a profound sleep, and after nine hours, awoke quite free from the complaint. He is still living in America in good health. This successful experiment put me in possession of one of the most powerful agents in nature.

It happened, that as I was wandering with a party of young students on a Botanizing excursion into the interior of Georgia, I found a heifer tearing up the ground where she lay in convulsions. I recollected the mode of treatment mentioned by Linnæus for the disease of cattle called the murrain, occasioned by eating poisonous vegetables, which consists in boring with a gimlet into the horn near the head, so as to wound the pith in the inferior part : blood issues at first, and in about an hour and a half afterwards, a yellowish serum follows, soon becoming very offensive, which is supposed to contain the poison that occasions the disease. We succeeded with great difficulty in performing this operation, and one of the students, at my suggestion, cut off two or three of the final vertebræ of the tail. On returning a



few hours afterwards, we found the heifer eating as she lay, being still too weak to stand. The appearance of the blood, which had flowed in considerable quantity from the tail, was too remarkable to escape observation; it was covered with a bluish pellicle, and did not coagulate; circumstances that coincide with observations which I have since made on the effects produced by morbid poisons on animals; leaving, however, for chemists to decide on the truth of my inferences. First, from some poisons of the umbelliferous plants, particularly of the *Smyrnum Cordatum*, as also of the various species of *Cicuta*, animals swell to an enormous size, the hair falls off, and the blood becomes green. Secondly, from the poison of the plants of the class *Hexandria*, the blood of the animal does not coagulate, and appears of a blue colour, which leads me strongly to suspect that the poison partakes of the nature of Prussic acid. Thirdly, of plants belonging to the class *Decandria*, having papilionaceous flowers, such as the *Baptisia* and others of that class, the blood becomes blue, resembling the effects of the *Hexandria*, but different in shade. Fourthly, the poison of plants of the class *Pentandria* changes the blood to a dirty pink colour, which effervesces like yeast as it flows from the veins; and, on its standing, lime is deposited from the serum, probably from the combination of the powerful acid forming an insoluble compound with the lime contained in the serum. Fifthly, acrimonious poisons act more immediately on the nerves and muscles, causing inflammation with acute pain; whilst others act more powerfully on the stomach, intestines, and blood, occasioning, for instance, the rot in sheep; the violaceous tribe, which sheep eat freely, have particularly this effect. Observing the very wide difference in the effect of poisons on different animals, my attention became closely directed to the laws of chemical affinity, and the effects of different species of food and medicines on the life of animals, and from that time to this, I have pursued the inquiry with the most unwearied diligence.

In the Spring of 1809, I returned to New York, and the ensuing winter I returned to the South, joining in my way a set of Indian traders, and the embassy dispatched by the government to the Creek Tribes. On reaching the Indian settlement, the surprise of the traders was excited by seeing me wander about in search of plants, and placing specimens in a book, for they had never seen a *white* man pay attention to that research, and the inference they drew was, that I had some connection with the Great Spirit. They asked our



interpreter whether it was so. He said I had, and that I was a great admirer of his works. My face and hands being much tanned by exposure to the sun and air, they next asked whether I was not descended from some of the Indian tribes. He replied that I was born beyond the Great Waters, in their former great father's country, but that I now lived in the American States. I inquired through the interpreter if the Indian doctor was willing to be examined as to the virtues of his herbs. He replied that he had no objection at the end of three days. This delay gave me a fine opportunity to ascertain his knowledge, because I had time to collect all the herbs, or some of their congeners, mentioned by Hippocrates and other writers on the *Materia Medica*, as well as the observations they had made on the effects they produced upon the human constitution. On this occasion I partook of their *black drink* made from the *Ilex Cassine*, the *Arbutus*, and other plants which I could not learn. It had a singular effect on my stomach, and made me retch a little. It is to be observed that they always take this drink previous to their entering into any solemn deliberations, entertaining a stranger of distinction, or engaging in any matter that requires a clear head and the best use of their judgment. It removes crudities from the stomach, and clears the head from vapours; and as they advised me to repeat the draught till it ceased to produce nausea, I conceive they apply it as a test of a perfect state of health. They are a companionable people, and therefore consider participation with them, whether of the bottle or the pipe, as a test of amity; I therefore smoked with them, and their preparation of the variety of herbs they use for this indulgence is very grateful to the sense, and beneficial in its effects, but I could not detect the ingredients. My collection of plants produced to the doctor consisted of one hundred varieties, and I found his opinion agreed completely with that of Hippocrates; but on producing my roots I saw that the whole of their ideas on the subject were founded on those guiding principles, colour, smell and taste, which Dr. Cullen has ventured to declare are often fallacious. I disguised the plants in such a manner, that the Indian had no possibility of distinguishing them by their physiognomy; on most of them, however, he pronounced his judgment from the colour or odour, and when these failed to inform him he tasted the plants. So attentive are they to preserve the senses perfect, that they always abstain from salt, and use it only for a week at a time twice a year; it acts as a purgative, considered by them very injurious to the olfactory powers. The physician now



brought forward a character resembling our pantomimic clown ; but in the scenes which followed he showed himself capable of adding abundantly to the expressive gesticulations of our most accomplished buffoons, for he exemplified all the kinds of affections which each plant was capable of producing on the constitution by most emphatic expressions ; purgatives, diuretics, and sudorifics, spitting, sneezing, pain, convulsions, and even death, were all with equal truth most unequivocally expressed, so as to intimate beyond a doubt the extent of the various effects of the plants produced to him.

I had now traversed all the United States from North to South, collected all the information I could of the cures performed by the Indians, and put the means by which they were said to have been accomplished to the test of experiment ; when, taking the aphorisms of Linnæus for my guide, I commenced a series of experiments on the physical properties of plants, classed according to their natural orders, to discover the difference of their action on living animals, and on dead animal matter, both in the fresh state of their juices, as well as after they had undergone the acetous fermentation. These experiments occupied the whole of my attention during the two following years. I had frequently observed that the United Statesmen as well as the natives, ate certain young plants, such as the *Asclepias*, *Phytolacca* and others,—the first resembling the finest asparagus, and the latter the most delicious greens,—their poisons when young being all soluble in boiling water, which at a more advanced stage of their growth, or rather in the more mature elaboration of their sap, become the most fatal poison. Hence I perceived the necessity of attending particularly to the proper elaboration of the sap, in order to be sure of gathering plants when possessing their desired medicinal properties ; and hence I was convinced of the uncertainty in the activity of those vegetable drugs collected by the Moors and other Africans, and by the Americans at all times of the year, at all ages of the plant, and in every different soil, and then dried upon the rocks, often under a burning tropical sun, by which their active properties were completely volatilised or dissipated ; and it became to me no longer a wonder that they frequently failed when brought to Europe. The best mode of drying them I found to be in the shade in a garret, and afterwards packing them air tight ; because when exposed to the air, a chemical change is perpetually more or less going on, varying in rapidity according to the degree of heat and



moisture to which they are exposed: and unless their active properties reside in the *resinous part*, no dependance can be placed on herbs for medicinal purposes, thus incautiously gathered and preserved. I have tried many European methods of preserving their active properties, by tincture, extract, inspissation of the juices, &c. without success, for I found that the qualities of those preparations were very different from simple infusions, decoctions, or recent expressed juices. When we view the question in all its bearings, it is no wonder that many terrible disorders, such as scrofula, cancer, and others exist, for which Europe has no remedies, although they yield readily to the means which nature has produced, provided that we use these means properly; and I am convinced a cure may be commanded in all these cases when taken in their incipient stages, and when the constitution is not worn out, nor the functions of the digestive organs destroyed by powerful stimulants, mercury and drastic purgatives.

In 1810, I came to England, sold my plants and seeds, returned to New York, and extended my researches into the properties of plants as applicable to the various purposes of life; to the arts as well as to food and medicine. I carried with me from the Botanical Garden at Edinburgh, by desire of Dr. Rutherford and Mr. M'Nab, a number of medicinal plants and seeds, to try whether their active properties could not be more powerfully elicited, by growing in a hot climate. In conversing with American physicians, concerning the efficacy of these plants in curing scrofula, &c., they assured me that, although I had been successful in some cases in America, I should certainly fail with the natives of any old inhabited country, from the greater acrimony prevailing in their constitutions. I had reason not to doubt the truth of these assertions, from what I had read in medical authors, who have described many herbs, formerly in use, and pronounced of great efficacy, which are now rejected, as inert, from our pharmacopœias. This reflection damped the ardour of my inquiries, and threw considerable difficulties in my way; but a favourable opportunity presented itself to try the truth of this position. A number of British, labouring under pseudo-syphilis and other disorders, came to New York, upon whom I tried the effects of the wild and of the cultivated plants. Of those plants which were gathered from my Botanical garden every one failed, but of those collected from their native situation, the success was invariable, and the same results uniformly happened whenever I tried them.—Therefore on



my return to England in 1814, I packed up a large stock of the dried herbs with my living plants and seeds, and brought them with me. On my arrival, I took out a patent for the manufacture of silk from the *Asclepias*, and of hemp from the *Urtica*, and to enable me to cultivate them, I had from government a grant of 2000 acres of land in Canada. During my stay in England, I administered my dried herbs gratis, with the most extraordinary success, in scrofula, pseudo-syphilis, liver complaints and cutaneous diseases, till my stock was exhausted. In the spring of 1815, I had shipped for Quebec implements of husbandry for the cultivation of the *Asclepias* and *Urtica*, also stills, retorts, chemical tests and re-agents, intending to make extensive experiments on the properties of plants for various purposes, particularly for extracting dyes. Just as we were preparing to sail, I unfortunately fell into the hold of another vessel, and almost broke my back, by which accident I was delayed fourteen weeks, confined to my bed. But my apparatus could not be relanded.

By the time I had recovered from the effects of my fall, the ships bound for Quebec had sailed, and I took my passage for Boston. On arriving at New York, I found that the merchant with whom I entrusted my affairs had become bankrupt, so that I lost all the property he held for me. Hastening on to Quebec, there I first learned that all my apparatus sent from England had been destroyed by fire, which had also totally consumed the government stores with which they were deposited. This accumulation of disasters almost overwhelmed my spirit. I endeavoured to obtain a settlement of my grant of land in Upper Canada, but, having passed the governor on his journey back from thence to Quebec, I also failed in this last object. I was therefore compelled entirely to abandon the idea of cultivating the silk and hemp plants. Some transparent Botanical paintings being my only remaining stock, the only resource I had was to give lectures on Botany and the Physiology of plants. I delivered courses successively at Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, Utica, at the College of Schenectady, Albany, Poughkeepsie, New York, Newhaven, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, attended by numerous and respectable classes. In the latter city the kind attentions of President Maddison and his lady were of the most flattering nature to me; and I had among the number of my pupils thirty-eight Members of Congress, by whose example and through the encouragement they gave to this useful science, rendering it one of the most favourite



studies in the United States, the sun of prosperity began to illumine my path, which had hitherto been so rugged and gloomy. From Washington I went to Charleston, where I had a larger class than I ever lectured to before.

At the College of Columbia, in the centre of South Carolina, I next assembled so numerous a class of collegians, as well as citizens, that the professors suspended all the lectures in the college during the course, except those on chemistry, anxious to obtain all the advantages that might be derived from the series of experiments which we had instituted on the chemical and medicinal properties of vegetables. Their extensive library of scientific works afforded us every facility in the prosecution of our inquiries, and we put to the test of experiment the theories advanced both in France and England to controvert the doctrines of Linnæus, with respect to the economy of vegetable life and the elaboration of the sap; as well as many of the European theories concerning the operation of various medicinal plants. The very interesting and important results of the experiments on these subjects, I intend at a future period to lay before the public; but I cannot forbear stating that the result of our experiments tended to establish the opinion of the illustrious Swede. At the instance of Captain Baird I went to Augusta in Georgia, spending two months on the way collecting medicinal herbs. Two days after my arrival, I was seized with violent cholic, followed by inflammation in the bowels. Not being conscious of having eaten any thing to occasion this disorder, I ascribed it to drinking the unwholesome water; and this conjecture was fully verified by subsequent experience. Captain Baird next day requested me to visit his wife and daughter, whom I found dangerously ill of the yellow fever. I administered to them a decoction prepared from dried herbs, and directed water to be procured for their use from an excellent spring of soft water, situate three miles distant. In thirty hours the fever was brought to a favourable crisis, and in three days they were convalescent. These two occurrences induced me to analyze the water in common use, and I found it to be impregnated with such an abundance of putrid and saline substances as fully to account for the prevalence of febrile disease in the town. At my suggestion the water was afterwards conducted from the spring into the town.

The President of the United States in his communication to the European powers, observes, "that the yellow fever is a *marine* disease, and that it cannot be propogated in the



interior of the country, even by contagion." This is a fact well established, but instead of referring it to the right cause, the effect was erroneously ascribed to Marsh Miasmata, and consequently the means necessary for its prevention were not adopted. Although I do not mean to assert that the use of bad water is the only cause of the yellow, malignant, and putrid typhus fever of hot climates, yet I am certain, from numberless experiments and observations, that combined with the use of spirituous and fermented liquors, acids, acescent articles of diet, fat meats, and potatoes, it is to be ranked among the principal predisposing causes of the disease; for tanners, curriers, and others who reside in swampy situations the most surrounded by impure air and noxious effluvia, but where soft water is necessary in their trade, almost invariably escape; pure water is a powerful solvent and will assist in carrying off vegetable poisons by perspiration.

The sea ports of the United States, the West Indies and the Spanish colonies are, like Alexandria in Egypt, situate on alluvial soils, containing a mixture of decayed animal and vegetable substances, of which the water on the spot holds a very considerable proportion in solution. Modern authors who have written on fevers of hot climates, seem to have totally lost sight of this important fact, which however did not escape Prosper Alpinus, who, as translated by Dr. R. James, says in his *Treatise de Medicina Egyptorum*: "It is also certain from experience, that the use of stagnant waters renders the liver and spleen hard and scirrhus, and by that means produces dropsies and malignant fevers, whereas corrupt or fœtid waters produce pestilential diseases; for the latter species of water renders the humours of the body highly susceptible of putrefaction; and the former species, by its thickness obstructing the vessels, weakens the viscera, which for that reason abounds with excrements of a bad quality, by which these disorders are excited: that the inhabitants of Alexandria in Egypt, who in autumn use corrupted waters in preparing their aliments, have every year fallen into epidemical pestilential fevers, by which many are cut off."

Another powerful cause of fever arises from eating the flesh of animals which are slaughtered in a febrile state, occasioned by the heat of the climate, the irritation of myriads of insects, and the distance they are frequently driven. Roasting or broiling the meat does not extract the acriminous juices so completely as boiling; hence the French, who



chiefly adopt the latter, and use a much larger proportion of antiseptic vegetables, are not so liable to the disease as the English, who generally prefer the former method of cooking.

December 1st, 1818, I embarked from New York for England, with an abundant supply of my Botanical remedies. On my arrival I presented a letter of introduction to Mr. Colquhoun, the late police magistrate, from Mr. Greig, his agent in America; stating that I had performed several extraordinary cures in cases of scrofula and cancer, some of them having fallen under his own immediate inspection. Mr. Colquhoun expressed his happiness in the prospect of seeing the means introduced into this country for effectually combating two diseases, which the faculty have hitherto regarded as *approbria medicorum*.

He remarked, that the situation he filled afforded him a wide scope for observing the extensive prevalence of those diseases and their very destructive tendency; that they were spreading like a gangrene, and eating into the very vitals of the community; that, unless it were possible by the resources of art to arrest their progress, the number which must eventually fall a sacrifice could not be correctly estimated, even by the most intelligent calculators, and that scrofula and pauperism were the two greatest evils at present assailing the British Empire. Moreover he pledged himself, that, notwithstanding his advanced age and increasing infirmities, he would exert the utmost of his power to bring my remedies into public notice, that their efficacy might be put to the test of experiment; and in support of this promise he gave me introductory letters to some of the physicians and surgeons of the public hospitals, to allow me to make trial of them on some of their cases deemed incurable.

They selected eight of the most desperate and deplorable perhaps ever beheld; and beyond my most sanguine expectations they were snatched as it were from the brink of the grave, besides twelve recommended by Mr. Colquhoun, and about eighty others to whom I administered my remedies *gratis*, all of whom eventually recovered. That venerable patriot, Mr. Colquhoun, informed me, when he was collecting information preparatory to his publishing his work on Indigence, he at the same time collected all the information he could on the increase of disease, and intended to publish a work on the subject; he made his intention known to Dr. Baillie, who dissuaded him from publishing, and gave as a reason, that scrofula and



glandular diseases could not be cured ; and to publish the dreadful increase of the disorder would only increase the fears of the nation, and answer no valuable purpose.

My original intention was to leave the remedies with an agent to introduce and distribute among the medical practitioners ; and with a complete set of transparent paintings, illustrating the classes, orders, genera, species and natural orders of the Linnæan system of Botany, return to New York, and renew my Botanical lectures and experiments. Not one, however, of the profession to whom I was introduced at that time would listen to my proposals, or even give them a fair trial in their practice, unless I was willing to communicate the secret of their names and combinations ; but with that, in justice to myself, and to the interest of the public, I could not comply. Mr. Colquhoun endeavoured to get certificates from the medical men to whom he had introduced me, of the cures that I had made of the patients they had given me ; not one of them would comply with his request, at which he was much hurt, as I had cured all the patients at my own expense ; it was therefore by his counsel and advice that the Committee was first formed ; and whatever benefits may arise from my practice it was he that gave the first impulse, and was the sole cause of my remaining in Britain. During the first two years the unparalleled success of my system of treatment, in a great variety of chronic diseases, attracted the attention of you, gentlemen, who a twelvemonth ago humanely organized yourselves into a Committee to watch the effects of my remedies. To you, Sirs, I am indebted for a great share of their celebrity, and I feel a pride in being associated with you in the labour of establishing an Institution that must do honour no less to your charity and benevolence, than to the firmness with which you are advancing the cause of truth.

In this outline of my life I have merely selected some of the principal incidents which led to the discovery and application of my Botanical remedies ; I shall not, however, consider myself unhappy in having suffered all the pecuniary losses and personal dangers with which my discoveries have been accomplished, if I succeed in introducing the means of eradicating some of the most direful and loathsome diseases, by which many of our fellow creatures are annually destroyed. In the course of my narrative I could not omit introducing also, what, from the experience of many years I am persuaded are of the utmost importance to the public, some circumstances on which are founded my con-



firmed opinion of the mischief proceeding from the use of acescent articles of food and drink, and also as to the use of acids, which I have found to be indisputably injurious to the constitution, instead of their having any one of the beneficent qualities for which they are recommended in cold climates.

I have purposely reserved for a future publication my observations and discoveries in practical agriculture, horticulture, the economy of vegetable life, the chemical analysis of plants, and their various properties applicable to the purposes of life, and particularly to food and medicine.

Permit me, in conclusion, to observe, that it is not with any view to private emolument that I solicit your patronage and support in aid of this Institution (the extensive sale of my vegetable medicines already affording me full employment); but, first, to extend and preserve the reputation of my Botanical remedies, the knowledge of which has caused me so many years of toil and hardship in its acquisition: secondly, to relieve the overwhelming mass of disease under which so many individuals, and particularly of the rising generation, are suffering, against whom the very door of charity is closed, since the hospitals of this country are absolutely obliged to refuse them an asylum: thirdly, to unite a suitable diet and regimen with the remedies; because I have found by experience that many articles of food in common use neutralize their effects, and render them inert; while others convert them into stimulants too powerful for patients weakened and reduced by disease; and having arrived at this general conclusion, that scrofulous and cancerous diseases may be greatly avoided by a proper selection of food and mode of preparing it, it is my anxious wish, while I am applying these vegetable remedies, to instruct those who may honour me with their applications, in a proper dietetic system, most essential to promote the cure as well as to avoid a recurrence of the evil: and, lastly, to afford gentlemen of the medical profession an opportunity of investigating the effects of my remedies, and of observing their different operations on the various states and conditions of the human constitution. As I have not a great many years of my existence to anticipate, my health being broken by repeated attacks of violent disease in hot climates, obliging me to live by rule, I am naturally very desirous that my hard-earned experience should not be lost to posterity; and, as you contemplate shortly to call another public meeting in the City, I trust that it will receive



such humane attention, and generous support, as the objects so truly merit. May your arduous endeavours be eminently successful in affording relief to the distressed and suffering part of the community.

I have the honour to be,

SIRS,

Your most obedient and very grateful Servant,

CHARLES WHITLAW.

July, 6, 1822.

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The first Public Meeting was held at the Freemasons' Tavern, February 28, 1822. Several Medical Gentlemen, among others, stated the satisfaction they had received from time to time in witnessing the success of Mr. Whitlaw's remedies, and the following Report was read.

*Report of the Committee occupied in observing the Effects of Remedies, introduced into this Country from America by Mr. Charles Whitlaw, on Scrofulous and Cancerous Cases.*

The Gentlemen, who voluntarily formed this Committee, having for a considerable period attended weekly examinations of Mr. Whitlaw's patients, and had the opportunity of observing the state of their several cases, and the progress of their cure, in the month of February, 1821, with the concurrent wish of Mr. Whitlaw, formed themselves into a Committee for the purpose of more completely combining their observations on the efficacy of the vegetable remedies introduced by him for the cure of scrofulous cases. During this period, the cases which presented themselves to their observation have satisfied the Committee, that the efficacy and utility of these remedies, in the cure and alleviation of a disease hitherto deemed incurable, are such as to demand that they should be brought more fully under the notice of the public.



The Committee, in the duties they have taken on themselves, have had that satisfaction resulting at all times from a connection with a meritorious and benevolent character devoted to the paths of science; and they think it proper to mention, that Mr. Whitlaw having early in life embarked for America with a propensity already acquired for Botanical pursuits, and having among other occurrences there, assisting to complete the bias of his mind, received great benefit from the skill of a native Indian physician, was led to give particular attention to that people's knowledge of plants and skill in the healing art. This pursuit, combined with sixteen years experience and long and careful investigation of the vegetable productions of the wilds of that country, led him to the discovery of remedies which appear to be highly valuable and important to mankind. It is by no means the wish of Mr. Whitlaw to keep his knowledge to himself, or to leave to any single individual after him the power of saying he is the only depository of Mr. Whitlaw's secret. His laudable anxiety is, by means fair to his own character, fair and beneficial to the community at large, to diffuse as widely as possible the knowledge of his remedies. In the spirit and sincerity of this wish, Mr. Whitlaw has constantly invited all persons, but especially the gentlemen of the faculty, to a weekly examination of his patients, when indeed an assemblage of most deplorable cases have presented themselves; but, in contemplating them, the feelings have been relieved by increased experience of the progressive benefit every one of them were deriving under his hand; for even where cure was rendered, by the inveteracy of the disorder and circumstances of the patient, almost hopeless, alleviation of the evil to a most beneficial extent has been effected. Here a number of these cases might be stated, but the Committee conceived they might be better referred to in a book kept open for general inspection at Mr. Whitlaw's house, in which they are detailed and where they will be found speaking more forcibly than any argument, or than any thing else but an exhibition of the living cases, in favour of a system of medical treatment introduced by Mr. Whitlaw, founded on numerous observations and proved by experiment to be efficacious for the cure of scrofula, consumption, cancer in its incipient stage, acute and chronic inflammation.

These cases are referred to as they afford a picture of the character of scrofula most particularly, extending its malignant effects over numbers of the population of this country, conceivable, it is apprehended, only to few. But



that scrofulous disorders exist, and have been for some years increasing to a most afflicting degree, is beyond all dispute. And that it is not a casual visitor of this country, but an ancient and permanent evil belonging to it, is as certain as the opinions of our ablest physicians (Dr. Cullen for instance), are well founded. On the same high authority it is stated that climates lying between the 45th and 60th degree of north latitude are most liable to scrofula, and that this country is the more subject to it and to a severer degree, from the peculiar humidity of our atmosphere and from the constant atmospherical vicissitudes which we suffer; and it may not be improperly mentioned as confirmatory of this opinion, that Mr. Whitlaw has had far more patients offer themselves to him than he could alone attend, and more especially of the poorer classes, who had no hope but from the charity he was known to dispense.

It is, therefore, for the relief of the numerous sinking and otherwise helpless poor, that the Committee made proposals for an Asylum for the reception of cases of this disorder. For they felt themselves further warranted in saying that, when compared with measles, small-pox, and other disorders that cut off our species in infancy, scrofula may truly be said to be the most malignant disorder to which the human race is liable in the temperate climates; the other disorders just mentioned, though infectious, are comparatively lenient, and, if not fatal, are transitory. The worst of them, small-pox, hardly destroying more than one in ten. But scrofula, if it spare its victim its more appalling afflictions during infancy, lurks in the constitution till age, growth, and elicited endowments render its attacks more severely afflicting in proportion as interest is justly excited in its object. For though during the earliest periods we are exposed to this as to the ordinary infectious disorders, yet also are the instances too numerous of our youth and of those advanced to ripened years being attacked with this evil, when it exhibits itself in a variety of disgusting characters externally on the person, or in the mournful indications of consumption; and, established in the system, takes its own course in spite of any remedy heretofore applied in attempting its eradication, or even for retarding its course. If the Committee have alluded to classes above the objects of any proposed establishment or asylum for the diseased, they will still, by looking to the cases, be found to speak with reference to instances they have witnessed under the treatment of Mr. Whitlaw; but they speak also with allusion to the numbers of shocking instances under the obvious



disadvantage of being poor, obliged to live in unwholesome dwellings, and on such food, hardly any but such, as is strongly in opposition to the cure of these disorders by any mendicaments, even in their mildest instances.

Under all the foregoing circumstances, and urged by the considerations and wishes to which they naturally give rise, the Committee ventured to frame a scheme for an Asylum for the cure of scrofulous cases, under the care and management of Mr. Whitlaw, and entertain a confidence that they have not in this presumed too much on public generosity, while their hopes are firm that the advantages of such an establishment will very soon be so apparent, as to insure for it Patrons and Supporters among all ranks of a charitable and wealthy community. The Asylum is intended only at the outset for a limited number of females, and of children under eight years of age ; the arrangements and provisions for an establishment limited to such objects being more simple and less expensive, and therefore, at the outset, involving less hazard of failure, than what must attend one that is to take in men or male adults. And while it is intended to be an establishment, in which Mr. Whitlaw's remedies should be alone administered, it is also intended to realize, if possible, the benevolent wishes of that gentleman to their larger extent, by inviting the personal and constant attention of the faculty in general to the proceedings in the Asylum, and by instructing medical gentlemen in the use of the remedies.

The Committee, assisted by information obtained from other charitable establishments, have made an estimate by which it may be said, accommodation and means for the reception and care of thirty-five patients may be had for about 2000*l.*; that, averaging the stay of the general description of patients in the Asylum at three months, while many will afford cases more difficult and requiring a longer time to cure, it is hoped that that sum will, at the end of twelve months, have redeemed one hundred poor individuals from a disabled, hopeless, loathsome state, and placed them in a serviceable, wholesome condition. It seems evident, then, that for so small a sum a great good may be extended to cases of serious affliction, while a very important experiment may be made, capable of extension to any amount for which adequate funds may be furnished.

The Committee conclude this Report with a conviction that they have brought to the consideration of the public the existence of a most afflicting evil, highly worthy of their



attention; and that they have recommended a plan for giving to the poor who are afflicted with it the surest means of relief, and of deriving the readiest and most important benefit from the charity that may be extended by a compassionate public to its encouragement and support.

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The Committee continued their superintendence of the cases brought under Mr. Whitlaw's treatment, till the 11th of July, 1822, when a second public Meeting was convened at the City of London Tavern,

ALDERMAN SIR C. S. HUNTER, BART., presided :

the Committee reported as follows,—

That although a liberal Subscription had been commenced at the last Meeting, and occasionally increased, the money subscribed being inadequate to carry the proposed plan into execution, they had confined their operations to a further observation of Mr. Whitlaw's remedies, and deemed it necessary to make a second appeal to the public, supported by the additional evidence which they were then enabled to bring forward.

That during the interval which had elapsed, about four hundred patients had been under Mr. Whitlaw's system of treatment, of which number, nearly one hundred persons afflicted with scrofula, cancer, and cutaneous diseases, in every stage of those disorders, had been gratuitously supplied with the necessary remedies.

That the cases requiring gratuitous relief from week to week, had chiefly and more properly engaged the attention of the Committee, although many other individuals, conscious of the great benefits they had received, and desirous that similar relief should be extended to their fellow-sufferers, had communicated to the Committee full statements of their cases.

It now devolves upon the Committee to state, for the information of the Public, the result of the whole of their proceedings, including, as well those cases which have occurred since the public Meeting in July, as those which



have been noticed in the former Reports, so as to form one general aggregate up to the present time.

The Committee have pursued their examination of individual cases, as referred to in their former Reports, sometimes with more, and sometimes with less minuteness; and before they state the result, it may not be improper to explain the method which they have taken, to ensure the accuracy of the facts, for the truth of which they pledge themselves to the public.

The Committee then declare, that most of them were entire strangers to Mr. Whitlaw, until the powerful effects of his medicines brought him to their notice; and while, from a perfect conviction founded on actual observation, they became daily more and more confirmed in the efficacy of those medicines, combined with his mode of treating scrofula and other glandular diseases, they disclaim every private consideration on behalf of Mr. Whitlaw, in an inquiry, where a sense of *public duty* alone ought to influence their conduct.

With a view to satisfy themselves, and others, that the cases in which cures had been said to have been performed by Mr. Whitlaw, were real facts: and in order to detect the fallacy, if any imposture had been practised upon them, the Committee instituted a regular inquiry (say from July to October) into eighty-seven additional cases. During the whole of that examination, Mr. Whitlaw was excluded from every kind of interference, the Committee preferring to take the statement of their cases from the patients themselves, if adults, or from the parents of children who voluntarily appeared before them, for the purpose of giving testimony to the benefits they had received from Mr. Whitlaw's medicines and system of treatment.

In every instance, the cases to which the Committee now allude, were seen by them, and they carefully ascertained and correctly registered the following particulars respecting them:—

First—The name, age, and residence of the patient—the nature of the disorder under which such patient had been labouring; the date of its commencement; whether the patients had been under medical treatment before they applied to Mr. Whitlaw; and what was the result of that treatment.

Secondly—The date when the patients applied to Mr. Whitlaw; whether they used his remedies, and followed his rules for diet and regimen; for how long a time they did so; and what was the effect of his treatment.



The result of this inquiry was, that out of the eighty-seven cases registered during those three months,—

45 had been cured.

22 were convalescent, or much benefited.

20 remained as patients.

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Total—87

And that the general health of all the patients had been very evidently, and almost invariably improved, whilst under Mr. Whitlaw's care, even in those cases where the disease had not been entirely eradicated.

It is not intended, by particularizing those eighty-seven cases, to convey the idea, that the Committee have, either before or since, been inattentive to the state and progress of those other numerous cases which constitute the general result they are about to give; but that, in those eighty-seven instances, a peculiar and minute mode of examination was adopted, for the more complete satisfaction of their own minds as to the efficacy of Mr. Whitlaw's remedies. Having, however, through the medium of those eighty-seven cases and numerous others which passed daily before their eyes, arrived at the most perfect conviction of the superiority of Mr. Whitlaw's medicines and treatment, the Committee have considered such minute attention no longer necessary; but they have not failed to pay strict observance to every case brought under Mr. Whitlaw's care, which has exhibited any extraordinary characteristics; and they hesitate not to declare, in the face of the public, that they do verily believe Mr. Whitlaw's medicines and mode of treatment, in every incipient case of scrofula and glandular disease, or where its ravages have not undermined the constitution, are an *absolute specific*. That, in cases where those diseases have arrived at a most afflicting height, he has *generally succeeded*; and that, in some instances, cures have been performed, where medical men of the first eminence have *decidedly despaired*, and where, indeed, to expect success, seemed to the Committee themselves to be hoping against hope.

It will be admitted, that to have succeeded amidst such a mass of disease, so far as to produce but a partial effect, and even a very moderate impression on the minds of a scrutinizing public, would afford tolerable evidence of the efficacy of the system contended for; whereas, in truth, that effect has been unusually general, and the consequent impression, where prejudice was laid aside and candour brought into exercise, almost universal. And the Com-



mittee most confidently assert, *as to nearly all the cases* which have come under their own inspection, and from the best information as to the rest—that even where a cure of the malady itself has not taken place, the general health of the patient has been uniformly amended, and consequent comfort promoted. In some instances where cure has not taken place, the peculiar malignity of the symptoms has subsided, and rarely indeed has it occurred that a patient has expressed regret at having had recourse to the medicines and treatment of Mr. Whitlaw.

What then is the general result to which the Committee are willing to pledge themselves?—That since the month of January, 1821, 670 cases have been submitted to the medical treatment of Mr. Whitlaw, under their immediate inspection, more or less minute—that in consequence of that treatment,

154 have been cured.

131 have become convalescent.

191 have been materially benefited.

148 are using the remedies.

38 have withdrawn, or the event not known.

8 have died.\*

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670

Were it possible to ascertain exactly the number of persons who have received important benefit from this mode of treatment, an aggregate of substantial and beneficial

\* The 1st case. C. W. had been cured of disease in the spine; her death, three months afterwards, was occasioned by acute inflammation of the brain.

Case 2d. E. W. was in the last stage of pulmonary consumption, and used the remedies only a fortnight.

Case 3d. E. S. laboured under cancer. The patient residing at Bath, was not seen; she used the remedies three weeks, by which her sufferings were alleviated.

Case 4th. G. W. diseased liver and dropsy. The dropsical symptoms were removed; but he afterwards died of vomiting of blood.

Case 5th. M. H. died consumptive; the patient residing in Durham, was not seen.

Case 6th. M. A. B. in the last stage of the tabes; the patient only seen twice; the case was considered as hopeless at the commencement.

Case 7th. T. G. violent continual asthma, which was considerably relieved, but the patient died of dropsy, after his return to the country.

Case 8th. J. S. in the last stage of pulmonary consumption when first seen. The symptoms were relieved by the remedies; but no hope was entertained of his recovery.



relief of human suffering would be presented, which the feeling mind has not often the luxury to contemplate. And when it is considered that the vast majority of those cases have thus far been all but forlorn—if not actually given over and abandoned—when it is admitted on all hands that these medicines, where they do not cure, invariably produce beneficial effects, not usually, if at all to be obtained by those most in use—is there an individual to be found, who if he had the power, would wish to impede the progress of the proposed Asylum, or deprive his afflicted fellow-creatures of that portion of relief, which the Committee are now, after the experience of nearly two years, competent to assure a benevolent public the medicines and treatment in question are able to produce?

There are two circumstances which the Committee have great pleasure in stating:—first, that the patients themselves, who must be allowed to be tolerably capable of judging whether they have received benefit or not, give their universal voice in favour of Mr. Whitlaw's treatment, and most of them entertain for him a personal regard and esteem, seldom produced but by a sense of benefit received. And secondly, that the prejudices of the public, in themselves natural, and at the same time, in many instances, justifiable, are so far subsiding—the impression produced by the numerous cures Mr. Whitlaw has effected being so considerable—that the cases which have latterly been submitted to his treatment have been of a less desperate character than heretofore; and whereas formerly the most diseased member of a family, afflicted with these complaints, was alone sent to him as a sort of hopeless experiment—now all the afflicted members place themselves under his care, and their confidence and superiority to vulgar and habitual prejudices have been amply rewarded.

Urged by every motive of compassion for those unfortunate sufferers who have been presented to the notice of the Committee, they have ventured, notwithstanding the small amount of the funds subscribed, to commence with a limited number of patients, at Bayswater. In that establishment, the patients are provided with proper food, and every article necessary for their medical treatment. The Committee are fully aware, how desirable it is that the domestic arrangements of a public institution should be placed under their exclusive superintendence. For the present, however, a house with extensive grounds has been taken by Mr. Whitlaw, part of which has been appropriated for the reception of those patients, at a regular weekly charge ;



until the liberality of the public shall enable the Committee to take upon themselves the sole possession and management of the Asylum.

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At the fourth annual Meeting held at the City of London Tavern, March 8th, 1826,

SIR JOSEPH SYDNEY YORKE, BART., M.P.,

in the Chair, the following Report was read and approved.

The principal obstacles attending the permanent establishment of a new Institution having been happily surmounted, the Committee meet the Patrons and Friends of the Asylum for the cure of scrofula and glandular diseases, on the present anniversary, with increased satisfaction,—a satisfaction naturally arising from the confirmation of another year's experience of the efficacy of the plan of treatment introduced by Mr. Whitlaw.

It is universally acknowledged, that nothing is more difficult than to form an accurate judgment upon medical subjects. Every attempt to do this, the Committee, from the commencement of their labours to the present time, have utterly disclaimed.

They have confined their observations exclusively to facts, which have been presented to their notice ; and facts have borne them out in the statements which they have laid before the public, and which they are prepared to adduce at this Meeting.

The Committee have done every thing in their power to challenge inquiry and court investigation into the merits of Mr. Whitlaw's system of treatment ; in proof of which they inserted, during the past year, an advertisement in the public papers, informing gentlemen of the medical profession, who were attending parochial workhouses and the lower classes of the community, that patients afflicted with scrofula or glandular diseases would be received into the Asylum at Bayswater, on the payment of six shillings per week for the board of each patient ; and that a certificate should also be delivered at the time of admission, signed by the medical attendant, stating his opinion of the character of the patient's disorder, and its duration.

The object the Committee had in view by this advertisement, was to call the attention of the faculty to the mode of treatment pursued in the Asylum for the cure of scrofula,



in the hope, that after having experienced its utility, they would diffuse the knowledge and benefits of this system universally among the victims of that destructive disorder. But it is with feelings of deep regret, both for the honour and interests of humanity, that the advertisement although frequently inserted, did not meet with that attention to which, in the judgment of the Committee, it was entitled.

The Committee are unwilling to imagine that feelings hostile to innovation in the medical treatment of any disease, have operated so powerfully as to quench the ardour of professional improvement, and to prevent the adoption of remedies and a mode of treatment, which are acknowledged in many instances, by professional men themselves, to have proved successful in cases of scrofula apparently hopeless. The most rational supposition is, that as this system did not originate with a member of the faculty, they have deemed it unworthy of investigation. As the Committee have been disappointed in their expectations of encouragement from medical practitioners, it only remains that the Patrons and Friends of the Institution should exert themselves more diligently, in order to introduce the invaluable discoveries of Mr. Whitlaw to the attention of the public.

In the Report of last year it was stated, that the Committee had heard of Mr. Whitlaw's safe arrival at New York, and that Dr. Pidduck had received a large importation of herbs, in the highest possible state of preservation; and that Mr. Whitlaw's intention of visiting America was for the purpose of insuring an adequate supply of those herbs which constitute his remedies, and to finish some practical experiments on the aphorisms of Linnæus, in which he had for many years been engaged.

The Committee have the pleasure to announce the return of Mr. Whitlaw from America, where he has succeeded to the full extent of his wishes in the completion of his object. Reports of the most satisfactory nature have also been received from the United States; by which it appears that Mr. Whitlaw has been successful in improving the vapour bath by the application of herbs in medicating the vapour.

It is highly to the honour of many medical gentlemen in America, that after a full and complete investigation, they have publicly testified their conviction of the utility of such medicated vapour baths in the cure of various diseases, and of scrofula in particular; and, as a proof of their decided approbation of Mr. Whitlaw's system, they have formed societies in the states of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania,



South Carolina, and in the cities of New York, Washington, &c.\*

On the authority of such testimony, in addition to the facts they have to adduce under their own immediate inspection, your Committee feel themselves warranted in using every exertion to extend the merits of Mr. Whitlaw's system, which they are persuaded wants only a fair and candid investigation in order to establish its high claim to public attention.

#### GENERAL RESULT.

Patients Cured . . . . .	6
— Convalescent . . . . .	3
— Benefited . . . . .	4
— Not benefited . . . . .	1
— Remain in the Asylum . . .	6

The great advantages which would result to the poor from the use of the vapour bath, in connection with the other means employed for their relief, having been represented to the Honorable and Reverend Anchitel Grey, in June last, he addressed a letter to Dr. Pidduck, stating that if it were practicable, it appeared to him so desirable to establish a vapour bath for the benefit of the poor, that he authorised Dr. Pidduck to inform the Committee, that he would contribute twenty guineas towards it, if a sum adequate to the purpose could be raised by any other means. To this liberal offer the Committee were obliged to reply, that as it appeared the funds of the Society were insufficient to support the Asylum in its present limited establishment, and as it was desirable to increase the charity to the full extent of the premises at Bayswater, the Committee were desirous of postponing the further consideration of the subject for three months. At the expiration of that time, the funds of the institution not having assumed a more prosperous appearance, the further consideration of a vapour bathing establishment for the poor has not been revived.

The Committee, however, are decidedly of opinion that one or more such establishments connected with a dispensary (in which Mr. Whitlaw's remedies were administered), for the benefit of the poor, would be attended with the greatest public advantage.

\* See letter to the Patron, &c.—p. 43.



The Committee are compelled to solicit attention to the heavy balance of arrears, incurred by the board of patients, house rent, and incidental charges of the Asylum. That they have not neglected any means to promote the interests of the Institution committed to their care, will appear from the advertisements which they caused to be inserted in the newspapers and popular magazines in August and September last, earnestly recommending the Charity to the patronage and support of the benevolent and humane. And they have ample ground of encouragement to exert their unwearied efforts in favour of a large and much afflicted class of society.

Your Committee, notwithstanding the opposition made to the system of medicine they have adopted, and from which such beneficial effects have resulted,—notwithstanding other difficulties with which they have to contend, especially the very limited amount of funds as yet placed at their disposal,—entertain no fears of so discouraging a nature as to induce them, for a moment, to relax their exertions. Prejudice, however inveterate, must eventually give way to accumulating facts daily opposed to it.

The long-afflicted patients (like the poor woman in the gospel, who “had spent among physicians all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,”) will be seen walking about in renovated health, living testimonies of the efficacy of the remedies afforded by your Society. These will speak volumes on the subject. Medical men, too, after the example of their transatlantic brethren,\* will no longer stand opposed, but give their unhesitating countenance, and the full weight of their influence to the system now claiming your support. Funds will not then be wanting in aid of the poor, who, in this country, share so largely in the sympathies of their richer neighbours; and who never want attention in cases where British benevolence can be called forth to their advantage.

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\* See page 48.



*A Letter to His Royal Highness the DUKE OF YORK,  
Patron, the VICE-PRESIDENTS, and the COMMITTEE,  
of the Asylum for the cure of Scrofula and Glandular  
Diseases.*

May it please your Royal Highness,—my Lords, and  
Gentlemen :—

Permit me on my return from the United States of America, to address you on the result of my exertions to complete the system, which I have so long and earnestly recommended to the attention of the British nation, for the preservation of health, and for the removal of those maladies which arise from indulgence in improper food, and other causes of virulent diseases or debility.

During sixteen years of diligent pursuit, I travelled through the United States, Canada, and the West Indian Islands, as a practical Botanist ; my attention being principally engaged in the application of Botany to the purposes of human life, as they relate to food or medicine.

Pursuing the system of Linnæus, and finding from numerous practical experiments that the opinions of that great and eminent naturalist were generally well founded, I was at a loss to account for the opposition presented to his opinions by so eminent a man as Dr. Cullen, in his lecture on the *Materia Medica*, delivered in the University of Edinburgh. The doctor and some others commenced an attack on the aphorisms of Linnæus, on the following important points.

Linnæus declares his opinion in the humeral pathology ; the mechanical operations of nature ; the necessity of selecting our food ; and that all diseases arise from the following causes : First, impure water ; secondly, improper food ; thirdly, acid ferments ; fourthly, putrid ferments ; fifthly, from animalculi ; sixthly, impure air. He has pointed out a plain and natural guide to mankind in the selection of food and the use of medicine. First, from the class ; secondly, the order ; thirdly, the natural order or physiognomy of plants ; fourthly, the smell ; fifthly, the taste ; sixthly, the colour ; seventhly, the locality ; eighthly, their chemical affinity.

The editors of Dr. Cullen's lectures say, that “ Our professor attempted a *plan entirely new and original*, and executed the same in a manner which gained universal



approbation ;” and add, that the substance of that performance is now offered to the public, which had been much desired by the faculty. I shall, however, in a few months, present to the public such reasons for differing from that learned professor as I trust will prove satisfactory.

For upwards of twenty years I have followed the principles of Linnæus, both in England and America, with remarkable success in the healing art ; and have added to my former experiments many new ones, during my late visit to America, which, in every instance, tend to confirm the correctness of the observations of Linnæus.

That our health is deeply concerned in the care which we take in the selection of food, and even in circumstances generally overlooked by mankind, as I have often stated. In my observations on the nature and properties of grasses being deteriorated by weeds, particularly the butter-cup, I have been wisely asked, “What becomes of the butter-cup after it has passed through the stomach of the cow?” Many facts, however, have confirmed me in my opinion of the danger proceeding from poisonous herbs : and among others I may present the following letter from Dr. Renick to His Excellency Governor de Witt Clinton, directly bearing on the point ; and those who ignorantly inquire what effects are produced by the species of food which passes through the stomach of a cow, may be referred to every dairymaid in the country on the effects of the turnip, and the different flavours of cheese varying in almost every county.

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*Copy of a Letter to His Excellency the Hon. de Witt Clinton, &c. &c. &c. ; enclosing a specimen of a poisonous plant.*

Sir,

This vine or weed, whatever it may be called, generally grows in low moist land, or round the edge of swamps, and perhaps is the most poisonous vegetable that grows ; horses, cattle and sheep feed on it in the fall ; it very often proves fatal in a few hours. The first symptom is a trembling and weakness in the limbs. The cow that gives milk is not affected with it so long as she is regularly milked, but the milk is certain death to any animal, human or brute, that uses it to any extent ; and the flesh of any animal that dies with it also becomes fatal to the dog, the wolf, the eagle, or buzzard, that takes a full meal of it. The use of the milk



has proved fatal to a great number of people living in the section of country called the Barrons, in this state, which lies between the Scioto and Bigmiami. It would be very gratifying to them to know whether there could not be some antidote discovered against its poisonous effects.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

Chillicothe,  
25th July, 1825.

FELIX RENICK.

His Excellency informed me, that, on a tour through the state of Ohio, he had learnt that the most dreadful effects were produced on many persons who used the milk of cattle which had fed on this plant. He requested me to ascertain its name and properties, that endeavours might be made to prevent its fatal effects. It proved to be the *Rhus toxicodendron*; and on further inquiries in journeying from Albany to the falls of Niagara, and in Upper Canada, I was informed, that infants on the breast had been poisoned through their mothers using the milk of cattle which had fed on the *Rhus*, while the mothers themselves received no injury,—one of the strongest proofs of the correctness of the doctrine of humoral pathology, so strongly objected to by a large portion of medical practitioners of the present day.

If I have trespassed too long in the preceding remarks, the importance of the subject will, I trust, plead my apology. My system must stand or fall on the principles which I have adopted; and I trust the following account of my proceedings in America during a year commencing November, 1824, in addition to the success of my system for several years in this country, will be admitted as confirmatory of my opinions.

Previous to my leaving London in 1824, I addressed a letter to the Committee for conducting the Asylum at Bayswater for the cure of Scrofula, stating my intention of revisiting America for the following purposes:—

“To insure a supply of the requisite medicinal herbs  
“adequate to the increasing demand of the public, and to  
“point out the situation, not easily communicated by writing,  
“where they may be gathered in the greatest abundance,  
“and in the highest perfection.

“Also to finish those practical experiments on the  
“aphorisms of Linnæus, upon which I had for many years  
“been engaged, and the completion of which will prove  
“of the utmost importance to the human race.”



With such views and intentions I arrived in New York early in November, and was not a little surprised to find that the medical gentlemen of this metropolis had already stimulated their brethren on the other side of the Atlantic to a determined opposition to my plans. Had their motives been pure and disinterested, these gentlemen, who consider themselves as the only legitimate judges, and the guardians of public health, would have candidly investigated the merits of my remedies, and in the event of approval, would have hailed the discovery as a blessing to mankind. Instead of which great pains were taken to circulate an inaugural address of Dr. David Hossack, President of the Medical Society of the city and county of New York, delivered on July 12th, 1824; in which a very illiberal and libellous attack was made upon my character:—

“ The existing laws of the State, regulating the practice  
 “ of physic and surgery, the statutes of our University, and  
 “ the by-laws of this Society, I believe contain certain pro-  
 “ visions, which, if properly regarded, will in a great degree  
 “ lead to the suppression of every species of quackery and  
 “ imposition in our profession. In all ages our calling has  
 “ been disgraced by the arts of the selfish and designing;  
 “ and it is mortifying to observe in our city continued  
 “ and most flagrant evidences of the successful career of  
 “ charlatanery. I earnestly hope you will omit no effort  
 “ within the legitimate reach of your authority to discour-  
 “ tenance and suppress the whole tribe of nostrum-venders,  
 “ and specific-mongers; and if upon experience you shall  
 “ find that the present system of regulation is inadequate, that  
 “ it will be deemed meet to supersede it by obtaining from  
 “ our legislature, a code of greater efficiency and vigour.

“ Many years since, the medical faculty of London ex-  
 “ pelled from their communion even the distinguished and  
 “ learned Dr. James; who, disregarding the obligations  
 “ due to his profession, and to society, became the vender  
 “ of a secret febrifuge powder. In like manner, the most  
 “ learned society of Europe erased from their list the cele-  
 “ brated Lower, who had been convicted of venal practices;  
 “ and, within a few months, as we are informed by Dr.  
 “ Johnston,\* the name of Dr. Thornton, once highly respect-  
 “ able, has been in a similar manner disgraced, by being  
 “ struck from the list of the Royal College of Physicians,  
 “ because of his association with an itinerant quack or  
 “ vender of American herbs in London. The spirited jour-

\* Medico Chirurgical Journal, Dec. 1823—edited by Dr. Johnson.



“nalist goes on to remark, that in his opinion, Dr. Thornton’s conduct, in aiding the Whitlaw imposition on public credulity, richly deserved this mark of disapprobation; and adds his hope, that immoral as well as unprofessional conduct shall be often served in this way in future. A similar course of decisive and vigorous conduct on our part, would probably be productive of similar beneficial results, in preserving the respectability of the healing art in the United States.”

Dr. Coventry, President of the Medical Society of the western district, in the state of New York, in his inaugural address, attacked me, and also the motives of the Committee, in the same illiberal and ungentlemanly manner; and added, “What a poor simpleton John Bull was, to be imposed on by such a set of men.” A copy of his address may be seen in, Dr. Beck’s Medical Journal of New York. No sooner had I set my foot on the American shores, than some of my friends said, something must be done to prove to the American people I was not deserving those vile aspersions which had been cast upon my character by the two inaugural addresses above alluded to. I stated that my treatment of the afflicted would soon convince them how unjust were their malignant remarks. I accordingly offered to divide with Dr. Hossack a hundred patients, and try who could cure them the soonest; which offer he refused more than once. I went to Utica, about two hundred and sixty miles from New York, and made Dr. Coventry the same offer, which he likewise rejected, though the gentlemen who accompanied me used every argument in their power to induce him to accept the challenge. We found the doctor was determined to abide by the old Roman maxim,—“To guard the honour he had got.” No sooner did the American people see the value of my discoveries, than they passed the highest eulogiums upon the Committee for their laudable zeal and indefatigable investigation,—their only motive being the cause of humanity.

These addresses were put into the hands of my most intimate friends,—in reading-rooms, and places of public resort,—and every endeavour made to disparage my practice.

In this state of matters I proceeded to Washington, where I obtained a patent for my discoveries, and set about curing such patients as presented themselves, and succeeded in several desperate cases. The unexpected cures which I had the satisfaction to effect, attracted the attention of the



president, and a considerable number of the members of the Senate and Congress,—and some of them became my patients. Their favour and support, entitle those gentlemen to my warmest gratitude.

In the city of Washington a Committee was formed, who purchased my patent right in the bath, for the use of the public; of their first report the following is an extract.

### WHITLAW'S PATENT VAPOUR BATH.

*Report of the Committee, appointed by the Subscribers, for the purchase and use of Charles Whitlaw's Medicated Vapour Bath, at a general meeting of Stockholders, convened at the Museum in Washington city, April 26, 1825,*

S. B. BARRELL in the Chair.

The Committee appointed by the Subscribers for purchasing Mr. Charles Whitlaw's medicated vapour bath, to superintend the use of the same in this city, conceive that the time is arrived when they ought to report more fully to the public, what they have now learned from experience and observation, during the last two months, of the real use and efficacy of the bath. They will detail nothing but facts that have come within their own knowledge, which, with some general observations on the nature of warm or vapour baths in general, and of the specific difference of this from other baths, and the regulations which have been adopted for its use in this city, will comprise all that they wish to say, until further experiments shall have extended their knowledge of its powers and utility.

Since the bath was opened on the 10th of March, it has been used by fifty persons, of all ages from 7 years to 70, one hundred and twenty-four times. We believe that in all these cases it has been useful, but the most numerous class of cases in which it has afforded almost immediate relief, and, in several, complete cure, are those of recent colds, rheumatism, inflamed eyes, eruptions on the skin, scrofulous swellings, and general debility.

A considerable number of patients whose eyes were so diseased that they had been completely laid aside from their usual avocations for many weeks, and suffered intense pain so as to deprive them of sleep, and who had been subjected to the usual course of bleeding, blistering, and depletion



by cathartics, in vain, have been effectually cured by the bath: in some cases, by three times using it, in others six or eight times. Some of these persons are citizens of great respectability, to whom a personal reference can be made. Dyspepsia, nervous irritability, and general debility, have been greatly relieved by it. Its efficacy in cases of irregular arterial action, whether it has been too rapid or too slow, has been strongly marked in several instances. In the former the pulse has been reduced, and in the latter increased; and in all cases a great equalization of the circulation, and a lessening the tendency of the blood to the head, has been the speedy result of using the bath a very few times. It has a remarkable effect of clearing the skin from troublesome eruptions, and giving it a softness and freshness that is a striking indication of improved health. We have heard persons express their fears lest, in a state of great debility, it might prove injurious and dangerous. We can safely state that, to our knowledge, the weakest persons who have used the bath, have been strengthened by it; and we have not known a single instance in which the repeated use of it has not increased the vigour and activity of the patients. It doubtless requires some continued experience in giving of the bath, to prevent the possibility of its being misused; and that experience we are daily acquiring.

Thus far we can speak from our own knowledge, and several of the medical gentlemen of this city, who have advised their patients to use the bath, can vouch for the truth of some of these representations.

Vapour baths in this country have usually been the mere exposure of the body (except the head) to sulphureous exhalations, with a view to relieve rheumatic affections; or else the application of vapour, produced by a spirit lamp, to a patient in his bed, so as to produce profuse perspiration. But this latter mode has been found exceedingly inconvenient, and, in some instances, highly dangerous, from the excessive damp imparted to the bed-clothes by the operation. Besides, it is evident that no other object can be effected in this way, than merely exciting perspiration, and that without due regulation.

Mr. Whitlaw's vapour bath has not only decided advantages in these respects, but it attains other ends. Every one knows that various plants possess highly important medical virtues, and hence they are used in various infusions in all countries, for purposes in which experience has pointed out their efficacy. In this bath, these herbs, properly prepared and preserved, are combined according to



the object they are intended to effect. They are enclosed in a condensing box beneath the tent in which the patient sits, and steam, at a high temperature, being forced upon them from an adjacent boiler, their essential oils are carried up in the form of vapour, and fill the interior of the tent; which vapour not only acts upon the skin, but is inhaled by the lungs, and produces a grateful, but powerful effect on the whole system. During the fifteen or twenty minutes which the patient remains in this fragrant atmosphere, the perspiration usually flows copiously, and by constant wiping of the body the pores are opened and cleansed. After coming out of the bath it is necessary to use the aid of an assistant to wipe the body perfectly dry, with as much friction as possible; and after dressing, to take the refreshment of a cup of coffee, remaining in the house half an hour or more, and then, in fine weather, a good brisk walk in the open air, will not be attended with any danger, provided he be in sufficient health to enjoy it. Nothing more is necessary than to avoid a sudden chill from a cold draft of wind, or a damp atmosphere.

It has been doubted by professional men whether any effect could be produced on the viscera by the combination of the medicinal virtues of herbs with the blood, in its passage through the lungs, in the act of respiration. It is, however, known, that important effects have been produced by vapour from mercury, sulphur, and other minerals; and we see no reason to doubt but persons possessed of medical science may, by a similar use of herbs, produce beneficial results in far more numerous and obstinate diseases than we are at present prepared to speak of. In the first access of bilious fever it may prove eminently useful. We request our physicians to make such experiments, and if they succeed in reaching some latent diseases by a method hitherto unknown or neglected, we are sure they will not reject the agent because it has not hitherto been in the regular course of practice.

This explanation of the nature and present state of the Medicated Vapour Bath Institution, in the city of Washington, is respectfully submitted to the consideration of the stockholders, by

THE COMMITTEE.

I leave the preceding report to speak for itself, and pass on to notice my visit to Charleston, in South Carolina, where I spent some time, and have particularly to acknow-



ledge the kind and liberal reception I met with from several gentlemen of the faculty, and many other respectable persons. Here also it was my happiness to succeed in the cure of a number of persons, and the alleviation of others. In this city a company was formed, including five medical gentlemen, who purchased the patent use of my bath, and have established it on a very extensive plan. The following is a copy of their first report, to which I have annexed copies of letters I have received from Drs. Holbrook and Shecut.

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At a quarterly meeting of the Medicated Vapour Bath Company, it was unanimously resolved, that the following Report be published in the Gazettes of the city.

*Extract from the Minutes.*

## REPORT

Of the Physicians to the Medicated Vapour Bath Dispensary.

In conformity with the request of the Board of Directors the physicians to the Medicated Vapour Bath Dispensary, with much pleasure, have drawn up a summary report, which they respectfully submit to the attention of the stockholders.

The important results from the application of simple as well as medicated vapour, in the treatment of certain chronic affections, having been attested by experience within the United States since its introduction, the following statement is intended to strengthen the confidence reposed.

The remarks submitted are the result of the observation of the medical directors, which includes the short period of scarce three months since its establishment. That no unqualified opinions may be promulgated on the treatment pursued in the Dispensary, it is desirable it should be distinctly understood, that many of the cases enumerated were treated with internal remedies, and general directions given with regard to regimen, etc.; and all anomalous cases which obtained the use of the bath have been excluded from this report; particularly certain acute diseases, in which decided advantage was derived. Such whose cases were not permanent must be attributed to the want of perseverance, and the unfrequency of its application, many having acknowledged relief from only three trials. During the period of eleven weeks 236 persons were admitted to the bath, 120



of which were patients of the Dispensary ; of the latter number there were—of rheumatism 48, scrofula 6, debility 3, cutaneous eruptions 19, chronic hepatites 2, jaundice 1, dyspepsia 3, pulmonary affection 8, catarrh 7, dropsy 3, asthma 4, hæmoptosis 2, ulcers 4, leucorrhæ 1, intermittent fever 2, paralysis 3, hydrothorax 1, cynanche tonsylaris 3—total 120. Cured 36, relieved 68, no relief 16—120. The remaining number, 16, includes anomalous cases, those yet under treatment, or those who came for pleasure\*.

In no instance was it brought to the knowledge of the physicians that injury resulted from the use of the bath ; and it is due to truth to state, that where no good was expected invalids were apprised of its probable inefficacy.

The general diary or register of cases contains a statement of those who resorted to the bath as a preservation of health, by having removed from the surface of the body those depositions from free exhalations, and that are productive of derangement, particularly in the cuticular functions. It will not be a digression to mention, as information to those unacquainted with the fact, the sympathy existing between the functions of the surface and the internal organs. On general principles, the medical Directors are warranted in the assertion, that the judicious application of vapour is a good preservative of health, as well as a modifier of the violence of some troublesome affections.

From this statement a judgment may be formed, whether or not the support of the establishment will benefit the community. The encouragement already extended augurs in its favour—its success rests on its utility ; should that fail, it can never be attributed to injury inflicted.

The medical Directors are happy in communicating, that the generally received opinion still prevails that the Institution has certainly been beneficial, thereby reflecting considerable credit on the exertions of those who united to bestow its benefits on the afflicted.

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\* A case of country fever of seven days was cured by these applications of the bath during the present week, the patient being now convalescent.



*Copy of Dr. Holbrook's Letter to Mr. Whitlaw.*

Charleston, April 23rd, 1825.

Dear Sir,

Having attentively examined the effects of the medicated vapour bath upon your patients, I feel it an act of justice to state, that whatever may have been my previous opinions, or if you will, my prejudices upon the subject of baths as a means of curing disease, I am constrained to allow, that the great and unexpected relief which has been experienced in a short time by the suffering and afflicted under your guidance, has gained my entire confidence: I have in two days time literally seen "the lame his crutch forego." The complete cures of long protracted cases of chronic disease, which now have every appearance of continuing, will render your invention highly acceptable to the medical profession, by removing from their hands a class of patients of which they in general would be gladly freed. I have also been surprised at the sudden cures of several severely acute diseases, which you have effected during your residence in this city. Your new application of a long catalogue of remedies heretofore neglected has commenced a new era in the practice of medicine, and will hand your name down to future generations in the long list of worthies who have benefited the cause of humanity.

I am, with respect and esteem,

Your sincere friend,

MOSES HOLBROOK, M.D.

To Mr. Charles Whitlaw.

S. M. C. A. Socius.

J. H. DUNCAN, M.D., concurs in the above opinions.

*Copy of Dr. Shecut's Letter to Professor Mitchell.*

Charleston, April 21st, 1825.

Dear Sir,

It has been my good fortune to be made acquainted with Mr. Charles Whitlaw, whose talents as a Botanist are generally well known and appreciated in this country. I have also had an opportunity of investigating the principles, and in several instances of witnessing the effects of his invaluable medicated vapour bath, and I am confident that those principles require no more than a candid and



unprejudiced examination to render his practice acceptable to the scientific and humane, and adopted and used in the particular practice of physicians. The *modus operandi* of the process, and its effects in the particular diseases for which it is used, are no less rational than they are truly scientific; and as the vegetable kingdom affords to our *materia medica* an extensive choice in the different classes of their medical virtues, that have been tested by ages of experience—if to convert the essential properties of those simples into vapour, and thus to cause the inhalation of those vapours to effect the relief or cure of individuals labouring under disease, be an innovation upon the science of medicine, so also must every recent chemical product, and every new formula offered as a remedy, be deemed likewise an innovation.

I am aware, my dear Sir, of the important necessity of guarding against imposition in the practice of medicine; but I am qualified to say, that an acquaintance with Mr. Whitlaw, and an accurate investigation of the principles of his discovery, and the rationale of his practice, must eventuate in the decided approbation of every liberal practitioner, and of every friend to humanity: and with myself I am inclined to believe, they will cheerfully hail him as among the greatest benefactors of our country.

As this gentleman is on the eve of his departure for your city I have availed myself of the opportunity of addressing you on the subject, conscious of the very great pleasure you experience in facilitating the views and promoting the designs of the humane and benevolent: and as the encouragement of this practice promises the greatest possible advantage to afflicted mortals, I cannot do otherwise than respectfully to urge to your attentive consideration the merits of this gentleman and his important invention. Permit me at the same time to apprise you of an advantage likely to result to our tropical cities from the use of this simple and elegant invention,—the prevention and cure of that fatal scourge to our population, the yellow fever.

Should the event justify the prediction (and from the very nature of its application and effects it appears next to impossible to fail if timely and judiciously resorted to and applied), shall we not have abundant reasons to class this indefatigable friend to science and humanity with the immortal and lamented HOWARD, VALLI, and other renowned benefactors of men.

It is my design to urge the adoption of this bath in the medical treatment of yellow fever; and I very sincerely



believe, that with judicious management it will be found capable of effecting the reduction of the first stages of that disease. I should also urge the propriety of alternating electrical friction, sparks and modified shocks, with the bath; in both cases, however, the stomach and bowels are to be previously evacuated.

Be pleased, my dear Sir, to pardon the length of this letter; the importance of the subject, however, will, I am certain, be its best apology with you. At the same time I must entreat your forgiveness for the great lapse of time that has passed since I last wrote to you. Incessantly occupied with electrical practice and the formation of a new system of electricity, reducing it to a regular science, demanding almost every spare moment, will, with you, plead strongly in extenuation of my seeming neglect. I need not I presume say more to convince you of the sentiments of esteem and regard I have ever entertained for you, and pray you to accept the cordial salutation of,

My dear Sir, your's most respectfully,

R. E. W. S. SHECUT.

*To Professor Samuel L. Mitchell,  
New York.*

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*Copy of Dr. Shecut's Letter to Mr. Whitlaw.*

Charleston, June 27th, 1825.

Dear Sir,

Your friendly letter of the 4th instant has been received and has afforded me sincere pleasure in communicating to me your very flattering prospects in the great metropolis of infant America. Of this I have never suffered myself to entertain a doubt from the moment you did me the pleasure of explaining the principles of your bath, and of permitting me to investigate the grounds of your practice.

In this city the friends of "Whitlaw's Medicated Vapour Bath" are increasing daily: prejudices are fast yielding to stubborn facts; and I now distinguish among its well-wishers and its patrons those who not long since condemned it as "a mere catch-penny juggle." I regret that I cannot furnish you with an official account of the success of the Dispensary in this city; the medical Directors are at this time preparing to lay before the company such an account: it would therefore be premature to attempt to furnish such a document before it has been officially examined and approved by the board. I am qualified to say



to you, however, that it has lost none of the reputation you annexed to it, and promises much permanent good to the citizens, who are becoming more and more convinced of its safety and its utility.

Upwards of three hundred cases have been submitted to the operation of the bath; and many of these cases have been directed to it by the most eminent of the profession, and I think have already considerably lessened their prejudice. I am happy in finding such liberality; because it is a principle which ought to be inseparable from men of science. You will doubtless soon see the report of the medical board in its official form, and I should have delayed this until I could have forwarded it to you, but as my particular friend, Mr. Martin, has politely tendered to deliver you a letter from me I have availed myself of the liberty, and take leave to introduce him to you on his tour through the northern states. Be pleased, my dear Sir, to accept for yourself and for your good lady the assurance of my very sincere esteem, together with my best wishes for your success and happiness.

Your's very respectfully,

*To Mr. Charles Whitlaw.*

R. E. W. S. SHECUT.

P.S. Drs. Holbrook and De la Motta have requested to be mentioned to you: the former gentleman would have written, but has so many engagements at present as to deprive him of that pleasure.

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From Charleston I returned to New York, where I found the public opinion not only changed, but that many respectable persons appeared much interested in the accounts they had received of my success in the cities of Washington and Charleston; and so great was the desire for making trial of my remedies, that within three weeks time, two hundred and twenty-four patients were introduced to my attention. A bath company was here also formed; His Excellency Governor de Witt Clinton (who had received personal benefit from the bath), was the first to subscribe, and was followed by Judge Herttell, and many other respectable persons, with seven doctors.

I was equally successful in the establishment of baths in Albany, where His Excellency the Governor again headed the subscription, and was followed by General Van Ranselier, and Judge Spencer, the Mayor. Here also six gentlemen of



the faculty united with them. Baths were also established at Hudson, New Lebanon, and Watervleit, and preparations for the same purpose are making in Troy and Lansingburgh, in the state of New York.

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*Copy of Letter from Drs. Lawrence and Henrickson.*

New Lebanon, May 21st, 1825.

Worthy Friend,

Having made a thorough trial of the medicated vapour bath for four months past, in our societies in New Lebanon and Watervleit, we think it but justice to state, that we consider it an invaluable improvement in the healing art. Its power in reducing both chronic and acute inflammation, also in removing spasm, is certainly very great. In cases of obstructed perspiration, it is unquestionably the safest and best remedy that we have ever seen. Several persons in our society, who were scarcely free from a catarrhal affection during most of the winter months for several years past, have found permanent relief by using the bath a few times, and the predisposition to take cold, as it is commonly termed, seems to be wholly removed. Obstructed perspiration is certainly, in our changeable climate, one of the most fruitful sources of disease; and any remedy that is capable of removing the predisposition to it, must be considered a great blessing to mankind; and as such we do not hesitate to recommend the medicated vapour bath, when used according to your directions, as a scientific and rational remedy in various diseases. Accept the assurances of our best wishes for your welfare.

GARRET K. LAWRENCE, M.D

ABRAM HENRICKSON, M.D.

*To Mr. Charles Whitlaw,  
New York.*

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Previous to my leaving New York, the Committee of the Vapour Bath Company requested the seven doctors who superintended the bath, to send in a report of their respective cases for the quarter ending 1st October, 1825, the number, and the various diseases with which they were afflicted.



*The following is a copy of Dr. William Ireland's cases.*

Out of the number of cases submitted to the bath, 227 have been cured ; and it is but justice to state, that in acute and chronic inflammation, more benefit has been derived from the use of the medicated vapour bath in twenty-four hours, than I have ever witnessed in a month's most successful practice.

The following is a list of the disorders included in the above 227 cases.

Obstinate visceral obstruction.  
 Acute and chronic affections of the liver.  
 Scorbutic diseases of the skin.  
 Scabies and old inveterate cutaneous disease.  
 Scald head, salt-rheums, ring-worms, &c. &c.  
 Jaundice, lumbago, sciatica.  
 Acute and chronic rheumatism.  
 Asthmatic diseases, spitting of blood.  
 Palpitations of the heart, attended with weak small intermitting pulse.  
 Obstinate diarrhœa.  
 Erysipelatous inflammations, ophthalmia.  
 Obstinate glandular and scrofulous diseases.  
 Obstructions of urine and menses.  
 Strangury, spasmodic strictures, &c. &c.  
 Syphilitic sore throat, eruptions of the skin.  
 Nodes, ulcers, &c. &c.  
 Tic douloureux, and nervous irritability.

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In addition to the long catalogue of diseases enumerated by the medical practitioners, permit me to name a few more which came immediately under my own peculiar treatment, and wherein no instance of death occurred,—on the contrary, I left them either perfectly cured or convalescent. The disorders I allude to are the following :—atony of the muscles, atonic gout, elephantiasis, cholera morbus, cholera spasmodica, quinsy, croup, hooping-cough, measles, and gout.

In Philadelphia, the baths were established under the superintendence of four highly respectable medical gentlemen ; and my most grateful acknowledgments are due to Mr. Watson the mayor, Mr. Haines, and other gentlemen, to whose kindness and liberality I am greatly indebted.



I paid a short visit to the city of Boston, where my system was most favourably received; Dr. Ingalls received me with the kindness of former friendship, and introduced me to Doctors Reynolds and Jeffries.

From the length of this letter some apology may be due for trespassing so long on your attention. There are many incidents, however, which I have purposely omitted, and the account of the various cities which I visited is abridged as much as possible for the present. Yet I trust the result will be as satisfactory to my friends in England as to those in the western world. Every experiment I have been able to make has confirmed my opinion that scrofula may be eradicated from the kingdom altogether, and that dyspepsia with its long train of disorders will be alleviated and cured by pursuing my system of medicine, regimen, and the vapour bath; and that the greatest benefit may be derived from due attention to the aphorisms of Linnæus, as applicable to the purposes of life and health.

Having returned by the blessing of God to this metropolis once more, with a degree of prosperity and success which has exceeded my expectation, and with an abundant supply of plants for the purposes of medicine and medicating the baths, prepared and packed in a peculiar manner calculated to retain their full physical powers unimpaired for a considerable length of time, samples of which I have ready for your inspection, I trust that my system will prove of essential benefit to the British nation, by relieving the afflicted; and, in a great degree, tend to prevent those formidable diseases that are eating like a gangrene into the very vitals of the community.

To your Royal Highness, and those Gentlemen who have patronized the Asylum, I beg to present my most heartfelt gratitude, and with the greatest respect, to subscribe myself

Your most humble Servant,

No. 23, Finsbury Circus;  
Jan. 1, 1826.

CHARLES WHITLAW.



*Copy of Letter extracted from the Gazette of Health, on Mr. Whitlaw's Patent Medicated Vapour Bath, October 1st, 1826, addressed to the Editors.*

New York, August 1st, 1826.

Sirs,

Having been in the habit of reading your useful work, and observing its increasing circulation, both at home and abroad, I have thought proper to address to you a few lines respecting the use and virtues of the medicated vapour bath, introduced and patented in this country, about two years ago, by Mr. Charles Whitlaw.

This simple, though very important invention, is beginning to attract observation and awaken inquiry among many of the most liberal and well-informed physicians in this country, and will, ere long, be in very general use. I have superintended the establishment, formed in this city for the purpose of testing its usefulness and trying its effects, as a means in alleviating and curing disease, and have seen administered for that purpose about six thousand baths. From the results of this experience and attentive observation, it will not, I hope, be considered presumptuous in me to say that I can speak with much confidence respecting its utility as a remedy in numerous complaints. If it be considered only as a simple warm vegetable vapour bath, its superiority over the warm water baths is not to be calculated. The vapour bath possesses the power of producing diaphoresis, or profuse perspiration, in *any state of the body* at will; therefore its effects must be salutary, efficacious, and powerful. The proximate cause of morbid or diseased action is, by the most eminent physicians, attributed to a deranged state of the exhalent arteries of the skin, or follicles immediately under it; and when this insensible exhalation is not present, disease must, to a greater or less degree, supervene. Indeed, perfect health cannot long continue without it; while a contrary condition, such as heat, dryness of skin, ardent thirst, &c. &c., is at all times more or less present in disease. It cannot, in fact, be otherwise; for the substances thrown off by perspiration are positively deleterious, being partly composed of carbonic and nitrogen gases: hence the numerous contrivances and means adopted in all ages and in all countries to promote this absolutely necessary and healthy action of the extreme vessels of the surface.



If, I say, the bath be considered only as a simple vegetable vapour, or rather effluvia, possessing these powers at will, its obvious utility as a remedy cannot for a moment be doubted. If it be considered as a *medicated* vapour bath, it may be observed that the practice of inhaling the fumes, effluvia, vapours, &c. of different substances, such as the fumes of tar, &c. for diseases of the lungs, smoking stramonium and other narcotics in asthmatic affections, cinnabar, &c. in ulcerated sore throats, &c. &c., but never to the same extent, or in so effectual a manner, until this simple, efficient, and happy invention, by Mr. Charles Whitlaw. When the body is labouring under disease, the restoration of that salutary discharge called diaphoresis, or perspiration, has long been the *desideratum* of the profession, and is in all cases the first symptom which indicates an approach towards a recovery; and where that cannot be accomplished, morbid action must be present, and disease continue. "A crisis," says a learned author, "is the actual discharge of morbid matter, whether by the bowels or skin, brought on by the powers of nature, or the aid of medicine." Here then, I say, is the *desideratum* at once; for, *in any state of the body*, this actual discharge can be brought on at will, and consequently a crisis formed in any stage of the disease. It would be an useless occupation of time and space to notice here all the particular effects produced on different habits and complaints, by the administration of about six thousand baths for the relief and cure of different diseases; but I feel myself called on by candour and truth to state, that I have never found its equal, as an aid to the means in our power, for the relief of suffering humanity; and when placed in the hands of those who will not abuse its merits, or blend its usefulness with *empiricism*, its advantages are not to be calculated. Its manifest and immediate effects are, an agreeable and pleasant cleansing or purification of the whole body, producing an equal and general stimulation of the functions of the skin, and promoting animation, liveliness, and desire of food. It immediately relieves retro-pulsed eruptions, constriction, congestion, spasm, asthma, cholic, ardent fever, ardent and unquenchable thirst, dry and hot skin, &c. &c.

In cold listless habits of body, attended with a depravity of the functions of secretion, particularly those of the skin, the bath has never failed to produce the most beneficial effects; many having attended who had not experienced the pleasure of a natural perspiration, or a soft moist skin for



several years previously to their taking the bath. Its happy effects in green sickness, phlegmatic and debilitated habits, have been manifest in numerous cases, far beyond expectation. At the commencement of the cold stage, or at the accession of the febrile paroxysm, its effects are happy and instantaneous, and in most cases (if care be taken), a cure will at once be effected. In fact, its usefulness as a remedy in the practice of medicine is not to be calculated; and the field which is opened by this simple and invaluable invention, to the inquisitive and philosophical members of the profession, is immense.

I am, Sirs, your constant reader and friend,

W. M. IRELAND, M.D.

*To the Editors of the Gazette of Health.*

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## MEDICATED VAPOUR BATHS.

*Extract from the Charleston Gazette.*

Charleston, South Carolina, April 20th, 1826.

At the Anniversary Meeting of the Medicated Vapour Bath Company, held at their Dispensary, on the 18th instant, the following Report of the attending physician was read, and ordered to be printed.

### REPORT.

Agreeably to the rules and regulations the physician to the Medicated Vapour Bath Dispensary has the pleasure of submitting to the associates his annual report of the patients who have attended the establishment since they purchased it of Mr. Whitlaw: and in discharging this duty he deems it incumbent, at the request of several Members, to discuss, and, if possible, to obviate some objections which have been considerably agitated since these baths have been introduced to the notice of the public in this country. A strong,



but wholly unfounded prejudice exists in the opinions of many highly respected persons in the community, and even among respectable physicians, that the use of the baths debilitates, and that after a bath there is increased danger of "catching cold," if it be taken in cold or unpleasant weather. Such is not the case. Facts are of more consequence than deductions from established principles, in proving the correctness of his assertions, he will, therefore, appeal to the results of experience, that "the use of the vapour bath is, in reality, a tonic, and fortifies the system against cold."

Heat and cold are relative terms, and, by themselves considered, are neither strengthening nor debilitating, but are only so, mainly, as a consequence of certain states of the human system at the time of their application. Heat and moisture united have been long known to the intelligent physicians among the most valuable means of cure in certain cases; and wherever they have been most accurately known, they have been most highly appreciated—and in no way can they be so effectually administered as by vapour baths.

Pure morals have been invariably connected with cleanliness; we would, therefore, claim for this bath the merit of having, in this respect, a friendly influence upon society. Its immediate effects are, a pleasant sensation of comfort, and an agreeable warmth upon the whole body; the skin seems extended, and becomes softened; the dry and useless scarfskin soon becomes detached from its whole surface, and then follows a strong inclination to sleep. After the bath the person feels recruited and refreshed, his spirits are more buoyant, he experiences an agility and flexibleness of muscle to which he was before a stranger, and, in general, all the functions of the system are in healthy exercise, with more ease, and certainly with greater strength and energy. Although the income from the bath in this city is trifling to all concerned, yet it has fully answered the humane intentions of the associates. Its institution and the results of its application, in relieving pain and distress, must be peculiarly gratifying and satisfactory, when it is seen that of 681 patients, who for various ills resorted to the Dispensary in less than fifty weeks, ending with the 1st instant; 468 were cured, 186 greatly relieved, and only 27 received no relief; many of the last having tried not more than one or two baths, and a number of those relieved are still patients of the Dispensary; many of the patients used other remedies in conjunction with the baths.



The diseases on which the medicated vapour bath has been administered during the last year are as follow :—

Influenza and Cold . . . . .	211	Giddiness, or Vertigo . . . . .	3
Rheumatisms . . . . .	156	Bilious Cholic . . . . .	3
Cutaneous Diseases . . . . .	55	Inflammation of the Eyes . . . . .	3
Pulmonic ditto . . . . .	43	Scurvy . . . . .	3
Dropsies . . . . .	19	Chronic Diarrhœa . . . . .	3
Diseased Liver . . . . .	15	Burns and Scalds . . . . .	2
Asthma . . . . .	13	Pimpled Face . . . . .	2
Debility . . . . .	13	Pain in the Stomach . . . . .	2
Scrofula . . . . .	13	Dysentery . . . . .	2
Fever and Ague . . . . .	12	Cholera Morbus . . . . .	2
Sore Throat . . . . .	11	Fits . . . . .	2
Bilious Fever . . . . .	9	Stricture of the Urethra . . . . .	2
Suppressio Mensium . . . . .	8	Hysterics . . . . .	2
Gout . . . . .	7	Stiff Neck . . . . .	2
Old Ulcers . . . . .	7	Sore Lips . . . . .	2
Swelled Face . . . . .	7	Sciatica . . . . .	2
Tooth Ache . . . . .	7	Diseased Spine . . . . .	2
Leucorrhœa . . . . .	6	Ear Ache . . . . .	2
Inflam. Tumours and Biles . . . . .	6	Gravel . . . . .	1
Palsy . . . . .	6	Nettle Rash . . . . .	1
Country Fever . . . . .	5	Organic Affections of the	
St. Vitus's Dance . . . . .	5	Heart . . . . .	1
St. Anthony's Fire . . . . .	5	Pleurisy . . . . .	1
Dyspepsia, or Indigestion . . . . .	4	Jaundice . . . . .	1
Spitting Blood . . . . .	4		
Syphilis . . . . .	4		
Hæmorrhoids . . . . .	4		
		Total of Fifty Diseases	681

#### RECAPITULATION.

Cured . . . . .	468
Relieved . . . . .	186
No relief . . . . .	27
	<hr/>
Total	681



# INSTITUTION

FOR THE CURE OF

## **Scrofula in all its Various Forms,**

SCIRRHOUS TUMOURS IN THEIR INCIPIENT STAGE;

*Cutaneous Diseases, Liver Complaints,*

**GOUT, RHEUMATISM, ASTHMA, DEBILITY,**

And all Disorders arising from Derangement of the

DIGESTIVE ORGANS,

*By MR. WHITLAW,*

No. 14, FINSBURY PLACE SOUTH,

BY MEANS OF

**American Vegetable Decoctions,**

**A SUITABLE PLAN OF DIET AND REGIMEN**

AND HIS

**PATENT MEDICATED VAPOUR BATHS.**

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*Properties of the different Numbers of the American Vegetable  
Decoctions.*

- No. 1. Alterative Medicine.
- No. 2. Alterative and Purgative ditto.
- No. 3. Alterative and Emollient ditto.
- No. 4. Alterative and Sudorific ditto.
- No. 5. Antacid ditto.
- No. 6. Antacid and Tonic ditto.
- No. 7. Antipseudo-syphilitic ditto.
- No. 8. Antihæmorrhagic ditto.
- No. 9. Tonic and Aromatic ditto.
- No. 10. Tonic, Aromatic and Aperient ditto.
- No. 11. Tonic and Corroborant ditto.
- No. 12. Tonic, Corroborant and Aperient ditto.
- No. 13. Tonic and Astringent ditto.
- No. 14. Tonic and Antibilious ditto.

Besides a great variety of other Medicines, imported from America, comprising a complete *Materia Medica* from the Vegetable Kingdom.



## PLAN OF DIET AND REGIMEN.

Unwholesome food, impure water, and irregularities in diet, being the primary causes of most chronic diseases, it is necessary that patients afflicted with the above-mentioned disorders, should pay the strictest attention to their mode of living, not only during the progress of cure, but even afterwards; as the same causes that produced a disease will occasion its return.

*Farinaceous Vegetables.*—Bread, wheat and rye flour, oat, barley and pease meal, rice, arrow-root, sago, and tapioca, are recommended: but potatoes, and bread adulterated with potatoes and alum (*a species of fraud the most pernicious; because the alum, by constipating the bowels, and the potatoes, by fermenting in the stomachs of those affected with indigestion, slowly induce many dangerous diseases,*) are forbidden.

*Boiled Vegetables.*—Green pease, French and Windsor beans, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, Scotch-kale, turnip, spinach, beet-root, sea-kale, asparagus, artichoke, Jerusalem-artichoke, vegetable marrow, celery, dandelion, carrot, parsnip, leeks and onions, when thoroughly cooked, also pumpions and squashes, in all their various modes of cooking, are recommended.

*Raw Vegetables.*—Water-cress, American-cress, mustard and garden-cress, lettuce, endive, nasturtium, radish, scurvy-grass, corn-sallad and celery, are also recommended.

*Fruit.*—Acidity in the stomach being one of the most prominent symptoms of derangement of the digestive organs, the patients must abstain from fruit; especially from currants, gooseberries, grapes, plums, cherries, oranges, lemons, dried currants, raisins and prunes; from vinegar, pickles, and acids of all kinds.

*Animal Food.*—Milk, eggs, sweet butter, new cheese, the lean of mutton, beef, lamb, veal, fowls, turkeys, game and fish, thoroughly cooked, and oysters, shrimps, crabs and lobsters, may be eaten in moderation; but pork, the fat of meat, ducks, geese, and eels, rich soups, gravies, and other greasy substances, salt meat, rancid butter, and decayed cheese, are strictly forbidden.

*Drink.*—Water being the natural diluent and solvent of the food, and constituting the chief part of the fluids of the body, the purest and softest filtered rain or river water should be chosen, as being the most wholesome; but water containing putrescent animal and vegetable matter, hard pump or well water; chalybeate springs, or water impregnated with iron, and water contaminated with the oxide of lead, in consequence of passing through leaden pipes and remaining in leaden cisterns, is very deleterious; particularly in cases of Scrofula and Consumption, and therefore to be avoided.

Coffee, cocoa, chocolate, sage tea, British herb tea, toast-water, and spruce beer are allowed. But since, in all cases of debility, a large quantity of fluid is injurious, the patients should drink as little as possible; and, in order to diminish the necessity of drinking, they should abstain from salt, as it excites thirst, fever, and inflammation; and from China tea, wine, cider, perry, and malt liquors, as they entirely counteract the beneficial effects of the medicines.

*Air and Exercise.*—To promote the cure, it is indispensably necessary that patients, and particularly those afflicted with Scrofula, who are frequently averse to active exertion, should rise early and take as much exercise in the open air as can be borne without pain or excessive fatigue.



## THE PATENT MEDICATED VAPOUR BATH,

Employed with the Vegetable Decoctions, is a powerful auxiliary in the cure of the above-mentioned diseases. The effects of the Vapour Bath are:—

1st.—To equalize the circulation of the blood, and hence to remove coldness of the hands and feet, and to lessen the determination or flow of blood to the head.

2d.—To promote sweat, and re-establish insensible perspiration, and thereby to relieve symptoms of internal inflammation.

3d.—To diminish nervous irritability; and in no instance has it failed to cure tic douloureux.

4th.—To promote cutaneous eruptions, and remove diseases of the skin.

5th.—To remove the effects of mercury from the system.

6th.—To promote absorption of dropsical effusions.

7th.—To relieve difficulty of breathing, and hence to cure Asthma, and other diseases of the chest and lungs.

8th.—To strengthen the stomach, and impart a tone to the digestive organs, and cure dyspepsia with its consequent disorders.

9th.—To promote the healing of Scrofulous and Chronic ulcers.

10th.—To remove Gouty and Rheumatic pains and swellings from the joints, and cure Lumbago, Sciatica, &c.

11th.—The Quinsy. The bath has never failed to relieve it.

12th.—The Croup. It may be regarded as a specific.

13th.—The Hooping Cough. Gives great relief.

14th.—The Measles. No instance of death having taken place, when the bath has been employed.

15th.—To prevent and cure discharges of Blood from the Lungs and other internal organs of the body.

16th.—To cure Acute and Chronic Inflammation, the Bath, judiciously medicated, is a certain specific.

17th.—To cure Gout, in all its forms, in a shorter period of time than any agent hitherto employed.

The American Vegetable Decoctions, combined with the use of the Vapour Bath, ample experience has proved to be invaluable remedies for the prevention and cure of the yellow and putrid fevers; and they are, therefore, particularly recommended to persons going abroad to a hot climate.



Mr. Whitlaw informs his Friends and the Public that he has recently imported from America a large and extensive collection of Medicinal Herbs, comprising a complete Materia Medica from the vegetable kingdom, applicable to the cure of most diseases with which mankind are afflicted. Mr. W. has likewise invented a new method of administering medicine by the agency of Steam or Vapour, for which he has obtained Letters Patent, both in this country and in the United States of America. He has sold his Patent-right to various companies established in America, where its operation has been attended with the most beneficial results; and the numerous reports that he has received of the success attending the administration of the Vegetable Vapour Bath, justify him in saying that it is a far more effectual means of relieving and curing diseases than any agent hitherto known in the history of medicine.

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Persons residing at a distance from the metropolis, who may wish to place themselves or children under Mr. W.'s care, can be accommodated at his house at Bayswater, or at the Boarding Houses in the neighbourhood, with Board, Lodging, Medicines, Baths, etc., from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* per week. The salubrity of the air, with the acquisition of Kensington Gardens, renders Bayswater one of the most desirable places near the metropolis.

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The humane individuals in the various cities and towns of Britain, who may wish to alleviate and cure the sufferings of their fellow men afflicted with the above dreadful disorders, may have the Patent Medicated Vapour Bath introduced at a very moderate expense by sending a person to be instructed in the mode of its application and medication, suitable to the various diseases for which it has been so successfully employed.

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Mr. Whitlaw may be consulted every day at his establishment, No. 14, Finsbury Place, South, London, where letters (post paid) containing a statement of cases, and enclosing a fee for advice, will be punctually answered; and Medicines, with proper instructions for use, for ready money only, forwarded to all parts of the kingdom.

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