

**A dissertation on the Oleum Palmae Christi, sive Oleum Ricini; or, (as it is commonly called) castor oil; in which its history is illustrated; its properties and virtues explained; and its uses in bilious, calculous, and other disorders recommended / By Peter Canvane.**

**Contributors**

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DISPERSED

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*The Palma Christi, or Ricinus Americanus,  
commonly call'd, the Castor Plant.  
—ut Palma florebit. Plal:*

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A  
DISSERTATION

ON THE  
*Oleum Palmae Christi,*  
Sive OLEUM RICINI;

Or (as it is commonly called)

CASTOR OIL:

IN WHICH

Its HISTORY is illustrated; its PROPERTIES  
and VIRTUES explained;

AND

Its USES in BILIOUS, CALCULOUS, and other  
DISORDERS, recommended.

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The THIRD EDITION, revised and corrected.

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By PETER CANVANE, M. D.  
OF BATH,

Member of the Royal College of Physicians in London,  
and Fellow of the Royal Society.

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Scribant alii, quibus ista mens est miracula ex auditu, ego, quod hisce oculis,  
& qualicumque meo iudicio percepi, vobis spectandum propono.

JACOBUS BONTIUS.

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DISSERTATION

ON THE

Optum Fimus Genui

Sive OIBUM RICHINI

(Or the ...)

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AND  
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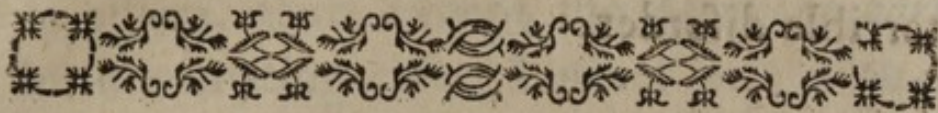
OF BATH

Member of the Royal College of Physicians in London, and Fellow of the Royal Society.

Printed by W. T. ...

L O N D O N

Printed for W. T. ...



## P R E F A C E.

I HAVE lately read, with great pleasure, four elegant treatises on the *colica pictonum*, or *dry belly-ach*, written by four living and shining ornaments of the profession, in four different parts of Europe; I mean by the incomparable Dr. *Huxham* of Plymouth; the judicious Dr. *de Haen* of Vienna; the learned Dr. *Thierry* of Paris; and the methodical Dr. *Tronchin* of Amsterdam.

Those gentlemen have treated the subject with the utmost art; have investigated the causes and symptoms with the greatest perspicuity; and have all unanimously agreed to commence the cure with *purgatives*; but unfortunately none of that class of medicines we know of, in the

*materia medica*, are appropriated to this terrible disorder.

*Laxatives*, given in such quantities and form as may seem to answer the intention best, will frequently not stay on the stomach, on account of the great dose required to be taken; and *drastic, rough purges*, are condemned by all with great justice, as they draw the intestines into spasmodic contractions, and add irritation to irritation.

Therefore, as the *oleum palmæ christi*, the subject of the following treatise, an incomparable medicine in this case, was not known to those learned gentlemen above-mentioned, I thought it would not be unacceptable to the public to see a few observations I have made from a practice of near twenty years, in using and applying this oil; seven years of which I have constantly used it with success in America, and near twelve years in my practice in England I have applied it occasionally, and as I could procure

P R E F A C E.

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cure it from abroad ; and I can venture to affirm, that, except the *peruvian bark* in intermitting cases, I never met with a more valuable medicine in all *bilious complaints*, and some other disorders, which will be specified in the course of this pamphlet.

The truth of this assertion I do not doubt but will be attested by those gentlemen of the profession, who have ever practised abroad, and used this oil either in the English or French Leeward Caribbee islands.

Mr. *Frazer*, who was surgeon to his majesty's troops of the island of Antigua, has some time ago given, in the *medical essays* of London, a very short but genuine account of some of the properties of this oil ; being the only tract I have ever seen published of it : which to me seems very surprising, as I am sure it has been used in those islands with success these thirty or forty years.—I could have corroborated every assertion in the fol-



lowing treatise by exhibiting cases I have by me, but was afraid of swelling this pamphlet to a volume; which was not my design. Besides, I have not leave from several gentlemen and Ladies, of publishing their names in print; without which I have always deemed it folly to publish cases, as it is very well known there is nothing easier than to adapt and form such cases, in order to support some particular favourite hypothesis.

In treating of this oil, I have sketched out the principal diseases to which it is chiefly adapted. In this I have not advanced any hypothesis, or given any rules of practice but what are deduced from the structure of the parts in the animal œconomy, and confirmed by observations of Dr. *Boerhaave*, his learned commentator, and Dr. *Mead*. Sometimes I have made use of these gentlemen's words in deducing practical inferences, not knowing where to find better, in order to strengthen, by the authority of such  
great

great names, my doctrine concerning this medicine.

As this oil, since my first publication of this pamphlet, is now become official, (it being sold at the Apothecaries-hall and at several other shops in London and Bath) the seeds from which it is extracted may be easily imported, at a very reasonable rate, as the plant grows wild and in great plenty, in every one of the English and French islands. We have the best and most valuable of our medicines in this manner from abroad; such as the *Peruvian bark*, *Rhubarb*, *Ipecacuabna*, &c,

If, in writing and compiling this small treatise, I have any ways contributed towards promoting the *ars medendi*, my chief aim is answered.

If there should be any errors in this performance, (as some no doubt there are) I hope the candid reader will make the proper allowances, when he considers,

that I may in some respect say with *Lucretius*,

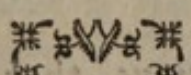
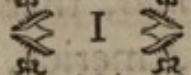
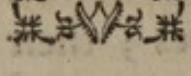
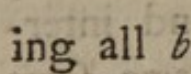
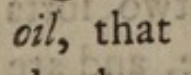
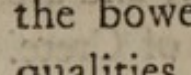
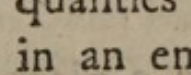
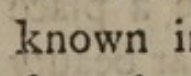
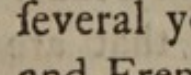
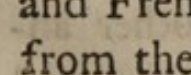
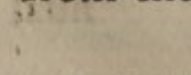
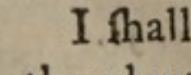
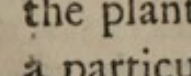
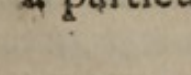


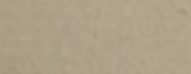

- - - *Peragro loca, nullius ante*

- - - - *trita solo.*

Since my first publication of this treatise, I have never once had any reason to alter my opinion in any one point, concerning this oil and its effects. The public, I believe, is now sufficiently convinced of its efficacy in all bilious and other complaints specified in this pamphlet, as this medicine is now universally prescribed by the most eminent physicians not only in this kingdom but in several other parts of Europe and America.



## A Dissertation, &c.



















 T is universally allowed, by all the learned of the profession, that there is nothing more wanted in the *art of healing*, and particularly in treating all *bilious* cases, than a *vegetable purgative oil*, that will act gently in a small quantity on the bowels, with little or no irritation: these qualities the *oleum ricini*, or *castor oil*, possesses in an eminent degree; and, tho' it is little known in Europe, yet it has been used these several years with great success in the English and French islands in America, as will appear from the following observations.

I shall first premise a *botanical* description of the plant; after which, I will treat of its oil in a particular manner.

## DESCRIPTION of the PLANT.

The plant from which this oil is extracted is the *ricinus americanus major*, *caule virescente* H. R. P. the <sup>a</sup> *Nbambu guacu* of *Piso*, and Sir *Hans Sloane's* <sup>b</sup> *Ricinus americanus fructu racemoso hispido*. The French in the islands call it the greater *palma christi* with green stalks. <sup>c</sup> *Monf. du Tertre* and <sup>d</sup> *Pere L' Abbat* mention it under that name in their description of the French Caribbee islands.

There are four or five sorts of *Ricinus*, that grow in different parts of Africa and America, which have much the same virtues; their seeds are frequently sent into England intermixed with each other. There are two sorts that grow in the warm parts of Europe, and are to be met with in Spain and the island of Crete.

Mr. *Millar* says these plants deserve a place in every curious garden, for the singular beauty of their leaves, especially those sorts that are annual and may be cultivated as all other annual

<sup>a</sup> Vide *Gulielm. Pison* hist. natur. Ind. Lib. iv. c. 31.

<sup>b</sup> Vide history of Jamaica, vol. i. page 126.

<sup>c</sup> Vide *histoire des antilles habitees par les Francois*, vol. vii. page 103.

<sup>d</sup> Vide *nouveau voyage*, vol. vii. page 78.

nual plants. He planted the *Ricinus Africanus maximus* near Chelsea; one of the leaves of this plant was upwards of two feet diameter, and the stem was as large as a middle-siz'd broom-staff, tho' but of one summer's growth.

Some imagine the *Ricinus* to be the tree that shaded *Jonas* after he was discharged from the whale<sup>e</sup>.

It

<sup>e</sup> The following anecdote concerning this plant, which is called in Hebrew כִּיק, is recorded in Gerard's herbal, or universal History of plants; printed in the year 1633.—*Ricinus* (whereof mention is made in the fourth chapter and sixth verse of the prophecy of *Jonas*) was called by the Talmudists *kik*, for in the Talmud we read thus, *velo beschemen kik*, that is, in English, *and not with the oil of כִּיק*, which oil is called in the Arabian tongue *alkerwa*. Moreover a certain rabbin asks this question, what is *kik*? to which *Resch Lachish* makes answer in Ghemara, saying, *kik* is nothing else but *Jonas's kikajon*; and that this is true appears from the Greek name *κικ* which the antient Greek physicians used, which Greek word is derived from the Hebrew *kik*, whereby it appears that the old writers long ago called this plant by its true and proper name, but the old Latin writers knew it by the name of *cucurbita*, which is evidently demonstrated by a history, mentioned by St. *Austin* to St. *Jerome*, in these words: "The name *kikajon* is of small moment, yet so small a matter lately caused a great tumult in Africa, for a certain Bishop, having an occasion to treat of what is mentioned in the fourth chapter of *Jonas's* prophecy, (in a sermon he made in the cathedral church) said that *this plant* was called *cucurbita*, a *gourd*, because it increased so hugely in so short a time, or, said he, it is called *bedera*: upon the novelty and untruth of this doctrine the people were greatly offended, and there suddenly

It is called in Latin *Ricinus*, because the seed resembles the animal of that name, which commonly infests horses and black cattle, called *tick*.

It is likewise called *Palma Christi*, because the leaves resemble the palm of the hand. It is called by *Dioscorides*, in Greek, *κίκις ἢ κρότων*, *a crotonis sive ricini animalis similitudine quod refert semen*. The French sometimes call this plant the *agnus castus*, perhaps on account of the great efficacy of its oil in curing, and in temperating all *febrile* heats, and especially the heats of *venery*; from whence, as I suppose, the people of St. Christopher's, who were formerly blended with the French in that island, have, by a corruption of *agnus castus*, called it *castor oil*.

It is certain this oil was used in St. Kitt's before it was in any of our other islands; what is very surprising, there is little or nothing said of its medicinal virtues by the gentlemen of the

denly arose a *tumult* and *burly-burly*, infomuch that the bishop was obliged to go to the Jews to ask their judgment concerning the name of this *plant*; and when he had received of them the *true name*, which was *kikaijon*, he made an open recantation and confessed his error, and was justly accused as a falsifier of the holy scripture."—Sometimes the Greeks call this plant *κρότων*, (i. e.) *Ricinus*, from its similitude with that insect,

the faculty residing at Barbadoes ; and I have met with two or three surgeons from that island, who seemed not to have known the use of it.

*This plant* grows as tall as a little tree, very beautiful, and expanded into many branches ; the leaves are large, rather round, parted into five, eight, or more sections, and sometimes into nine sharp-pointed or serrated divisions, fashioned like the leaves of a fig-tree, but rather larger, spread or wide open like the hand of a man, and has towards the top a bunch of flowers, clustering together something like a bunch of grapes : these flowers are small and staminous, growing on the top of the stalks ; but on the body of the plant grow bunches of rough triangular husks, each containing three speckled seeds, less than horse-beans (tho' sometimes as large) ; which, in their brittle shells, contain white kernels, of a sweet, oily, and sometimes nauseous taste. <sup>f</sup>

The

<sup>f</sup> Vide *Gulielm. Pison histor. natural. & medic. Indiarum*, p. 180.—The Arabians call this plant *cherva*, the Italians *cataputia maggiore*, the French *palma christi*, the Germans *winderbaum*, the Dutch *wonderboome*, the English the *castor*, *palma christi*, or *great spurge*.



The *kernel*, from which the oil is extracted, is very acrimonious, and will in some constitutions work upwards and downwards, in a violent manner; it consists of two very thin membranes or pellicles, one exterior, and the other in the heart of the seed; of which if the seed be stripped, 'tis commonly deemed less purgative and emetic by half than it was before, insomuch that four grains will then be only equal to two.

The use of these seeds is of very antient date in the practice of physick: the divine *Hippocrates*, some hundred years before the Christian æra, made use of them instead of the *grana Cnidia*, and says they were acrimonious, and sometimes very violent in their operation.

It is certain the seeds in substance are acrid, and should not be used but with caution. It is very remarkable, that all the oils obtained by expression are constantly very mild and lenient, even though the substances from which they are extracted be in themselves very acrimonious. *Mustard-seed*,<sup>§</sup> which is so acrid that it is even caustic, yields by expression an oil as mild as that of *sweet almonds*; but then  
the

§ See *Monf. Macquer's elemens de chymie*, p. 97.

the *kernels*, from which the oils are extracted, must not be old, but fresh and ripe, because they become more and more acrid as they grow old, and this acrimony is acquired even in the fruit itself.

*Matthiolus*, 'tis true, and some antient physicians, attempted to correct the emetic quality of the *seeds* of this plant by *torrefaction*, but were mistaken; as, on the contrary, they acquired by that means a greater *acrimony*.

*Gulielmus Piso* has proposed a tincture of them, with brandy, as a very safe medicine: but, as the acrimony of this nut is sometimes so great as to become unsafe, I must advise it to be taken with caution.

The *leaves* of the *palma christi* are commonly used abroad, cut in small pieces, boiled with milk, and made into a *poultice*, which becomes very suppurative, and will bring boils to a head sooner than any *plaster* or *poultice* I know. The leaves are also used very often with success to dress *blisters*, especially if there be any dread of an approaching mortification; they are also of great efficacy steeped in vinegar; and will cure the *herpes*, the *itch*, and the *scalded head* of children.

Having

Having premised thus much, concerning *this plant* in general, its *fruit* and *leaves*, I must now return to the *oil*, which has been found so efficacious in all obstinate constipations, and, in fine, is a sovereign medicine in all *bilious*, *calculous*, and *nephritic complaints*. And here I appeal to all those gentlemen of the faculty, who have practised abroad in *warm climates*, some of whom are now in England; I likewise appeal to the surgeons of his majesty's navy, who have tried this oil in the Leeward Islands,—whether they ever found any other than salutary effects from the use of it in almost all cases where there is an indication for opening the body, especially in warm bilious constitutions? 'tis true it does not answer so well in cold phlegmatic habits of body, as it is a cooling purge, and in those persons sometimes apt to cause gripings and spasms. I never knew any medicine answer so well in most affections of the bowels, and especially the *colica Pietonum*, commonly called the *dry-belly ach*.

Mr. *Frazer* very well observes, that *Sydenham* and *Baglivi* have both complained in their treatises of *bilious cholics*; <sup>h</sup> that, tho' they preferred mild purgatives in those cases, yet these

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<sup>h</sup> See the medical essays of London, vol 2.

complaints sometimes were so obstinate, as to require stronger efforts than any of the laxative kind could effect; and consequently they were obliged, in spite of themselves, to recur to *pilæ cochiae* and other *drastics*: this oil would certainly answer their intentions in every respect.

Tho' it is the most efficacious medicine in removing the most obstinate complaints of the *dry belly-ach* and the *iliac passion*, (two of the most excruciating disorders that human nature is liable to) yet it is so innocent in its operation, that I have often known it given with success to infants, a tea-spoon-full the day after their birth, in order to lubricate the passages, and expel the *meconium*.

Mr. *Brown*, a gentleman of fortune, of the island of St. Christopher's, often used it instead of olive oil, in his fallad of an evening, it procuring him one or two stools, which he told me was always of great service to him and kept him cool in the *gout* and *calculus*, both which disorders he had in a violent manner.

This oil—which we may now call either *oleum ricini*, *oleum palmæ christi*, *oil of kik* from

the Hebrew, *agnus castus*, or *castor oil*—this oil, I say, I have given with success in *dysenteries*, or *bloody fluxes*.

It is sometimes disputed whether mild oils, such as oil of sweet almonds, bind or relax the body; because, if they are taken in a *dysentery*, they bind, but in *hypochondriacal affections* relax.—But if we consider, that the cause of a *dysentery* is something acrid, vellicating the fibres of the intestines, and that the property of mild oils consists in obtunding acrids, by sheathing them, we shall easily perceive they must be of service in a *dysentery*: but in *hypochondriacal affections* the passages of the intestines are dry and crisp, and their surfaces unequal and rough; hence mild oils, being applied to them, take away their crispness and corrugation, by lubricating and then relaxing them.

The use of this lubricating oil is most beneficial to those bodies that are dry, hot, *atrabilious*, troubled with the *piles*, and that enjoy a plentiful perspiration; for these will be purged with oily medicines, when the strongest drastics will have no effect; for if we consult all the Italian eminent physicians who have written on *bilious cholics*, such as *Baglivi*, *Bellini*, &c. they are the most averse, in  
all

all these cases, to acrid purges, and only order oil of sweet almonds, and other oily draughts, which immediately perform their *effect*, whilst *drastics* only cause anxieties, sweats, and vomitings, without any purgation.

I have often found this oil of the greatest efficacy in *clysters*; and in outward application, by only rubbing the navel and hypochondria in children, when I could not get them to take any thing inwardly, which is often the case in infants, this embrocation alone has often produced one or two physical stools.

The *castor oil* given in small draughts, or by way of clyster or embrocation, is an excellent and wonderful *vermifuge*: nay the very smell and fume of this oil will purge some delicate and weak children, the active part of some purges being very volatile; this likewise appears from *aloes*, the fume of which will purge some delicate frames; but when its subtile parts are flown off, that which remains is quite unactive, the cathartic part of a *purge*, according to *Boerhaave's* observations, being the least with regard to the whole bulk: as appears evidently from *euphorbium* and *coloquintida*, which  
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being dissolved in water, and gently evaporated, become unactive masses ; whereas the part evaporated was very small, and scarce perceptible.

The Indians in Brasil, I am told, take an orange or lemon, and keep it macerating for a month together in this oil and the *oleum colocintidos*, mixed together ; and by rubbing it strong in the hands, till they become warm, by applying the lemon to the nose, its odour will immediately cause a stool : but this, I believe, must be meant of the *oleum ricinoides* or *physic nut*, or rather the *oleum granorum tigli*, which are much stronger than the *oleum palmæ christi*.

#### PREPARATION of the OIL.

This oil is prepared in two different manners : first, by decoction, in boiling water ; secondly, by expression, which is counted the preferable method, tho' a greater quantity of oil is acquired by the former.

In order to prepare it by decoction, you must gather the seeds when ripe, strip them of their husks, pound them in a marble mortar, and tie them up in a linen cloth ; put this packet  
into

into a pan, with seven or eight times as much water, and make the water boil ; the oil will be separated by the ebullition, and float on the surface of the water ; skim it off carefully with a ladle, and continue boiling till no more oil appears.

By this method a much greater quantity of oil will be obtained, than by *expression* alone, because the degree of heat applied greatly facilitates the separation of the oil ; for a convincing proof of this truth, take the remains of the seeds, from which the oil has been so thoroughly expressed that they would yield no more, boil them in this manner, and you'll obtain a great deal more oil.

*This* way of obtaining the *castor oil* is not so much esteemed in general, as that by *expression* ; because the heat, which the seeds are exposed to in the operation, occasions their being less mild than they naturally are, and more liable to become rancid.

In order to *express* this oil, you must pound in a marble mortar, or grind in a mill, the kernels ; tie up this mass, thus prepared, in a strong, thick, new canvas bag,



bag, and put it into a prefs, between two iron plates ; squeeze it strongly, and you'll see the oil run out in streams into the receiving vessel.

It is very remarkable, as I observed before, that oils, thus expressed, let the substances from which they are extracted be ever so acrimonious, are mild and lenient.\* Bitter and sweet almonds produce the self-same soft oil ; and the *oil of mustard-seed* is equally as mild, tho' the seeds are so acrid as to raise blisters, and are even caustic. † Dr. *James*, in his new English dispensatory, says, the *oil of mustard*, by expression, is prescribed with success in the severest fits of the *stone* : but *this oil* is more mild, and by no means like *oil of mustard-seed*, which is procured by distillation, and which is extremely acrid and igneous. The expressed oil of the West-India *thistle-seed* is very lenient and mild ; tho' the seeds bruised, and taken a thimble-full, will vomit and purge several times, and are counted abroad, and really are, a specific in *dysenteries*.

#### Medicines

\* See Monf. *Macquer's* elements of chemistry, p. 97.

† See Dr. *James's* new dispensatory, p. 443.

*Medicines* of the *purgative* tribe are commonly, by the best authors, divided into two classes; the *drastic*, and *eccoprotic*: the former act by a very powerful stimulus, and, by greatly irritating the intestinal coats, very often cause such pains as bring on *convulsions*, *diarrhœas*, *dysenteries*, &c. insomuch that the celebrated *Hoffman* † says, they should be discarded the practice of *physic*, except in cases of the utmost necessity, where a mild method stands no chance of succeeding.

There are, properly speaking, two kinds of *eccoprotics*; one of which does not disturb the body in its operation, and expels little or nothing from it; such as all recent oils, freshly extracted from *animals*, and some from *vegetables*, as *olives* and *almonds*. The second class of *eccoprotics* are now called lenitives, and formerly by the antients *minoratives*; that is, which do not draw out a quantity of the *feces* to be expelled, at once, but by degrees. To this class, therefore, belong all *medicines* whatever, that are able to stir the villi of the stomach into *excretory motions*: but this ought to be done without much disturbance to the rest of the

C 4

body;

† See *Hoffman's* dissertatio de purgantibus fortioribus e praxi medica merito ejiciendis.

body ; yet, as *Boerhaave* and his learned commentator observe, it is absolutely necessary that these medicines be thick and something acrid, otherwise they will never become purgative. The *oleum ricini* we are treating of has both these qualities ; for it lubricates, gently stimulating the *intestines* to perform their offices, and its thickness hinders it often from passing the lacteal vessels : this we see in whey, which by the thinness and lightness of its particles will pass the lacteals ; and, instead of opening the body, will become a *sudorific*, or *diuretic*.

*The Use and Dose of this OIL.*

I commonly prescribe from two to three or four spoons-full of this oil to adults, in two spoons-full of *pepper-mint* water, or the *tinct. stomachica* of the *London dispensatory*.

Sometimes I make a *potio alba*, by mixing two or three spoons-full with a sufficient quantity of the *yolk of eggs*, to incorporate it thoroughly, and then add two ounces of simple and two or three drachms of compound *pepper-mint* water. To children I order it by way of an *oleosaccharum*, or mixt with *honey*.

Tho' this oil will keep a good while ; yet, *like all other oils by expression*, it is apt by age and heat to become rancid.

My ingenious friend, Mr. *Renaudet*, surgeon, at Bristol Hotwells, who has used for several years the *castor oil* with great success in North-America, and on board his majesty's navy, tells me, that he has often depurated this oil, and prevented its rancidity, by putting a quart of it into about half a gallon of pure cold water, and whipping it as women do syllabubs ; by which means the salts and grosser feculent matter either fell to the bottom, or were blended in the menstruum, and the oil floated on top, which he carefully scummed off ; and repeated the process a second time, which was well worth his trouble, as he often found by experience. I am likewise told, that a little salt will depurate this oil ; which I have not tried.

As I have found this surprising medicine in a very particular manner serviceable, and preferable to all other purges, in the following *disorders* ; I'll make a short abstract of my observations in those complaints.

1st—In the *colica pictonum*, or *dry belly-ach*.

2dly—In *most fevers*, where there is any indication for cooling and opening the body.

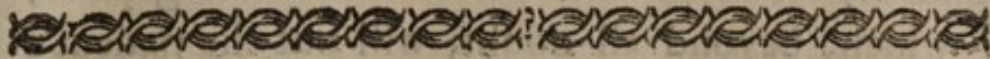
3dly—In all *bilious complaints*.

4thly—In the *apthæ chronica*, or *thrush*.

5thly—In the *tetanus*, or *cramp*.

6thly—In the *gonorrhœa*, *fluor albus*, and *some other complaints*.





*Of the* COLICA PICTONUM,  
or DRY BELLY-ACH.

**I**T is universally allowed, by all the authors who have wrote on this disorder, particularly the moderns, such as *Huxham, de Haen, Tronchin,* and *Thierry*, who have given us their practical observations on it, made in very different countries and climates, that, whatever the causes of it may be, which they very accurately described, keeping the body open is one of the main indications of cure, in order to give a free passage to the noxious and irritating matter contained in the *intestinal canal*; which alone is the true cause of all the dismal symptoms that attend this dangerous disorder: but then the method for obtaining this end is attended with great difficulty; sharp, rough draftic purges, are condemned by all with great justice, as they add irritation to irritation, and draw the *intestines* into spasmodic contractions, which must necessarily defeat the intention they are given for; as these contractions will stop the natural spiral motion of the *intestines*,  
and

and consequently the expulsion of the irritating cause, with the addition of excruciating pain; which, beyond all doubt, will put the patient's life into immediate danger.

*Eccoprotics*, given in such quantity and form as may seem to answer the intention best, will not frequently stay on the stomach, but be rejected as soon almost as they are given, on account of the great load and quantity of these mild medicines required to be taken, in order to render them *purgative*; by which means the symptoms are again exasperated, and the *vis vitæ* or strength lessened; which is a most material consideration, as weakening the powers of nature here is destroying every salutary intention, because it is by these powers we must expect a recovery, and destroying or lessening them is taking away our bulwark, and foundation of all hopes.

From this consideration it is, that the before-mentioned gentlemen, of distinguished abilities in their profession, are so cautious in regard to bleeding in this complaint, and are far from recommending it; so distant is the true genius of this disorder from an *inflammatory disposition*, except such may be brought on by imprudent treatment.

REMARK *the First.*

In regard to gentle laxatives, all those who have had the *cholic* of *Madrid*, under the care of Doctor *Thierry*, who at that time resided there, not one had so imperfect a recovery, as to be paralytic, or even weak in the limbs after the fit.

Now by taking a view of this gentleman's practice, which he candidly and minutely exhibits for the sake of young practitioners, we find his chiefest stress, in the medicinal treatment of this disorder, and I may say his *sheet-anchor*, to be an openness of body.

REMARK *the Second.*

No *palsy* was the consequence in such a number of afflicted people ; therefore no more material indications can occur than that of keeping the body open, especially in the beginning, because fulfilling properly that indication not only removed the complaint, but also prevented the *paralytic indisposition* it generally leaves after it ; which all observations confirm.

REMARK



REMARK *the Third.*

It is not surprizing that Doctor *Thierry*,<sup>i</sup> who found so much success from *laxatives*, in his practice, should be so fond of overlooking the immediate cause of this disorder in acting on the inward coat of the intestines, introduced there by what we eat, drink, or let down with the saliva, as to establish the different changes in the *air*, such as heat, cold, dryness, moisture, sharp winds, all governed in a great measure by the respective situation of places, as the most general causes of this disorder; alledging the inclemency of the air, the season preceding the memorable *cholic* of *Poitou*, and that the people had incautiously left off the furred linings of their cloaths too soon.

I would willingly ask the doctor, why these changes of the air affected the bowels of such a multitude of people at the same time, and no other part of the body?—surely the lungs lay more particularly exposed to the consequences of such changes, than many other parts; and yet he gives us no account of the then reigning *peripneumonies*, *pleurisies*, *opthalmias*, *catarrhal fevers*,  
dy-

<sup>i</sup> See les observations de Monf. *Thierry* docteur regent de la facultè de la medecine de Paris, sur la colique de Madrid & ses environs.

*dysenteries*, and other *inflammatory complaints*, which are the usual consequences of such changes of the air.

Had the Doctor attended to the dissertation on the *cholic* of *Devonshire*, by the deservedly admired Dr. *Huxham* of Plymouth, he would have found the rough, sour, or *unfermented cyder*<sup>k</sup> of that country, to be the cause of that *cholic* he describes; he would have found that *that* great man, so well acquainted with air, its variations, and effects, never had recourse to it to explain the cause of this *endemic cholic*; in short, he would have found, that this gentleman (whose treatise on the air, and the disorders mostly depending on its various constitutions, will be a never-failing monument of accuracy and *Hippocratical judgment*, grounded on principles of true theory) knew too well its insufficiency, to establish it as the general cause of *this disease*.

Never-

<sup>k</sup> New rum, and a great quantity of fresh and unripe lemon and lime juice, made into punch, seem commonly to be the causes of this disorder in the West-Indies; as distillers of rum, boilers of sugar, and overseers, are chiefly subject to it: the first (who are generally of the poorer sort) from immoderately drinking new hot rum; the second and third, from taking cold after sweating in hot boiling-houses, and drinking very strong punch made with fresh limes and newly-distilled rum.

Nevertheless, tho' this disorder is not *epidemical*, yet it may sometimes be *endemial*, and proceed from damp weather in rainy seasons ; which, stopping the insensible perspiration, may cause all those terrible symptoms attending the *dry belly-ach* : but this is not to be attributed to any deleterious particles in the air causing this disorder.

REMARK *the Fourth.*

The learned and *methodical* writer on this subject, Dr. *Tronchin*,<sup>1</sup> has clearly shewn the anatomical distribution of the eight pair of nerves thro' the *intestines*, forming their different *plexus's*, particularly the *plexus mesentericus*, and the communication of these nerves with those parts *paralytically* affected in this disorder ; from which the true cause of the *palsy* attending the complaint, and the true method of cure in general, (I mean by an openness of body, supported without irritation) will appear to a conviction. The whole human frame must suffer *convulsive spasms*, whenever the *meseraic nervous plexus* is irritated : this is evidently confirmed and demonstrated by *Webfer's* admirable observations concerning the

<sup>1</sup> His dissertation on the *cholica piætonum* was lately translated by Dr. *Schomberg* of Bath.



hospitals for cure ; tho' before not one in fifty escaped ; to the great detriment of those concerned in the *mines*, and the public in general ; which, before, were obliged to support so many poor widows and orphans. This physician's doctrine is elegant and sound, his practice bold and masterly, and not to be exceeded by any that ever wrote on this subject.

Whatever is the proximate cause of this terrible disease, Dr. *Tronchin* very well observes, it produces many remote ones, which, upon a close attention to the disorder, he reduces to the following :

1st—To the *remains of a fever*, carried off by an *imperfect crisis*, or not well cured.<sup>n</sup>

2dly—To *poisons*.

3dly—To the *too free use of wine*, or of *acid austere fermented liquors*, or of *unripe acid fruits*.

4thly—To the *gout* or *rheumatism*.

5thly—To an *obstructed perspiration*.

6thly

<sup>n</sup> See a treatise on the *colica pictonum*, by Dr. *Tronchin*, and translated by Dr. *Schomberg* ; with notes.

6thly—To the *scurvy*.

7thly—To *melancholy*.

8thly and lastly—To the *passions of the mind*.

Now let the remote causes be what they will, the proximate and primary indication of cure is to open the body first by an emollient *clyster*, with two or three ounces of the *oleum ricini*, or the following, which I commonly use :

℞. Decoct. comm. pro clyster. *uncias viii.*

Ol. Ricin. *uncias iii.*

Sapon. nigri *unciam fs.*

Vin. Antimonial. turb. *drachmas vi.*

Afæfœtid. (v. g. solut.) *drachmas iii.*

M. f. Enema statim injiciendum & pro re natâ  
sing. noctib. repetend.

After which I give a table-spoon-full of the oil, either with *pepper-mint water* or the *tinct. stomachica*, and repeat it every hour, or half-hour, occasionally, till it produces a stool, which the fourth spoon-full most frequently effects; that is to say, if it remains upon the stomach: but if the stomach is nauseating, and will not keep it, two ounces of the infusion of

*ipecacuanba*, drawn from a tea-pot with boiling water, (i. e. two drachms of the powder of *ipe-*  
*cacuanba* being allowed to a pint of hot water  
 and strained) will sufficiently cleanse the sto-  
 mach; this will act without much straining,  
 and better than the *powder* or *tincture*. After  
 the stomach is thus settled with one or two  
 pukes, the oil will then commonly perform all  
 that can be expected, and ease the patient in three  
 or four hours from the most excruciating pains;  
 nevertheless, sometimes, this sickness of sto-  
 mach, in spite of all that can be done, is very  
 violent and lasting; in that case I commonly  
 order a neutral saline draught, with simple  
 and compound mint water, in *actu* <sup>u</sup> *fermenta-*  
*tionis sumendus*; if this does not answer, I repeat  
 the same draught with a small *pill* of one grain  
 and a half of *extractum thebaicum*, to be repeated  
 occasionally with the draught according to the  
 violence of the pains; this seldom fails prepa-  
 ring the stomach for the reception of the oil;  
 which, as I observed before, after the fourth  
 spoon-full will begin to operate, and find a pas-  
 sage; this is by all means to be kept open for  
 some time, for otherwise the belly would be soon  
 bound

<sup>u</sup> See Dr. Barry on the three different digestions and dis-  
 charges of the human body, page 50.

bound up again, and most severe griping pains would most certainly soon succeed, on account of the sharp humours continually falling on the intestines. This is to be done with the following *potio alba*, composed of a smaller quantity of the *oleum ricini*, and to be repeated every six hours :

℞. Aq. Menth. simpl. *sesquiunciam*.

Ol. Ricin. (v. g. solut.) *drachmas ii*.

Aq. Menth. spir. *drachmas iii*.

Syr. Alth. *drachmam i*.

M. f. haust 6a. quâq. hora repetend.

In the mean time the following, or the like *anodyne bolus*, is to be freely given, in order to take off the excessive pains, which are vastly apt to return, unless prevented by repeated use of *opium* and *camphire*.\*

℞. Valerian. Sylv. p. *scrupulum i*.

Cast. Ruffiens. *gr. v*.

Extract. Thebaic. *gr. i*. syr.

E mecon. qs. m. f. bolus pro re natâ fumend.

The quantity of the opiate cannot, however, be absolutely ascertained, as some patients can bear much greater doses than others.

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\* As there seems to be here a convulsive constriction chiefly in the *ileon*, *anodynes* mixt with *anti-hysterics* will always be the likeliest means of relief.



To prevent costiveness, which these opiates are apt to cause, the *clysters* must be occasionally repeated.

If the patient complains of loss of sight, great weakness of the loins, or a tingling uneasy sensation thro' the whole substance of the *medulla spinalis*, I repeat the clyster before described, and order blisters to the *thighs* and *arms*, and *sinapisms* to the soles of the feet, to be renewed every six hours; and the following or some such volatile liniment:

R. Spir. Volat. Ammon. *unciam* i.

Camp. in f. v. f. *drachmas* iii.

Liniment. vol. *drachmas* vi.

Ung. Nervin. *unciam* ss.

Pisselæi Indic.

Ol. Palm. Christ. aa *unciam* i.

Bals. Peruvian. *uncias* ii. m.

F. Linimentum quo illinatur dorsum & spina dorsalis post frictions.

At the same time the *Barbadoes tar* is likewise to be taken inwardly, as there is nothing more likely to prevent the *paralysis* so often attending this disorder.

When the body is once open, there is no more danger of any bad symptoms; it must there-

therefore be kept so by the oil, or sometimes (in order to diversify and please the patient's palate) by the following linctus :

R. Ol. Amygd. d. fyr. ros. solut. aa *unciam* i.  
Tart. solub. *drachmas* ii.

M. f. Linctus, sum. Cochl. i subinde.

During the whole time of the paroxysm, emollient embrocations, consisting of *this oil*, *spirits of wine*, and *balsam of peru*, must be often repeated, and cloths dipped in the same applied and bound tightly round the whole abdomen; this will be found of great use, especially if oily draughts and emulsions be constantly and at the same used, and bladders filled with warm water be applied occasionally to the abdomen.

After the *cholical* and *rheumatic* pains cease, the patient must be very cautious in regard to his diet; for this complaint is very apt to return by the smallest error in this respect,

For drink, nothing should be given but *Bath*, or some proper *chalybeate water*, with now and then two or three spoons-full of some generous wine. Every thing that is *flatulent* and *windy* is hurtful in this disease. Stomachics, and *Huxham's tincture* of the *bark*, will now become very proper: frictions and riding to be

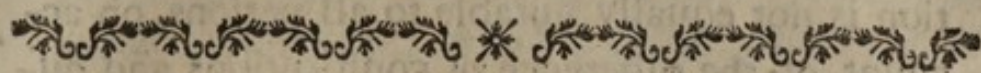
absolutely insisted on, as the greatest preservatives against relapses. Balsam of Peru, taken from ten to twenty drops every six hours, will here likewise be of excellent service, as also sea voyages,

This is the method I have always found most successful during the paroxysm of this disorder. After the fit is over, then (and not till then) the prudent and sagacious physician will have an eye to the remote causes before-mentioned, and investigate every symptom, in order to find out and adapt his cure accordingly, to prevent relapses. After which, *bat-thing*, and drinking the *Bath waters*, with prudence, will be of excellent service: as *bat-thing*, even in the fit and paroxysm of this disorder, has often proved very successful.

I have seen terrible consequences from the bad treatment of this complaint by *medicasters* and *pretenders to physic*<sup>t</sup>; who, sometimes, I have known order hot drastic purges, and even crude mercury in great quantities. These *gentlemen*, who often practise by rote, and play with the lives of mankind, are seriously advised by the learned Dr. *Huxham* to peruse now and then the sixth commandment.

Of

<sup>t</sup> Quorum stultitia quæstus impudentiæ est. *Phædr.*



## Of F E V E R S,

**S**YDENHAM, in writing of *fevers*, says, that disorders in general, and *fevers* in particular, are nothing else but a struggle of nature, endeavouring by all the means in her power to exterminate the morbid matter, for the recovery of the patient: now it is universally allowed, that there is no *fever* cured but by some considerable evacuation, either procured by nature or by art; but, of all evacuations and solutions of disorders, the most desirable is, first by sweat, secondly by stool and urine.

*Hippocrates*, the father of <sup>a</sup> physic, says, those things that are to be carried off are to be drawn to the parts they most incline to, thro' such ways and places as are fittest for their conveyance and expulsion. If nature is not able to expel the congested humours, then the art of the *physician* is required, to assist her that way by which she inclines to unburthen herself, either

<sup>a</sup> Vide *Hippocrat.* Aphor. 21.

ther by *sweat, stool, or urine* ; for every evacuation is not equally suitable to all persons, on account of the difference of constitutions and diseases : tho' we observe *evacuations* thro' all or most of the emunctories are sometimes necessary, as is experienced in *malignant fevers* <sup>b</sup>.

Now, when there is an indication for stools, I maintain there is not, in the whole *materia medica*, a medicine equal to this *oleum ricini*, both for its opening and cooling qualities. I say in *most fevers* ; for I have found, by experience, it will not answer in *low nervous fevers*, even by way of *clyster*, on account, as I imagine, of its *cooling and refrigerating* quality.

As for *ardent and inflammatory fevers and complaints*, I have often seen it succeed when *nitrous medicines* and *James's powders* have failed ; giving twice a week or oftener, *pro re natâ*, two spoonfuls of the *oil* and now and then occasionally three or four spoonfuls of the *castor emulsion*, every six or eight hours : which is made like common *emulsion*, with six or eight almonds and one *castor nut*, stript of its pellicle, and boiled in a pint of water.—This emulsion is most frequently made use of by the French  
in

<sup>b</sup> See Dr. Mead's *monita practica*.

in the islands, tho' it is sometimes apt both to purge and vomit ; which I think proves the acrimony of *this nut* to consist entirely in its essential salt, and by no means in its oil. I never knew the oil to vomit, tho' given to four spoons-full ; and here an exceeding small quantity of the salt, dissolved in an aqueous *menstruum*, is apt to have from its *acrimony* an *emetic* quality.

I have a servant, who some months ago was taken with the worst symptoms of an *ardent* and *inflammatory fever* and *sore throat* : there were strong reasons to suspect that this pain in the throat was of a *gouty* nature ; for one night he had a pain in his great toe, during which the other greatly abated. As he had been for two or three days without a stool, I gave him two spoons-full of the *oleum Ricini*, in a little *pepper-mint water* (as I always have some of this oil by me, myself and family never taking any other purging physic) ; this gave him four stools, and the next morning his fever left him ; and he had a regular fit of the *gout*, that lasted ten days ; which he had not for many years before.

I have even seen cured the worst of all kind of fevers, I mean the *bilious yellow fever*  
of

of the West-Indies, by this simple method; first exhibiting an *emetic*, according to the indication; then *this oil* and *emulsion* occasionally; at the same time diluting *acids*, especially in the commencement of the disorder, are of great service, as the blood from the beginning is full of *putrid alkaline* <sup>c</sup> salts.

I don't doubt but the judicious and learned of the profession will approve of this simple method of treating this terrible disorder, when they consider that the chief and principal seat of this fever is in the right *hypochondrium*, where the *liver* and *biliary ducts* are situated, and that the *bile* of all the humours of the human body is the most *putrescent*, and that this degree of *acrimony* is heightened by the heat of the climate: thus the *bile*, in this exalted state, gets into the blood, brings the whole mass into a putrid and almost *gangrenous* state; will cause a deep yellowness all over the body, and sometimes livid spots and *mortifications* in various parts. All these complaints arise from the great acrimony of the *bile* in its most exalted state; therefore, the chief indication of cure always appeared to me to consist in evacuating and

<sup>c</sup> Tho' the *bile* is not absolutely *alkaline*, I think it is allowed that it is *alkalescent*, and of the nature of an *alkali*.

and carrying off the putrid, *bilious humours*, by gentle *vomits*, *laxative purges*, and *antiseptics*, such as all vegetable acids, *nitrous medicines*, and the *decoctum serpentariae*, occasionally.

I have always been of opinion, that the more simple the method of treating *fevers* in general, the more agreeable to the practice of *Hippocrates* and all the antients, who always insisted on the regulation of diet in *fevers*, and expected the greatest part of the cure from a strict observation in this point; the thinnest aliment, such as *ptisan*, with *barley* and *hydromel*, were what they chiefly ordered. And, as Dr. *Towne*<sup>d</sup> very well observes, was *Hippocrates* to see some of the modish mixtures and cordials, which are now-a-days prescribed by some in *fevers*, in defiance of all his skill in phyfic, he would be at a loss to guess at the disorder.

Dr. *Sutherland*, in his analysis of *Bath* and *Bristol waters*, observes, that the origins of diseases are not so complex as commonly believed; neither is the method of cure. He takes notice that *Boerhaave* (in his *prælectiones academicæ*)

<sup>d</sup> See Dr. *Towne*, on the diseases most frequent in the West-Indies.



*mice*) was wont to observe, \* there were many who despised the practice of the *antients*, because in diseases differing in their symptoms they applied the same or similar remedies : they think themselves well used if they meet with *doctors*, who ransack dispensatories ; changing, compounding, and re-compounding, every hour ; while far more surely and sooner they empty the pocket than the disease, *dum longe certius crumenam exhauriunt quam morbum*. Let those who despise simplicity of practice consider how many, and how different diseases, in all ages, and all countries of the world, have been cured by the use of *baths* and *mineral waters*, of all sorts and denominations ; and cured too by these waters *alone*, only first preparing the body for the same.

In all *fevers*, especially in *hot climates*, the diet should be cooling and moistening ; air should be admitted into the chamber, so as to circulate thro' one or two adjoining apartments ; the room sprinkled with vinegar, rose-water, and cooling herbs ; the common drink warm *lemonade*, which has often occasioned a *diaphoresis* when all the unnatural attempts by *alexipharmics* and *cordials* have  
 served

\* See virtues and analysis of Bath and Bristol waters.

ferred only to aggravate the heat, and inflame the blood.

Besides the *yellow fever* there comes very properly, under this head, a *particular class* of fevers so well described by *Heister*<sup>f</sup> in his *compendium medicinæ practicæ*.

These *fevers* are very common in Europe and the West-Indies, and deserve our attention in this place, as the *castor oil* answers almost every intention of cure in this complaint.

Those that are seized with this fever have commonly the following symptoms: first, *horripilations* at different times; secondly, the *tongue, teeth, and throat*, are filled with a viscid and glutinous *pituita*; the patient's *breath* becomes sometimes both offensive to himself and by-standers; thirdly, there is a gentle looseness attending, with a most offensive smell of the *excrements*, throughout the whole disorder; fourthly, the *hypochondria* are tense and sometimes painful (no doubt from the great quantity of noxious humours contained in

<sup>f</sup> Vide *Heister* compendium medicinæ practicæ. de febribus acutis stomachicis & intestinalibus.

in the *stomach* and *intestines*); fifthly, frequent *frights and terrors* in their sleep, sometimes even when awake; this, *Heister* says, is a certain sign that the cause of this fever is in the *intestines*; sixthly, pains commonly in the *head* and *neck*, from *spasms*; seventhly, the *urine*, at first like natural *urine*, (the cause of the disorder being not yet in the *blood*) in the progress of the disease becomes *turbid*, and deposes a *muddy sediment*.

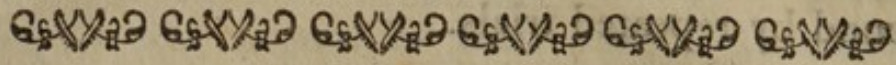
Now it is universally allowed, that it is a very dangerous practice to stop the *looseness* attending this *fever*, as the noxious humours, that ought to be evacuated, would by that means be retained; therefore vomits and gentle purgatives will, in this case, answer every intention of cure. Repeated experiments daily convince us thoroughly of the truth and justness of Dr. *Sydenham's* observation, when he says, “ vomitu peracto sæva  
 “ illa symptomata (nausea v. g. & anxietas &  
 “ jactationes, suspiria luctuosa, nigredo linguæ,  
 “ &c.) quæ & ipsos ægros excruciarunt &  
 “ astantes perterrificerant, mitigari solent ac  
 “ solvi, quodque morbi reliquum est, bene  
 “ tolerari.”—After which puke the *oleum Ricini* internally, and by way of clyster, will answer

better than any other lenitive purge, as I have found by repeated trials.

It may, perhaps, here be asked, what this oil can perform better than *manna*, and other *eccoprotics*, which are used in these and similar complaints? to which I answer, first, it will *purge brisker*, without irritation, in a smaller quantity, and is more likely to remain upon the stomach; secondly, it is *more cooling*, and more efficacious in temperating all febrile heats; thirdly, it corrects and obtunds the acrimony of the *bile*, better than any medicine I know; fourthly, it helps to dissolve, (as I imagine, and will endeavour to prove in the chapter on *nephritic complaints*) all *bilious* and *calculous concretions*. I believe, it will never be asserted that *manna*, or any other *lenitive*, is possess of all these qualities.

E

Of



Of BILIOUS DISORDERS  
in GENERAL.

IT is not expected that I should here give a treatise of *bilious disorders*, (that itself would require a large volume) but I will endeavour to draw a few practical inferences from the theory and observations of Doctor *Boerhaave*, his learned commentator, and Doctor *Mead*, in order to support some <sup>y</sup> practical and *medical* facts and observations which I have made in applying this oil to *bilious* cases.

1st, The *bile*, by its stimulating quality, as it is the most acrimonious of all the animal fluids, it, no doubt, helps to excite the peristaltic motion of the *intestines*, and hereby promotes concoction; and as it is purgative like *aloes*, which it greatly resembles, it helps the expulsion of the *fæces*.

My

<sup>y</sup> See *Mead* monita practica, page 222.

My Lord *Bacon* very properly says, that the *bile* is *multarum in corpore functionum* *causa* & *stimulus*, that is, the *bile* is the *whet-stone* and stimulus of many functions in the human body.

Its great utility is evinced by the extraordinary apparatus which nature uses for its preparation: we do not find in the whole animal *economy* a structure of parts like the vessels framed by nature for the separating and perfecting this natural *sapour*: nature here, and no where else, as *Haller*, *Fleming*, and all *physiologists* agree, fashions and forms a venous system into an arterial one.

This natural *sapour* is a mixture of oil, water, and salt, both *volatile* and *fixt*, separated from the blood and the liver for the different uses of animal life; and, as the blood itself is very often vitiated and liable to many changes, no wonder that this fluid, which is separated from it, should be subject to many alterations, and be rendered unfit, very often, to perform its office.

I shall just touch briefly, in Dr. *Mead's* own words, \* on the ways by which the *bile*

E 2

may

\* See *Mead* monita practica articul. de ictero.

may become vitiated ; after which I will give a hint of the efficacy of this *oleum palmæ christi*, in mitigating and removing these *bilious* complaints.

I use this gentleman's words, in order to confirm, by so great an authority, this doctrine of *oily* and *emollient* medicines, and especially this of the *oleum ricini*.

This ingenious physician says, in his *præcepta medica*, “ that the *bile* is often rendered  
 “ faulty by its lentor and viscidty, and some-  
 “ times by its excessive thinness ; in the first  
 “ case the secretory glands of the *bile* are  
 “ obstructed, and the small quantity of what  
 “ is secreted stagnates in the *hepatic ducts* ;  
 “ whence the liver grows hard, and under  
 “ its tunicle are formed whitish concretions  
 “ that resemble hard *sope* ; in the second  
 “ place not only the *bile's* viscidty, but  
 “ its excessive thinness, is likewise in fault ;  
 “ for here the volatile salt, which is one  
 “ of the compounding principles of the  
 “ *bile*, over-abounds ; whence the *bile* be-  
 “ comes too thin, too exalted, hot, and  
 “ irritating, to the *intestines* : in the former  
 “ case the body is too costive, and the  
 “ *faeces*

“ *faeces* are hard, and of a clay colour ; in  
 “ the latter case a *diarrhœa*, attended with a  
 “ fever, and thin yellow stools, constantly  
 “ teaze the patient : persons who spend their  
 “ lives in a sedentary manner, without pro-  
 “ per exercise, are most liable to that *lentor*  
 “ and *visciditas* of the *bile*, because its oily  
 “ part grows too thick and viscid for want of  
 “ a due proportion of salt ; on the contrary,  
 “ those who render their faculties useless by  
 “ too high feeding, and drinking spirituous  
 “ liquors, are generally most exposed to the  
 “ latter, that is, the *bile*'s excessive thin-  
 “ nefs.”

Here seem two opposite complaints from  
 the *bile*, requiring two different methods of  
 cure : I have, nevertheless, treated these in-  
 dications in the following manner, and have al-  
 ways met with success in such treatment.

First, In case of costiveness, with ash-co-  
 loured and whitish stools, the *oleum ricini*, or  
*castor oil*, was of the greatest service, in purg-  
 ing gently the intestines ; especially when often  
 repeated : after which *nitrous* and *saponaceous*  
 medicines came in very *apropos*. Lastly I ad-  
 vised the *Bath waters*, which perfectly compleat-  
 ed the cure.



When the body was loose from the thin, hot, and irritating *bile* in the intestines, I also gave *this oil*, which, obtunding and sheathing the acrimony of the salts, was of more service than *rhubarb* and all the class of *anodynes* that could be given; after which the *Bath waters* answered to a miracle.

This is conformable to the *Hippocratic* doctrine, and confirmed by the most eminent moderns; *Hippocrates*, in his book *de Morbis*, justly observing, *that it conduces very much to the relief and safety of feverish patients, and such as abound with bile, to have the bile evacuated in due time by soft purges.* For which reason *Hoffman* makes this most excellent remark, that in all fevers, especially *bilious*, a *soluble belly*, whether it is so naturally, or made so by medicines, is a highly lucky and salutary circumstance: when, therefore, the *bile* becomes acrimonious, and lodges in the *primæ viæ*, it excites horrors, anxieties, and vomitings; and, being afterwards received into the blood, is generally thrown off the third day by febrile motion and heat.

*Artbritic* and *gouty* pains, which, according to *Hoffman* and the antients, draw their origin from a hot cause, are in like manner principally produced

duced by a fault in the *primæ viæ*, arising from a vitiated *bile*, which, being conveyed into the blood, proves the cause of all these pains; whilst the caustic salts, with which the *bile* is impregnated, are fixt upon the membranes of the joints; and this is the reason why fits of the gout are for the most part ushered in by pains of the stomach, anxieties, nausea, and loss of appetite. Hence *Hoffman* and *Dr. James* rightly observe, that the person who knows how on these occasions to evacuate the *primæ viæ*, without raising tumultuous commotions in the animal œconomy, and at the same time to correct the acrimony of the humours, is the likeliest to succeed in removing, or at least in mitigating *arthritic* and *gouty* complaints. This is most wonderfully performed, especially in hot *bilious* constitutions, (which is commonly the case in all *gouty* complaints) by this excellent *oil*.

It likewise deserves our attention, that periodical and critical *hæmorrhages* have commonly their cause in the *primæ viæ*; and the medicines, which are best calculated for allaying and restraining the violence of the *flux* and *hæmorrhage*, are those that are purgative, and render the *bile* temperate and balsamic;

this the *oleum ricini* performs in a wonderful manner.

Therefore, in the *hepatitis* and most *bilious disorders*, (as *Boerhaave* and his learned commentator observe) whenever the bowels begin to send forth a bilious flux before the fourth day, it will be proper to promote that evacuation, according to *Hippocrates's* general rule; not by draughts and strong purgatives, but by mild emollients, such as *this oil*, using at the same time mild *abstersives*, which are able farther to attenuate the matter of the disorder, and render it fluxile; such as fresh whey, made of new milk, in the spring or summer season, while the cattle cheerfully feed on the green pasturage; but this will be rendered more efficacious if it be boiled, as the learned *Baron Van Swieten*<sup>1</sup> observes, with those herbs the botanists call *planipetalous* and *lactescent*, such as *endive*, *sowthistles*, *succory*, *dandelion*, *viper-grass*, and the common *gramen*<sup>m</sup> *officinarum*.

This

<sup>1</sup> Vid. *Boerhaave* aphorism. de ictero multiplici & commentar. *Baron Van Swieten*.

<sup>m</sup> Vel ipsi bubulci vim graminis detergentem noscunt, observando enim sterco bubulum notant obstructions & crustas  
pene

This noble physician says, that, whenever he met with any *icterical* patients in his practice, he always remembered the advice given him by his excellent master *Boerhaave*, to think the cause of these complaints might possibly be *calculi* in the *gall-bladder*; and to this scope he always directed his curative indications, commonly with success: he says he made many trials in order to find out a menstruum that would dissolve and expel these concretions, but hitherto has never been happy enough to accomplish his end.

I think, with all due deference to this great man's opinion, that saponaceous medicines, and the fresh juice of these plants mentioned above, would answer the first indication of dissolving; and *this oil* I am sure will gently, and without irritation, expel those matters that are dissolved by gentle stools; for *Glisson's* observations, as well as daily experience, convince us that those concretions, found in the livers of stall-fed cattle, are fused by the vernal juice of grass, and are carried off by a supervening diarrhoea.

I find it more difficult to contract than to enlarge this chapter, as there offers so ample  
a field

pene lapideas, cum stercore excretas, dum recentia gramina carpunt boves; qui in stabulis detenti, diu languidi fuerunt admodum & icterici profus.—Vide *Huxham* de aere & morbis epidemicis, vol. ii. page 170.

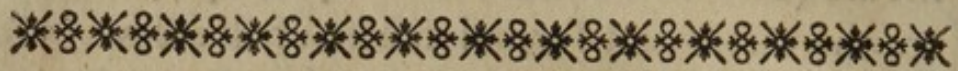
a field in treating of *bilious disorders* : I'll therefore end with the words of the excellent <sup>k</sup> *Hoffman* ; who well observes, that, as the *bile* when in its natural state, both as to quantity and quality, may be considered as a medicine of the highest use and importance to the body, so likewise, when vitiated, it becomes a poison ; and consequently, that the health of man may be either preserved or destroyed by the *bile* ; and that for this reason, in accounting for the symptoms of most diseases, in taking our indications and prescribing the means of relief, we are in a particular manner to advert to the state and condition of this humour, and carefully observe, whether it is faulty, either with regard to its quantity, quality, and the degree of its motions ; for certainly many medicines, which are very efficacious in the cure of diseases, operate no otherwise than by increasing the quantity of *bile*, when deficient ; *evacuating* it, when redundant and superfluous ; *correcting* it, when vitiated ; and preserving its motion to the intestines, in its due and proper state : for few medicines act directly and immediately upon the blood and humours, but most of them exert their virtues and efficacy upon the *primæ viæ* ; where, in a secondary manner, they correct the vicious humours

<sup>k</sup> See *Hoffman* de morbis a *bile* oriundis,

mours (of which the *bile* is the principal) which are the direct and formal causes of diseases.

This observation holds good in regard to *emetics* and *laxatives*: it will always hold in a particular manner in regard to a *vegetable purgative oil*, such as the *oleum Ricini*, which operates on the bowels with little or no irritation, and will always in a most efficacious manner obtund and correct the acrimony of the *bile*, and at the same time cool the fever that is produced from the same cause.

I will venture to affirm that there is not, in the whole materia medica, a medicine like this *oleum Ricini*, which, at the same time, possesses in so eminent a degree these three qualities, of *cooling*, *purging*, and *correcting* the *acrimony* of the *bile*.



*Of the* APHTHÆ, THRUSH,  
*or* SORE MOUTH.

**T**HIS is a *new* disorder, and has never been known till within these few years abroad : it is *endemic* in warm climates, and seldom or never seen in cold countries, but when brought thither by the patient.

All the *apthæ* we see in Europe are acute disorders, commonly attended with a fever : this is intirely *chronical*, and will continue months, sometimes a year or two, without destroying the patient.

Dr. *Hillary*, of Barbadoes, has lately written a very ample and accurate history of this terrible complaint : \* but I am sorry I cannot agree intirely with this gentleman in his treatment of this disorder ; for I am sure *antimoni-als* in general, which he prescribes, can never be of service when there is such an acrimony of the *lymph*.

I know

\* See Dr. *Hillary*, on the disorders of Barbadoes.

I know that a dose of this *oleum palmæ christi*, administered in the beginning of this distemper, will prevent the *aphtæ*; because, by this means, those viscidities, which stick in the ducts, and afterwards cause the *sore mouth*, are intirely carried off.

The following are the symptoms that commonly attend this disease.

1st—A burning heat in the upper part of the *oesophagus*, something like a *cardialgia*.

2dly—This heat gradually increases, without the patient's being able to attribute it to any cause whatever; either of intemperance, or irregularity in his way of living.

3dly—After this burning heat, little pimples or ulcers, with an acrid *lymph*, begin at the gums, and spread to the palate and over the mouth, and descend even to the *uvula* and *fauces*; the inside of the lips, and the whole mouth, appear hot and reddish, and resemble very much the zigzag of lightning.

4thly—After this a crust or thin pellicle falls off from these little ulcers, which renders the whole mouth so raw, as not to admit any thing



thing but the softest and smoothest decoctions. Sometimes a salivation will ensue, which seldom or never proves critical ; on the contrary it often sinks the patient.

5thly—The patient will continue in this manner some days, and then these pimples and pustules will disappear, he thinking himself pretty well, at least much better.

6thly—A little time after he is taken with all the symptoms of a *diarrhœa*, the vomiting of an acrid *lymph*, which becomes very hot : this diarrhœa will continue some time ; after which, the same matter and the same complaints will return to the bowels ; and thus a continual translocation of this peccant matter, and a metastasis of this acrid humour through the whole intestinal tube, will be continually forming during the whole course of the disorder : from hence these ulcers or pustules fall down from the *primæ viæ* to the *anus*.

Sometimes a troublesome and fatal *hiccough* will attend the last stages of this disorder ; because, in this case, the stomach is covered with an *apthosæ* crust ; which falling off, the extremities of the nerves are left bare, and are consequently

requently easily irritated to convulsions, and liable to inflammation and gangrene.

The excoriation and soreness of the mouth, tongue, gula, stomach, and the whole intestinal tube, plainly shew that the cause of this disorder is an *acrid lymph*, turned upon those parts, and producing those effects above-mentioned.

The coldness, dryness, and roughness of the patient's skin, which usually attend this disease, demonstrate an obstruction and great want of perspiration and sweat, which in warm climates is or should be very great in a state of health.

In fine, obstruction and acrimony of the humours, arising from thence, seem to be the immediate causes of this disorder; consequently the indications of cure are to cleanse the *prime via*, to correct the acrimony of the humours, and promote perspiration.

First, as there is an afflux of humours to the stomach and bowels, attended with a sickness, reaching, and sometimes vomiting, an *emetic* is clearly indicated; I accordingly commence the cure with fifteen grains of *ipeca-*

*cuabna*

*cuabna* in substance, exhibiting at night a *diaphoretic anodyne*; this will carry off the acrid phlegm, with which the stomach and bowels are generally loaded.

The next day the second indication of cure, viz. cleansing and correcting at the same time the acrimony of the humours, will be best performed by a full dose of *castor oil*; this, by cleansing the bowels of their foulness, will contribute to render *diaphoretics*, and other medicines indicated, much more effectual. This is to be repeated occasionally in smaller doses, according as the physician shall see it necessary: after this the workings and efforts of nature, in this disorder, ought by no means to be disturbed by too frequent purges, since the end in general is better answered by gentle diaphoretics and temperating emulsions, prepared with almonds and a small quantity of the poppy-seeds.<sup>1</sup>

*Riverius* recommends *narcotics* in the cure of the worst and most dangerous *apthæ*; because they not only ease pain, but prevent a fluxion of humours to the parts affected.— Therefore, after thus cleansing the *primæ viæ*,

I com-

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. *Hillary*, on the disorders of Barbadoes.

I commonly order the following *bolus* and *mixture* to be repeated every six hours :

℞. Theriac. Androm. *scrupulum* i.  
 Pulv. Rhei. *gr.* iv.  
 Rad. Ipecacuah. *gr.* ii. vel iii.  
 Syr. e Mecon. *q. f.*  
 M. f. Bol. sextâ quâq; horâ sumend. superbi-  
 bend. cochl. iii. seq. mist.

℞. Aq. Menth. simpl. *uncias* vi.  
 Confect. Raleigh. *drachm.* ii.  
 Aq. Menth. Spir. *uncias* ii.  
 Ol. Palm. Christ (v. g. fol.) *drachm.* iii.  
 Magnes alb. Syr. Papaver. albi aa *unciam* fs.  
 F. Mistura.

The patient should, during the whole cure, take every morning and evening a pint of *warm milk*, in which an ounce of *mutton suet* was melted ; this will be of excellent service in this case, as well as in *dysenteries*.

In the above prescription the *oleum palmæ christi* and *magnesia alba* will correct and obtund the acrimony of the humours ; whilst the *theriaca andromachi* and *ipecacuabna* will promote

perspiration, and prove, as Dr. *Akenside* observes, an excellent *antispasmodic*.

Whenever the patient complains of pains in the shoulders or feet, which is often the case, I have always found a *perpetual blister*, applied to the part affected, of great service; I have likewise, even when the patient has not complained of those pains, applied a perpetual blister to the back, by way of revulsion.

Mr. *Renaudet*, whom I mentioned before, in one of his letters to me, says, “ that he often experienced the good effects of *perpetual blisters*, dressed with the following ointment, in that terrible disease of the West-Indies, called the *thrush*, which is most common to the inhabitants of Barbadoes, viz.

℞. Cantharid. opt. contuf. *unciam i.*  
 Coque in Aq. Fontan. lib. fs. ad *uncias iv.*  
 M. cum ung. basilic. flav. *uncias iv.*  
 Coq. lento igne ad liquoris consumptionem.

“ This is the most excellent *ung. epispasticum*  
 “ in this case that was ever made use of; it  
 “ acts with so small a degree of irritation, that  
 “ the patient is not sensible of any pain or in-  
 “ con-

“ convenience from it ; the salts of the flies  
 “ being probably more intimately engaged by  
 “ the unctuous part of the *basilicon*, guards them  
 “ from stimulating the urinary passages, so as  
 “ never to occasion a strangury, which too of-  
 “ ten is brought on by all other forms that have  
 “ yet been tried : besides, this ointment not be-  
 “ ing loaded with the filaments and substance  
 “ of the flies, the opening is kept much clearer  
 “ and free from those sloughs and foulness that  
 “ are with the utmost difficulty prevented by  
 “ the use of the *unguentum epispast.* of the dif-  
 “ ferent dispensatories.”

Whether the cause of this disorder, I have  
 now described, be similar in every respect  
 to the cause of a *rheumatism*, I will not pre-  
 tend to determine ; but have lately read with  
 pleasure an elegant Latin treatise on the *dy-*  
*sentery*, written by Dr. *Akenside*,<sup>d</sup> who greatly  
 insists on the close affinity of a *dysentery* and  
*rheumatism*, insomuch that he generally sup-  
 posed them to have one common cause ; and  
 sometimes does not scruple to call the former  
 a *rheumatism of the bowels*, in the following  
 terms : — “ Denique hanc morborum simi-  
 “ litudinem toties jam observavi & perspexi,  
 F 2 “ ut

<sup>d</sup> Vide de dysenteria commentar. authore Marco *Akenside*.

“ ut dysenteriam jamdudum pro rheumatismo  
 “ intestinorum habeam—nos vero id vocabu-  
 “ lum a doloribus artuum et musculorum ad  
 “ intestina transferendo similem plane utriuf-  
 “ que morbi causam & materiam esse con-  
 “ tendimus.”

This I must observe, that I have always found a great similitude between the *aphtæ* above described and *dysenteries*, in warm climates; they both continue very long, with little or no fever; are both chronical disorders; having seen patients continue months together under each complaint; they both appear to have their translations and metastases from the bowels to the joints, and *vice versa*; gripings, and frequent stools, are common to both; the cause in one seems to be an acrid *mucus*, corroding the intestines; in the other an acrid *lymph*, or sharp humour turned upon those parts.

In regard to the method of cure, I have for these four years past treated this *sore mouth*, or *aphtæ*, with success, in much the same manner as I find Dr. *Akenside* has treated *dysenteries*; that is to say, in giving *Ipecacuabna* in very small quantities; sometimes with, and sometimes with-  
 out

out *diaphoretic anodynes*; with this difference, that I never omit the *oleum palmæ christi*, especially at the beginning of the disorder. This medicine I infinitely prefer to *rhubarb* in the first stages of the *apthæ*, notwithstanding the extraordinary recommendation of it by some eminent modern physicians.

Dr. *Akenside*, who treats elegantly of the *rationale* of the salutary actions and effects of *ipecacuabna* in *dysenteries*, resolves the whole virtue of this root into its *aperient* power of keeping the body open, and its faculty of relaxing the coats of the intestines, and, in fine, mitigating the *tormina* or gripes.

I would willingly ask this question: Which of these two medicines, the *ipecacuabna*, or the *castor oil*, is most likely to possess these *aperient* powers of keeping the body open, of relaxing the coats of the intestines, and of abating the violence of the gripes? If the *ipecacuabna* be supposed, by the doctor, to possess such an *anodyne* and *antispasmodic* virtue as cannot be expected from opiates in this disorder, what are we not to expect from the *oleum ricini*, which possesses all those powers and virtues, above described by the doctor, in a most eminent degree?



Notwithstanding these heroic medicines, the *oleum Ricini*, *Ipecacuabna*, and *Rhubarb*, the *aphtæ chronica* are often so obstinate, the small pustules and ulcers are so foul, that sometimes we have been obliged to recur to *sorrel whey*, *vinegar whey*, and other acids; which have been of service, when all other means have proved ineffectual, in order to deterge and cleanse the said ulcers. This method (however strange it may appear to some) has frequently been of service when every thing else was of no signification.

The *rationale* of this method of cure seems confirmed by what my learned and ingenious friend, Dr. *Sarsfield*, of Cork, tells me. This gentleman, who has often had opportunities of seeing in practice the worse kinds of *aphtæ*, assures me, that he has often used the following topical composition with success; and, where he could touch the *aphtæ* with the same, it was almost infallible:

R. Mell. Rosar. *uncias* ii.

Borac. *drackmas* iii.

Sp. Vitriol. *drackmas* ii.

Now, I am apt to think, that, if small quantities of this composition were well di-

luted

luted and conveyed to the stomach and intestines, it would in every respect answer, and be as efficacious as *sorrel* and *vinegar whey*, which has been so often of service in the last stages of this disorder.

I have likewise used the following medicines in the *aphtæ* and *dysenteries*, occasionally, and *pro re natâ*, as specifics.

A strong *decoction* of the *simaruba*, given in small quantities, and often, in both disorders promiscuously; the *decoctum arabicum*; the wax emulsion; warm milk punch; common punch, or toddy, in which a hot poker has been quenched. Which shews the great analogy there subsists between these two complaints.

The cortex of the bastard *Locus*, and the mistletoe of the lemon-tree, are both excellent medicines at the end of a *dysentery*, after having occasionally used the *Ipecacuahna* and *castor oil*.

*Bathing* in *Bath waters*, with prudence, is a powerful remedy in the *aphtæ chronica* of the West-Indies; it will greatly increase perspiration, and at the same time strengthen the

solids. We daily see <sup>p</sup> *palsies* cured at Bath by *bathing*; which, in a surprising manner, will corroborate in relaxations, and relax in contractions. It is therefore surprising that the celebrated Dr. *Mead* should decry the use of *Bath waters*, and *bathing*, in *paralytic cases* in general; since we have the united testimonies of most writers, in different countries, who have written on warm waters and bathing, to vouch for their powerful effects in these cases: *sed quandoq; bonus dormitat Homerus.*

The patient, in the *apthæ chronicæ*, when he finds himself recovering, should by all means be careful of his *diet*, as the least error in this regard will bring on relapses. Riding should, at this time, be insisted on; he should now take a *horse* for his *physician*, and an *ass* for his *apothecary*;—*viresque acquirat eundo.* <sup>q</sup>

of

<sup>p</sup> See Dr. *Rutty* on mineral waters. <sup>q</sup> *Huxham.*



Of the CRAMP, or the  
TETANUS.

**T**HE *tetanus* is a continual and involuntary contraction of all, or most of the muscles of the human body, and rigidity without relaxation. When the body was bowed down forward, the Greeks called it an *emprostotonos*; when it was bended backwards, it was called *opisthotonos*; when the body was fixt in a rigid erect posture like a statue, it was called *tetanus*; very often when only one limb was stiff, in this manner, it was likewise called *tetanus*.

In the *tetanus* the anterior and posterior muscles are equally contracted; the spasm or convulsion is felt commonly as it were tending from the *sternum* to the *vertebræ*; most acute pains during these spasms all along the spine of the back, with a contraction and stiffness of the dorsal muscles. The patient complains of a tenseness about the *præcordia*, a  
stiffness

stiffness and locking up of the jaws ; the face becomes red ; the eyes look stern ; and, as the disease advances, these strong convulsive spasms become more frequent, and more violent. The poor patient is now in a most distressed condition, dreading every quarter of an hour a return of these symptoms ; the pulse is very often præternaturally slow ; the blood is so far from being fizy, that its particles do not cohere as much as they do in the natural state ; the body is commonly constipated ; often an intermission in the pulse ; sometimes the body is covered with sweats, from the violence of the agonies, yet no feverish heat attends ; the exterior and interior senses all the while remain whole and intire.

This is a short but true description of this terrible disorder ; which is *endemic* in very hot climates, but especially in rainy weather succeeding great heats.

If this disorder proceeds from a *wound*, it is seldom or never cured. According to *Hippocrates*,—*convulsio vulneri superveniens lethalis* : tho' I have seen one cured, and two others much mitigated in their symptoms, by first dividing the nerve above the wounds, then dres-

dress'ing it with a digestive with opium : after which I commonly treated it in the following manner, as I did all other *cramps* from whatever causes they proceeded.

First, in order to relax the rigid contraction of the nerves, I fomented the præcordia, jaws, neck, and spine, with warm *castor oil*, with (and sometimes without) Barbadoes tar ; I then gave two or three spoons-full of the *oil*, with a clyster of the same ; still repeating every three or four hours emollient fomentations, and anointing the parts affected as above. After which I had recourse to musk and opium boldly, without any fear, according as the symptoms were more or less violent ; so as to give ten or twelve grains of *extractum thebaicum* in twenty hours.

To prevent costiveness, which this quantity of opiates might occasion, emollient relaxing clysters, with the *oil of palmæ christi*, are to be repeated every day.

After the cure, the bark, and *anti-epileptics*, are to be insisted upon for some time, in order to strengthen the parts so much weakened by this disorder.

This

This method sometimes succeeded, but oftener failed; as indeed all methods hitherto found out to conquer this most terrible disorder: but, as *cramps* in general fall under this head, I do not doubt but it will be agreeable to my readers to see the following letter, concerning the effect of *tar-water* in this disorder, which I received very lately from Col. *Martin* of Antigua. This ingenious gentleman has favoured the public with several curious and philosophical remarks on West-Indian husbandry; and, without being a physician, has a general tincture of medical knowledge.

“ S I R,

“ The variety of cures made by *tar-water*  
 “ I have often seen in many printed cases, as  
 “ being very effectual in pains of the stomach,  
 “ by indigestion, flatulences, &c. but I  
 “ do not remember it recommended as a  
 “ cure for the *cramp*, for which I esteem it  
 “ a specific.

“ I discovered this virtue by accident, thus:  
 “ my wife in her last pregnancy was frequently  
 “ afflicted with the *cramp* in all her limbs;  
 “ at length she was taken suddenly, in the  
 “ night, with a *cramp* in her bowels, to such  
 “ a de-

“ a degree, that I thought her expiring ; I  
 “ started out of bed much frightened, and, not  
 “ having laudanum or any other medicine at  
 “ hand, I poured some *tar-water* out of a bot-  
 “ tle upon the table, into a silver panakin, (all  
 “ which I commonly kept on the table with a  
 “ wine glass to wash the mouth) and, immedi-  
 “ ately warming the same over a candle, I gave  
 “ it to the patient, who was instantly at pre-  
 “ sent ease, and continued so all night.

“ This induced her to drink a wine glass  
 “ of *tar-water* every night going to bed, and  
 “ then she had not the *cramp* ; but, as soon as  
 “ she neglected to take the *tar-water*, the *cramp*  
 “ returned, and was constantly and instantly  
 “ cured by the same remedy.

“ This gave me so high an opinion of its  
 “ efficacy, that I put a woman of forty years  
 “ old into a course of *tar-water*, for five or six  
 “ weeks ; which intirely cured her of a most  
 “ dreadful *cramp*, which had afflicted her for  
 “ several years, and for a week together had  
 “ her limbs drawn up and convulsed by the  
 “ *cramp*, under the most excruciating pains ;  
 “ but that course of warm *tar-water*, taken by  
 “ half a pint morning and evening, cured her  
 “ so

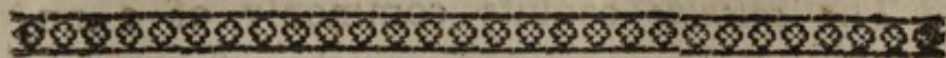


“ so effectually, that for five years she never had  
 “ a fit of it,

“ My method of making *tar-water* is  
 “ this:—

“ Take a pint of the best *Norway tar*;  
 “ put it into six quarts of soft water in an  
 “ unglazed earthen vessel, stir it well together,  
 “ let it stand twenty-four hours, then draw  
 “ it off clear from the sediment at the bot-  
 “ tom, and from the oil on the surface. If  
 “ an hole be drilled within two inches of the  
 “ bottom of the vessel, it may be drawn off  
 “ the easier, and bottled for use : it will keep  
 “ thus for any time, and be less distasteful ;  
 “ but, by washing the mouth morning and  
 “ evening, the palate will be soon reconciled  
 “ to the taste of the *tar-water*, and it is  
 “ moreover thought a good antiscorbutic for  
 “ the gums.”

\* \* \* The above account I have not had suf-  
 ficient opportunities of confirming.



O F

## CALCULOUS COMPLAINTS.

**I** THINK it is universally allowed, that whatever is the cause of *nephritic* complaints, (whether the stone, or any other cause of inflammation) it is absolutely necessary, after bleeding, to recommend such things as are emollient and lubricating, inwardly taken, and externally applied; for it is from this method only that one can safely prevent the inflammation in those parts that are injured by a stone; or even remove the inflammation when it is once formed, and relax the passages by which the *calculus* must pass from the kidneys to the bladder: but the *oleum palmæ christi*, which I have been endeavouring to recommend, conduces in a most particular manner to this effect; and is therefore extremely useful for the cure of a gravelly nephritis; insomuch that in these complaints I never saw any medicine answer so surprisingly.

The

The *calculus* consists commonly of a nucleus, and concentric tunics and crusts, treated in a chymical manner; it resolves itself into air, phlegm, volatile urinous salt, an oil, and *caput mortuum*.

*Helmont*, *Dr. Hales*, and *Dr. Mead*, were of opinion, that the matter of the *calculus* was a certain tartar, formed in the kidneys by a præternatural coagulation; and the proximate cause of this disease is tartarous salts conveyed out of the blood into the small ducts of the kidneys. Therefore, to prevent those salts from shooting in crystals, lixivial salts, or the lees of sope, seem to be extremely proper: next, to keep the crystals from coalescing into a *calculus* substance, oily medicines, and in a particular manner the *castor oil*, must be very efficacious. And this rule, the ingenious *Dr. Mead* says, ought always to take place, with regard to diet as well as medicine.

Therefore, the *stone* is to be treated in a quite different manner during the fit, and out of it. During the paroxysm, the inflammation is to be taken off the parts by bleeding, emollient and turpentine clysters, with *castor oil*; the same oil taken by way of purge; with warm baths; and, when the inflammation

tion is taken off, opiates, and emollient oily decoctions. After the paroxysm is over, then (and not 'till then) we must recur to lithon-  
triptics and diuretics : which must be used with the utmost caution ; for a stone is never forced out, when the patient is in great torture ; tho', when the pain ceases, it sometimes comes away unexpectedly, and almost of its own accord, with the urine. On the contrary, sharp diuretics do mischief ; as they increase the fever, and the present inflammation, while they give a greater acrimony to the urine ; from all which the painful parts are more irritated, and the several symptoms increased.

When there remains no inflammation or pain, we may safely recur to small quantities of the *lixivium saponaceum*, diluted in ale or veal broth. This medicine, and the *castor oil* blended, I have known relieve, and often cure, many *calculous* complaints.

I do not pretend to say (tho' there is great reason to suspect) that the sope lees is Dr. *Chittick's* medicine ; but this I will venture to affirm, that it never performed any cure but what the *castor oil* in the fit, and the *lixivium* out of it, has executed, and will execute.

I commonly, out of the paroxysm, give twice a week two or three spoons-full of the *oil*; and the intermediate days begin with ten drops of the *lixivium*, which I increase to a tea spoon-full in a pint or half a pint of veal broth every day, morning and evening, I often give, instead of it the *aq. calcis* which is an excellent medicine, especially the oyster and cockle-shell lime-water, which possesses a much greater power of dissolving the *calculus*, than that of stone lime.

Here I cannot help recommending the use of lime-water, to prevent miscarriages of women. Col. *Martin* (whom I mentioned before) writes me, that he had tried the experiment on a lady who had miscarried often, and it succeeded so well, that it not only saved the child of which she was then pregnant, but she afterwards became mother of another; and she is now going on to furnish her husband's table with more olive branches: this I have not had an opportunity of trying.

That *this oil* alone will dissolve *calculous* and *bilious concretions*, I do not pretend positively to affirm: but am really of opinion, that it has some lithontriptic quality, and will greatly help

help towards dissolving those concretions :—  
which I think will appear from the following  
observations.

1st—As I have been subject to gravelly  
complaints, I have often taken this oil ; and I  
can affirm, that I never used it but there always  
succeeded, more or less, a discharge of fabulous  
matter.

2dly—Tho' the grosser parts of this medicine,  
as I said before, on account of its thickness,  
will not pass the lacteals, yet its most subtile  
and active parts may ; which I think is evident  
from its colour and smell, which I have obser-  
ved to have been sometimes communicated to  
the urine.

3dly—Three spoons-full of this oil will com-  
monly give me (who am hale and strong) se-  
ven or eight gentle stools ; yet, twice or thrice  
within these two years, I have found that the  
same quantity of this medicine purged me but  
once, the rest having passed off in a great  
discharge of urine.

4thly—I have observed, that, in those islands  
where this oil is commonly used, the inhabi-

tants in general are not so subject to *calculous* complaints, as in other parts.

5thly — Since I have used this oil myself, (of which I commonly take a dose once in two months, without any other physic) I find myself intirely freed from the *stone*; tho', after every dose of this medicine, (as I observed before) I still find a discharge of *gravel*, but without any pain or molestation.

It is very remarkable, that there are some patients who don't dislike the *taste* of *this oil*; while others think the smell and taste very disagreeable. For the sake of the latter, a few drops of the oil of roses, or a few spoonsfull of rose-water, may be added, in the beating up the seeds or nuts into a paste; this will rarify the oil, facilitate its extraction, add to its odour, and rectify in some manner its taste; at least 'twill hinder it from being so disagreeable to delicate patients.

I can't dismiss this subject of the *calculus*, without acquainting my West-India readers, that they have, besides *this oil*, an excellent medicine for all *gravelly* complaints, called in those parts the *bottle-cod root*: the botanical name I don't know, but take it to be a species

of the *raphanus*, or *raphanoides*. This root has all the pungency of the *raphanus*, or *horse-radish*, and at the same time all the mucilaginous property of the *marsh-mallow*.

Since my first publication of this treatise, I have received several letters from the most eminent physicians in *England* and abroad, concerning this *oil*, which is now sold in most apothecaries shops in *Great Britan*. I have two letters by me from the incomparable *Dr. Huxbam*, of *Plymouth*, wherein he mentioned the success he had found of the *castor oil*, in several cases; but, in particular, in the *Devonshire colic*, and in nephritic complaints; at the same time desiring I would procure “him a great quantity of the *oil*,  
“ cost what it would; he did not value the price  
“ for so excellent a medicine :” (These are the Doctor’s own words.)

Last *February*, I received the following Latin Letter from the learned *Baron Van Swieten*, first physician to their Imperial Majesties, and my quondam professor at *Leyden*; which, I think, will not be unacceptable to the public, as every thing, that comes from his pen, must be agreeable to all true lovers of the medical art :



Honoratissimo Viro

PETRO CANVANE, M. D.

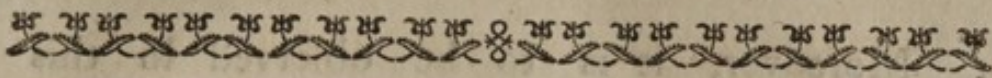
S. P. D.

GERARDUS L. B. VAN SWIETEN.

Differtationem tuam, *de Oleo Palmæ Christi*, miserat mihi Nob. Eques de *Brady* Principis Caroli Ducis Lotharingæ Archiater, quam hinc avidè legens, inveni, quod confirmet pulchrè illa, quæ de eodem hoc oleo, ejúsque usu, habentur apud *Labat*, *Nouveau voyage aux Isles d'Amérique Tom. I. Part 2. p. 212*, ubi etiam monet oleum hoc, internè datum, sursum quandoque & deorsum purgare sicque colicis doloribus opitulari: addit, idem oleum, pressione solâ paratum, rancescere nunquam, sed æquè fideliter alterum exemplar unà cum gratissimis litteris tuis attulit Lord *Taafé*, nobilitate & virtutibus venerandus senex, qui & simul tradidit olei specimen; pro duplici hoc munere debitas ago gratias, uti etiam quod mei meminisse volueris.

Planta hæc non infeliciter crescit in Europa. Tentabimus ejus effectum, quem salutarem fore non dubito. Vale & res tuas feliciter age!

Dabam 16 Janu. 1769.



Of the FLUOR ALBUS,  
GONORRHOEA, &c.

IN regard to the *fluor albus*, the principal intention of cure ought to be directed towards mending the habit of body, from some fault from which it may derive its origin.

\* Wherefore, generally speaking, it will be proper to begin the cure, as most authors agree, by giving a vomit, especially with *ipecacuabna wine*.

Frequent purging is indicated, chiefly with *this oil*; which will not only purge, but mend the habit of body. As it will prove an excellent balsamic, it may be taken with the addition of aromatics; and in some cases of a little calomel now and then: after which the laxity of the fibres requires astringents, particularly such as have the *cortex peruvianus* and steel in their composition.

G 4

More.

\* See Mead de *fluore albo*.

Moreover, it is to be observed in this place, that women of a *spare* and *lean* habit of body, who are apt to be costive, especially after delivery, often become languid and melancholy, labouring under a most obstinate and miserable *obstruction*, from an *indurated* matter in the *colon*; and this hardness in that place is sufficiently evident to the *touch*; and by the unskilful is sometimes taken for the *placenta*, and sometimes for the *spleen*; when in reality it is only the *obstructed* matter stopping in the large intestines; whence it cannot be removed by any medicines except *eccoprotics*; for, if stronger purges are given to women in this case, dreadful symptoms are immediately excited, as *vomitings*, *cholics*, and *hysterics*: wherefore, at that time a spoon-full of *this oil* is to be taken; and three or four spoons-full thrown up in form of a clyster, to remove and expel the infarction.

*This oil* is likewise of service to some artificers: as also to all studious persons; whose abdomen is usually much and frequently compressed: because, whilst they are intent on their studies, they generally sit with their bodies

dies bent, and so comprefs the contents of the abdomen. <sup>a</sup>

In regard to *gonorrhœas*, the *oleum palmæ christi*, in every ftage of this diforder, is an excellent medicine. 1ft, as a cooling purge; 2dly, as a balsamic and vulnerary; 3dly, it answers in the fame manner as *balsam capivi*, which it very much refembles in its effects.

In the *Influenza*, that was epidemical in the year 1762, *this medicine*, taken twice a week, with fufficient diluting, was of excellent fervice. It was neceffary fometimes to take at night fix grains of the *pil. è styrace*.

And in all pectoral and confumptive cafes this is the beft and foftest purge, taking at the fame time an infufion or decoction of the wild liquorish or bead-vine, fweetened with the fyrup of calabafh.

We have nothing in Europe to be compared to this laft medicine in confumptive cafes. I have been lately told it is now in great vogue in fome parts of France.

*This*

<sup>a</sup> Vide *Rammazini* de morbis artificum.—See, alfo, Dr. *Cheyne's* treatife on health and long life, page 221.

*This oil* not only acts on the *primæ viæ* as a purging medicine ; but, given in small doses, and assisted by proper diluents, will become aperient and deobstruent ; and be rendered either sudorific or diuretic ; as I have found by repeated trials. Hence its usefulness in several *chronic* diseases is evident. And I don't doubt, but (when its different virtues are more investigated) the *palma christi* will be called the *vegetable antimony*, as its different preparations will *vomit, purge, or sweat* almost in the same manner as the different preparations of antimony, that great mineral, so productive of sovereign medicines and secrets in physic.

In fine, the *castor oil* is an excellent purge in most *gouty* complaints ; tho' we are sometimes obliged to recur to warmer physic in this disorder. It has also been used *externally*, in *dropsical* cases, with success. For it has been lately found, that, after premising a few draughts, especially the *elaterium*, this *oil*, being well rubbed over the whole abdomen, has occasioned a great and sudden discharge of urine.

This method of friction with oil is not a new practice, but was often used by *Aetius* : and *Celsus* takes notice of the same, in his cure of  
*a dropsy,*

a dropſy, in the following words :—*Utendum fricatione, madefaētis tantum manibus aquâ, cui ſal et nitrum & olei paucum ſit adjeētum, ſic ut pueriles aut muliebres manus adbibeantur, quo mollior earum taētus ſit.*

After all I have ſaid concerning this medicine, I would not be underſtood to mean, that it ſhould be looked upon as a *catholicon* : with the excellent *Boerhaave*,—*nullum ego cognoſco remedium, niſi quod tempeſtivo uſu fiat tale.*—I know of no remedy in phyſic, but what becomes ſuch by due application. This, like all others, will be excellent or otherwiſe, according as it is well or ill applied. Nor will it agree with all conſtitutions : perſons afflicted with bilious diſorders, acute fevers, inflammatory diſeaſes, and all thoſe of warm bilious conſtitutions, will find great benefit from the uſe of it. On the contrary, perſons afflicted with cold diſorders, cachexia, leuco-phlegmatia, and dropſical complaints, and all thoſe of a cold, phlegmatic habit of body, ſhould by all means refrain from the uſe of it, as it is apt, in thoſe diſorders and conſtitutions, to cauſe ſpaſms.

As we are in all likelihood indebted to the *American Indians* for this medicine, as well as for the  
*bark,*

*bark, ipecacuabna*, and several others ; I think there will be no impropriety in finishing this treatise with a short account of the practice of physic at the court of *Montezuma*, emperor of Mexico ; chiefly taken from the conquest of Mexico, by *Antonio de Solis*,<sup>a</sup> secretary and historiographer to his catholic majesty : to which I will add two or three observations from the learned Dr. *James*,<sup>b</sup> in his introductory preface, tracing the practice of physic thro' its different revolutions.

This last-mentioned gentleman observes, that, of all the people, of whom history gives us any information, the *American Indians* appear, with respect to *physic*, to have been the wisest ; as indeed it is indisputably better to have no theory at all, than one that is bad, and capable of introducing errors into practice.

Don *Antonio de Solis*, speaking of *Montezuma*, emperor of Mexico, says, that there was nothing to be seen in his gardens but flowers of delightful variety and fragrancy ; with medicinal

<sup>a</sup> See Dr. *James's* introductory preface to his medicinal dictionary.

<sup>b</sup> See history of the conquest of Mexico, by Don *Antonio de Solis*, vol. 1, page 329.

cinal herbs, set in squares ; and summer-houses, where he used to sup.

He took a particular care to transplant into his garden all the choice simples that benign climate produced ; where the only study of the physicians was to attain to the knowledge of their names and properties. They had herbs for all kinds of pains and infirmities ; and in the juices and application of these herbs consisted all their remedies ; and with these they effected surprising cures, having by long experience found out their virtues ; and, without distinguishing the cause of the distemper, applying them, to the patients great benefit and recovery.

The king freely distributed to all, who had occasion for them, such of his simples as were prescribed by the physicians, or desired by the sick ; and was wont to inquire if the patient had received any benefit therefrom : either gratifying a sort of vanity he had, in the successful operation of his medicines ; or believing that he fulfilled the obligation of a sovereign, in taking such care of the health of his vassals.

*Don Antonio de Solis*, in another place, speaking of the sickness of *Cortez*, informs us, that the senate sent for all the best physicians of their coun-



country ; whose skill consisted intirely in the knowledge and choice of medicinal herbs ; which they applied with a wonderful discernment of their virtues and effects ; varying the medicines according to the condition and different turns of the distemper. And to them he was intirely beholden for his cure. For, making use at first of wholesome, cooling simples, to correct the inflammation, and mitigate the pain ; which occasioned the fever, they proceeded by degrees to apply others, proper to ripen and heal the wound ; with so much skill and good fortune, that in a little time they restored him to his perfect health.

REMARK *the First.*

Let the *rational physician* laugh as much as he pleases at *empirics* ; it is certain, however, that the first knowledge of physic was intirely from experience. And, in a country intirely unacquainted with natural philosophy, (which searches out causes by effects) it was no small matter to find so great a progress made in the knowledge of nature, as we find among these Indians.

REMARK *the Second.*

Theory cannot assume, with any appearance of reason, the power of discovering the virtues  
of

of simples, in curing distempers ; tho', by investigating the causes of disorders, it may adapt known remedies with greater propriety, and perhaps with greater success to particular cases ; provided always that the theory has its foundation more in truth, than in the imagination of the whimsical and trifling.

REMARK *the Third.*

In consequence, therefore, of neglecting all manner of theory, and cultivating experience alone, the *American Indians* have been able to discover to the Europeans the most effectual medicines yet known ; as the *Peruvian bark ipecacuabna*, and a multitude of others ; for which we are indebted to the experience of the illiterate inhabitants of the new world : whilst all the boasted learning of the Europeans has been so little productive of improvements in physic, that, with respect to our own plants, we know very little more of their virtues, than what we have learned from *Dioscorides*, and some others of the antients : and, as to distempers, those that were deemed incurable two thousand years ago would have remained so to this day, if the experience of the virtues of the *peruvian bark, ipecacuabna, rhubarb*, and *this oil*, had not furnished us with the means of relieving patients labouring under some few.

To conclude—Many medicinal discoveries have been brought about by inspiration, (that is, by the peculiar direction of providence) which are usually attributed to accident; otherwise, it should seem very surprising, that after the labour of a multitude of men, both of learning and abilities, who have spent their intire lives in physical researches, and after all the advantages of our reason, we find (to the mortification of human wisdom) that the most important remedies have been originally discovered by *savages* and *madmen*: whilst they had nothing less in view than the improvement of physick. By the former I understand the *Indians*, and by the latter I mean the *Alchymists*; who, in their pursuits after the transmutation of metals, have blundered upon some medicines of efficacy.—Thus we are told in scripture: GOD *has made foolish the wisdom of the world*; GOD *has chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise.*

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F I N I S.

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