

Observations on the use of caustic alkali, in scrofula, and other chronic diseases / [Joseph Brandish].

Contributors

Brandish, Joseph.

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OBSERVATIONS
ON
THE USE
OF
CAUSTIC ALKALI,
In Scrofula,
AND OTHER
CHRONIC DISEASES.

Second Edition.

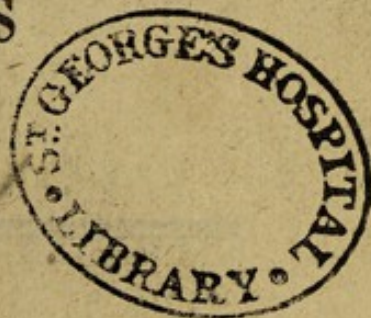
BY JOSEPH BRANDISH,
SURGEON TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF SUSSEX,
AND
Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London.

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836



TO
SIR HENRY HALFORD, BART.

M. D. F. R. S.

*Physician to the King,
and to the Prince Regent,
&c. &c. &c.*

SIR,

No intelligent reader can have the smallest doubt upon the propriety of my dedicating a treatise, on a medical subject, to a person, whose distinguished rank in the profession, points him out as at once the ablest judge, and the most efficient protector of every effort, which is made for the elucidation of its principles, or the improvement of its practice.

Permit me, then, to thank you, Sir, for the permission you have given me to prefix your name to this publication, and for the numerous proofs, which I have on various occasions received, of your candour, and your friendship.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

With the greatest respect,

Your much obliged, and very faithful

humble servant,

JOSEPH BRANDISH.

Aulcester,
September 30, 1817.

PREFACE.

AS the first edition of this pamphlet has been honoured with a favourable reception by the public, and all the copies of it are sold; the Author, in compliance with the wishes of his friends, has ventured to send forth a second edition. He begs leave to observe, that, upon re-considering the subject, and consulting with several intelligent men of his own profession, he has not found any occasion to materially correct, or add to, what he has before written.

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OBSERVATIONS
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CAUSTIC ALKALI,
IN SCROFULA, &c. &c.

HAVING for more than thirty years directed a great share of my attention to the investigation of the nature, and causes of scrofulous disorders, and having met with singular success in almost every trial to effect their cure, I can with much satisfaction deliver for the consideration of gentlemen in the medical profession, and of the public at large, the contents of the following pages.

I have been frequently exposed to the remonstrances of my friends in general, and of my medical brethren in particular, for having so long delayed to publish the results

of my experience in the treatment of a complaint, the dreadful effects of which in embittering and shortening the existence of those, who have suffered under its attacks, are so generally known and deplored.

Those who belong to the same profession with myself, will not, I hope, attribute my delay to any motives incompatible with that free and liberal spirit of communication, which so materially promotes our professional honor and interests ; they may rest assured, that no one is more inclined than myself to ridicule the vanity, and to suspect the designs of those, who boast the possession of a secret.

The conduct I have determined to pursue upon the present occasion will, I trust, sufficiently exempt me from every imputation of entertaining the sordid views, or imitating the degrading example of those, who pass under the name of quacks.

That my readers may be convinced I do not deal in mere assertion, I will proceed to

state, with every degree of openness, the cause which has hitherto prevented me from making that public disclosure of the method I have followed in treating scrofulous disorders, which the credit of our profession, and the cause of humanity seemed to require.

Living, as I did, at a considerable distance from the metropolis, my practice in scrofulous cases was necessarily confined to those patients who would consent to leave their own homes, and place themselves under my care at Aulcester. The prospect of regaining their health was, however, a sufficient inducement to them to make this sacrifice ; and I have in the course of thirty years attended to the cases of some hundred patients, who came from London, Birmingham, and various parts of the kingdom, for the purpose of undergoing, under my superintendence, that process of cure, which I had found to be so very generally successful.

When I had completely effected their cure, I was not always so fortunate as to obtain

the credit of it; for it has been repeatedly said, that the re-establishment of their health could with much greater truth be attributed to their changing the air of London for the pure and open air of the country, than to the mode of treatment I had adopted.

Being myself perfectly convinced there was no truth whatever in the remark, I was very anxious, at some future period of my life, both for my own satisfaction, and that of others, to try the effect of my treatment upon patients actually resident in the metropolis; I therefore determined to delay the publication of my plan, till I had completely ascertained its efficacy in London, as well as in the country.

From various causes it was not in my power to carry my resolution into practice till the spring of the year 1808. From that period I have been frequently resident in town, have treated many afflicting and aggravated cases of scrofula in patients of all ages, and can with the greatest confidence affirm,

that their recovery has, in point of time, been rather more rapid, and for the purposes of future and lasting health, in my opinion, quite as complete as any I have ever accomplished under the boasted advantages of country air and exercise.

Some patients actually came from the country for the purpose of placing themselves under my care in London; and I can safely affirm, that their progress in amendment was equally favourable with the amendment of others, who were born and had constantly resided in town.

I ought not to omit mentioning that I have lately had an opportunity of trying the alkaline medicine with the mercurial ointment, in a few cases, in hospitals, and notwithstanding the foul air of those places, I have little doubt from what I saw of the result, that if the patients were to be indulged with plenty of fresh meat, to receive a proper allowance of good fresh porter or ale, according to their age, and were per-

mitted to walk out when the weather is fine, the major part of them would completely recover.

It is not my intention to make a display of medical learning, and to swell the size of my pamphlet by quotations from authors, who have turned their attention to the nature and causes of scrofula, and according to their different judgments, laid down rules for its mitigation, or cure.

My object has been to state with as much brevity as the subject upon which I am desirous to communicate information can admit, the fruits of my own experience and practice, during the long course of time in which I have been engaged in the service of those, who have been afflicted with the complaint.

As it is my earnest wish to render the statement of my opinions, and history of my proceedings intelligible to the general, as well as the professional reader, I have

abstained, as much as possible, from the use of technical terms, peculiar to the science of medicine.

It would be a source of great satisfaction to myself, and a very effectual mode of strengthening the conviction of those, who peruse the following treatise, if I were permitted to introduce the names and situation in life of those persons whom I have had the good fortune to relieve and cure in various and very deplorable cases.

But, as this advantage cannot be realized without wounding the feelings and delicacy of those, who have entrusted themselves to my care, and had received from me the strongest pledge of secrecy ; every humane and honourable reader will see the propriety of my preserving inviolable that secrecy, with respect to the names of all, and of my being very cautious and sparing in the enumeration of instances without names, lest the minute detail of circumstances should lead to the discovery of the persons.

As I am about to publish what has hitherto been kept a secret, both from my medical brethren and the public at large, some one may ask how did the discovery of the efficacious remedy arise, and to whom ought to be given the merit of the invention?

The answer, if accompanied by every particular of name and circumstances, would not be very interesting or useful to the world at large.

For myself, I do not set up any claim to originality of invention; nor is it in my power, nor, to the best of my belief, in that of any other person in existence, to point out the name of the man who is entitled to the credit of having first discovered, and first applied the alkaline medicine for the cure of scrofulous disorders.

Whatever merit may be attached to a long and anxious course of endeavours thoroughly to understand its properties and powers; to the repeated trials of its superior

efficacy, and the publication of the results of those trials, for the conviction of the sceptical, and relief of the afflicted; to the discovery and successful extension of its uses to other obstinate disorders, to which it had never before been applied by any practitioner, except myself, that merit I may without presumption or falsehood, freely call my own.

Scrofula, the disease which I profess to cure by the remedies soon to be enumerated, appears generally before the age of puberty. It is not, however, confined to this period of life; it frequently infests youth and early manhood, and if not subdued, even leaves traces of its ravages in a more advanced life.

The temperament most subject to scrofula, is that in which light eyes and light-coloured hair prevail, and when the skin is particularly fair and clear.

It is not, however, confined to this temperament. Persons with black hair, black eyes, and dark complexions, are occasionally

attacked with it. In patients of this description, I have found it more difficult to effect a cure, than in those who appear more fair and delicate.

In the instance of a little boy with dark eyes, a swarthy complexion, and remarkably strong black hair, who was afflicted with scrofulous tumours, and ulcers in different parts of his body, my treatment, though carried on with the greatest attention and perseverance, completely failed, and left me without the means of accounting for such failure. His constitution appeared to be tolerably good; yet, contrary to my expectations, and in spite of my utmost exertions, he sunk into a decline and died.

Perhaps it may not be amiss also to remark, that I have always found persons considerably advanced in life more difficult to cure than children, and those who had the advantage of youth on their side.

It is generally supposed that scrofula is

an hereditary disease, and the evidence of facts compels us to acknowledge that it is much more prevalent in some families, than in others. But in those families, where we meet with the most virulent cases, it frequently happens that some of the children are totally exempt from the complaint. To what cause is their escape to be attributed, and how is it possible to account for the great frequency of the disorder in the present times, for it has certainly much increased within the last forty years? If I might venture a conjecture upon a subject which has puzzled the wisest of the medical profession, I should, in a great measure, impute its increase to the mode of treatment usually adopted in the small pox, measles, and other epidemical disorders, which, according to the present fashion, in my opinion, too strongly checks the eruptive fever, and prevents the pustules from making that kind appearance, which the system might probably require.

I do not wish to be understood as asserting

that inoculation for the small pox is, of itself, the cause of scrofula. But, if you insert any virulent poison into the constitution, and nature makes an effort to get rid of it by the means of eruption, and such means are counteracted, I should be very apprehensive of the mischiefs, which might ensue, and strongly suspect that virus so lurking in the constitution might be a great cause of the complaint in question.

But while I have ventured to express my opinion upon what I conceive to be one faulty extreme in the management of persons under the small-pox, measles, &c. I would by no means recommend the opposite one, which was practised in the days of our forefathers, when the patient was confined to his bed in a heated room, from which the air was, as much as possible, excluded. The middle way I have ever considered as the best—I would keep the patient in a room moderately warm, advise him to sit up when ever he is able, and when tired and fatigued, occasionally to lie down. He should drink

plentifully of diluting liquors, such as different sorts of herb teas, water gruel, weak chicken or veal broth, and such kind of beverage. If this mode was generally pursued, we should not, I humbly conceive, see so many of our fellow-creatures suffering under scrofula.

I have often been induced to believe that scrofulous affections have followed the small pox from the mere circumstance of due preparation, before inoculation, having been too much neglected; and from purging physic having been omitted after the complaint had subsided.

I have not ventured to publish my opinion upon this point without sufficient grounds, and this will be evident when I declare, that upon enquiring of my patients when the scrofulous disorder first made its appearance, I have found that, in the very great majority of instances, it has followed the small pox by inoculation. It has also in several instances

followed the natural small pox, and likewise the cow pox.*

Though I have endeavoured to account for the greater frequency of the disorder in the present times from the treatment adopted

* A particular friend of mine of the greatest professional eminence, to whom I shewed this treatise in manuscript, made the following observation upon this part of my statement :—" Scrofula may exist without being preceded by any other disease, and when it appears after some disorder, it is no proof that such disorder was the cause. The cow pox affects the constitution so inconsiderably that it is not probable it can be the cause of another disease."

In answer to this, I can only say that my practice has furnished me with the sight of many instances, in which scrofula has followed the cow pox; and that I have at this time, under my care, some patients whose parents have declared that no scrofulous affections were ever known to exist in their families, and that the disease made its first appearance in their children in a short time after their recovery from the cow pox. I would not be understood in this observation to depreciate the introduction of the cow pox, or to rank myself in the number of those, who have spoken or written against its safety, expediency, and utility:—I mean merely to state with openness and impartiality the fact of scrofula having followed the cow pox, as well as the natural small pox, and the small pox by inoculation.

while the habit is under the influence of the small pox, I am fully aware that it also owes its origin to other diseases, which have the effect of weakening the constitution, and impoverishing the blood.

It has also been known to take its rise from bruises and strains, of which several examples have come under my own immediate observation and practice.

Every part of the body is, indeed, liable to be attacked by scrofula; but its appearance is said more generally to take place in the glandular parts, for which reason I conclude scrofulous tumours and ulcers are now called glandular affections. With equal propriety, according to my judgment at least, they may be called ligamentous affections, from the frequency of the disease in joints; they may also be called *muscular* affections, for we very frequently see them on the arms, legs, and thighs, and still more frequently on the feet and hands, accom-

panied with caries of the metatarsal and metacarpal bones.

In fact, wherever the lymphatic system reaches, there may scrofula extend, and when its reign begins, there is no part exempted from its ravages; and finally, if not arrested in its progress, it destroys life, by affecting those organs immediately subservient to existence.

Whatever may be the cause of its appearance, and wherever may be the particular seat of its ravages, the great point, in which we are most concerned, is to check its progress, and finally to eradicate it from the system.

Many ingenious theories have been started, and many details of practice have been published by those, who have attempted its cure. But no satisfactory method has hitherto, I believe, been pointed out.

Sea air, sea bathing, and drinking sea

water, are most commonly recommended ; but they have very seldom been followed by any decisive, and permanent effects. I do not deny that scrofulous subjects may return, from the use of those expedients, apparently benefited in health, and to all appearance, much improved in the condition of their sores. But it is well known that in the following spring, or, perhaps as early as the months of January or February, the sores will break out again, and in some instances, with increased violence. The cause of this I have attributed to the remedy itself, the tendency of which being to strengthen the habit, enables nature to act for herself, and gives her the greater power of throwing out the disease on the surface.

Many patients have been placed under my care, after they had tried the efficacy of sea air and sea bathing for several summers, and the state of their complaint upon their first coming to me, which always took place in the spring, was quite as bad, or perhaps worse, than it was before they went to the sea.

Amongst many instances which I could adduce, to establish the success of the treatment I have chosen to recommend, after the sea had entirely failed, I shall, at present, mention the case of a little boy, who had passed five summers at the sea, and of a little girl who had passed seven. The boy had lost one finger, and I was obliged to cut off another, the bone of which was completely decayed. The finger was drawn into the hand, and he felt himself relieved from much inconvenience, when it was taken off: he had bad sores on his neck, under his arm, on his groin, legs and feet. In fact, he was almost covered with sores.

The girl had seventeen sores in different parts of her body: they were both perfectly cured in three summers, are both grown up, and have not had the slightest return of the complaint.

But I could enumerate many cures of patients, who have remained from one to three years at the sea without having experi-

enced any favourable change in their disorder, which could give them the slightest hopes of its extinction from a further perseverance in that remedy. I do not deny that instances may have occurred in which the vigour of a strong constitution may, in the course of time, have finally triumphed over the disease. But they are, I believe, very few, when compared with those, who have fallen victims to it.

I well remember to have held a long conversation with the late celebrated Mr. John Hunter, concerning the treatment of scrofula, when, at his particular request, I shewed him three patients much afflicted with the malady, who were going with me from London to Aulcester. After examining them very minutely, he strongly recommended that they should be sent to the sea side, or to Malvern, or at all events to some fine country air; and predicted that their recovery would take place in the course of seven, or eight years.

The three patients in question, were a little

girl about six, or seven years of age, a little boy about five, and a youth about nineteen or twenty. According to the time fixed by Mr. Hunter, the two children would recover about the age of puberty : the fact, however, was, that the little girl became perfectly well in three summers, the little boy in four, and the young man in two. I brought them to the sight of Mr. Hunter again, after the cure was performed, when he asked me very significantly, whether I could venture to pronounce the disease finally eradicated, and what I thought would be the fate of their children, if they should ever happen to marry. I expressed myself in very confident terms about the stability of the cure, observing, that I could at that instant shew him several persons, who had met with no relapse during the space of ten and twelve years, from the date of their recovery.

To the doubt he seemed to urge in respect to the fate of the children, I could not at that period make a satisfactory reply ; because no patients of either sex, who had been

indebted to me for their recovery, had then contracted marriage, and become the parents of children. But, if Mr. Hunter was now alive, I should have great pleasure and satisfaction in shewing him the girl, whom he had seen so many years ago in a state of deplorable disease, still continuing free from every vestige of it, and the mother of six very fine and healthy children. To this instance I could add many others of my patients in both sexes, who have become the parents of children, in whom no vestige of the disease has ever appeared: In some cases I have seen the grand-children of my patients born with the healthiest constitutions, and living with the same chance of exemption from scrofula, as the descendants of families, in which the complaint was never known to exist.

The late eminent Dr. Warren saw the three patients above-mentioned, before they went to Aulcester, and also after their return; he thought them very fit subjects for trying the efficacy of my plan, and very candidly acknowledged its complete success in having

stood so strong a test of its excellence, and power.

After this I received a young woman under my care, selected by the Dr. himself, and pronounced by him to be in the very worst stage of the disease. In the course of three summers, I had the happiness to present her to him completely cured, and I have at this moment the most lively, and pleasing recollection of the very handsome terms, in which he expressed his satisfaction, and I add his own word, "astonishment." The young woman has remained quite free from the complaint, for the space of more than twenty years, and is now in the enjoyment of perfect health.

Besides the use of sea bathing, which has of late years been so generally recommended by the faculty, and so generally resorted to by the afflicted, fifty other remedies, in my opinion, very unimportant and fruitless, have been at various times adopted for the cure of scrofulous affections. The ethiops, both

of antimony and mercury, have been used for the swelling of the glands; but the want of success has caused them to be generally laid aside, and if we may appeal to them at all, as articles of the *materia medica*, it is that we may apply means popular, rather than remedies certain. The same remarks will hold good in respect to Cuttle-fish bones, to the coralline and testaceous powders often so largely tried, and the prejudice concerning whose use is manifested by the selection of coral, as one of the chief ornaments of infants.

As to the use of other disgusting but innoxious articles, it is not necessary for me now to speak; for I believe millepedes and snails are no longer recommended, at least by the medical practitioner.

It struck me that mercurial ointment in small quantities, properly rubbed in, would disperse scrofulous tumours, as it is known to do venereal ones. Being aware, however, of its pernicious tendency to weaken the

system, and break down the blood, and being persuaded that the mischief of the remedy might upon some occasions be equal to that of the disorder, I was of course desirous to accompany it with something, which should wholly counteract all baneful results, and make the action of mercury in all respects safe and salutary to the constitution. With this view then, I have given internally the alkaline medicine of tonic and deobstruent qualities, which effectually serves to counteract the bad qualities of the mercury, and by so doing, assists it in its cure of the original disease.

That I have given it in its caustic state, not in the small quantities in which it is even now used, (and then as an internal remedy it was not used at all) but in much larger doses ; in quantities, indeed, which nothing but an authorized experience of many years could justify, may excite the surprize of some amongst my medical readers.

The formula in which I have been accustomed to make the alkali, I shall now

deliver—I have used it in the same manner for more than thirty years.

FORMULA.

R̄ Ciner: Clavellator: Americanor: ℥ vi

Calcis viv: recent:

Ciner: Ligni combusti $\overline{\text{aa}}$ ℥ ii

Aq: Bullient: Cong: vi.*

Boil the water in a tin kettle, and while the water is boiling hot, put the lime into it, a small piece at a time, that the ebullition may not be so great, as to force the water over; when the lime is properly slacked, put in the pearl ashes, and stir it till the lumps are all broken; then put in the wood ashes, and stir it all together, and pour it into a strong earthen jar, or pot well glazed on the inside, with a wooden spigot and faucēt fixed

* The original way of preparing the alkali was,

Calcis viv: recent:

Ciner: Ligni combusti $\overline{\text{aa}}$ p. œ.

The addition of the pearl ashes makes the medicine more soft and palatable.

in it, and a little tow or herds wrapped round the end of the faucet withinside the vessel, for the liquor to drain through when drawn off: let it stand at least twenty-four hours, then draw it off into a glazed earthen cup, very gradually, by putting a small chip or splint of wood by the side of the spigot into the faucet, so that the liquor may little more than drop: it will then come off perfectly clear.

A pint of this liquor, wine measure, will weigh from eighteen to nineteen ounces; it is to be taken twice a day, namely, between breakfast and dinner, and at night, going to bed, in a small tea cup full of fresh small beer or ale, as that will cover the taste of the alkali better than any other vehicle.* The beer cannot be too fresh, provided it is quite clear; but should the patient have a dislike to beer, it may be taken in malt tea, barley water, or water gruel: in whatever it is taken,

* To a pint of the alkali, I generally add a drop or two of Ol: Juniper: Ver: as it in a great degree takes away the saponaceous taste, and gives it a grateful smell.

the taste of the alkali should be a little predominant.

To children, from four years of age to six, I generally give one small tea spoonful, or one dram by measure. From six years old to eight, one tea spoonful and a half. To children under four years old, of course must be given less, in proportion to their age. From eight to fifteen, two tea spoonfuls. From fifteen to eighteen, two tea spoonfuls and a half. To grown people, three tea spoonfuls; and to some strong people, I have given four tea spoonfuls. For the first few days, I would recommend *rather* a smaller quantity, in all cases.

As a commentary on this formula, let me add that the pearl ashes should be of the purest American sort; that the lime should be fresh from the kiln; that the ashes should be made from the branches of the ash tree, which should be burnt, as soon as may be, after the wood is dry, and that the ashes should be used quite fresh. The alkali

should be put into a bottle with a glass stopper, and always kept in a place moderately warm and dry, as its virtue is liable to be impaired by heat or cold. In the summer season it should be carefully protected from the rays of the sun; and in the winter, from damp and frost: and in order to prevent the salt crystalizing round the neck of the bottle, the stopper should be occasionally taken out and wiped with a wet cloth.

The alkali, with the use of the ointment, in general wonderfully exhilarates the spirits, increases the appetite, and in fact strengthens the system. But I think it right to mention that I have met with a few instances, where in the middle of summer, and particularly in very hot weather, it has appeared to bring on a kind of languor and debility: upon observing this, I have left off the alkali and the rubbing, have given a dose or two of salts, afterwards the Decoct: Cort: Peru, two or three times a day, with a little of Huxham's Tincture in each dose, for a fortnight, or three weeks. After this, for the

most part, we could go on with our usual process for the remainder of the summer. I recollect two instances, and two only, where the alkali in the usual dose produced a kind of heaviness and stupor. But, in both cases, they went off in a very short time; and, I can with great propriety and truth affirm, that the instances of its disagreeing with any constitution are very rare, and very, very few indeed, when compared with those, in which it has answered every desirable and expected end, which hundreds can testify.

I can have but one motive for expressing myself thus earnestly in its favour, and that is, to persuade my medical brethren, and their patients to place confidence in what I have asserted, and to persevere in the plan I have before laid down.

I think it right to state that I have always been accustomed to give the alkali, accompanied with the mercurial ointment, during the milder part of the year; namely, from

the beginning of April 'till the latter end of October, or longer, if the weather has continued tolerably warm. Being fearful of my patients taking cold, and being convinced that too long a perseverance in any medicines at one time, is calculated to lessen their effect upon the constitution, by making them too familiar, I judged it expedient to confine the use of mine to a limited period, and that the most distinguished for its mildness the year could afford. How far it may be proper to continue the ointment throughout the winter, is a question I shall leave to the determination of others. It is obvious that there can be no objection whatever to giving the alkali, in other disorders, at any season of the year.

The mercurial ointment to be rubbed in every night before going to bed, I have used in the following proportions.

Children, from four years old to eight, may rub in six grains. From one to four, of course, rather less. From eight to twelve,

nine grains. From twelve to sixteen, twelve grains. From sixteen and upwards, fifteen grains. And to strong hearty patients, I have sometimes ordered a little more.

The form in which I have prepared the mercurial ointment is as follows :

℞ Argent: viv:

Axung: porc: aa ll.i.

Put the quicksilver into a marble, or stone mortar, add a small quantity of the fresh liquor, and rub it for some time with a marble or stone pestle ; add, by degrees, the remainder of the fresh liquor, and rub it till the globules completely disappear, or in other words, till the quicksilver is completely killed. I do not put any mutton suet into it, because I think the ointment rubs in better without it. I wish the friction to be continued till the part is quite dry, (which will probably take half or three quarters of an hour,) as the stimulus produced by it will increase the action of the

absorbent vessels, and by that means cause more of the mercury to be taken up. I always order it to be rubbed, if practicable, below the seat of the tumour or ulcer, so that the mercury may, as much as possible, pass through the diseased part.

The patient should sleep with a glove on the hand he rubs with, and for the purposes of cleanliness, I would recommend a thread, or cotton stocking, or linen glove, to cover the leg, or arm upon which the ointment is rubbed. He may wash his hands in the morning with warm water. But the part rubbed upon need not be washed oftener, than once in three or four days. Let it be remembered, that the patient must always wash himself with water a little warm.

During the use of the ointment, I would have him take a dose of salts every four, or five weeks, or oftener, if he should find his mouth sore; as it is well known that mercury will take greater effect on one person than another. He need not take the drops, or

use the ointment, the night preceding the morning, on which he takes the salts, or on that day, but begin again the following evening.

Children may take senna tea, sweetened with manna ; but, indeed, most of them will take salts readily enough, if, after they are dissolved in a proper quantity of water, a small tea spoonful of good rum be added to them, as that will take away the disagreeable taste of the salts. They must, of course, be worked off with tea or water gruel, in the usual way.

There have been various opinions concerning the propriety of opening scrofulous tumours. If they tend to suppuration, I constantly apply a poultice of bread and milk, without any grease in it, night and morning, and put it on sufficiently thick to keep soft for twelve hours : I continue the use of it, till the tumour is quite come to maturity ; I would then rather open it, than leave it to break of itself, because I have the

choice of opening it in the most dependent part, and it generally happens, that there is a smaller cicatrix, or scar, than when it is suffered to break of itself; but the operation of opening it must not take place till the hardness is completely dissolved. When nature is left to act for herself, it will most commonly break about the middle of the tumour, and then it will be necessary to dilate the wound to the bottom of the tumour, as it is evident the matter cannot run upwards.

It may perhaps be expected that I should lay down some directions for dressing scrofulous sores, in which I think there is some little difficulty, because the dressings must be varied according to the state of the sores. I generally dress them with a little Basil: flav:*

* Basil: flav: I make as follows:

R_x Resin: flav:

Tereb: Venet:

Ceræ flav: aa ll. i.

Ol: Lini: ll. iss.

Melt them together over a gentle fire, and strain while hot.

or Liniment Arcaei,* spread on lint, with a plaister of Cerate over it; and where there is a considerable degree of inflammation, I have found the Pomat:† Saturn: Goulard:

CERATE.

℞ Butyr: recent:
 Ceræ flav: aa ℥xiii.
 Ol: Oliv: Op: ll.i.
 Lap. Calamin. pp. ℥xi.

Melt the wax and the butter, in the oil, over a slow fire; then remove it from the fire, add the Calaminaris, and stir it till cold. In cases of scrofulous ophthalmia, I have found the Unguentum ad Lippitudinem of great service.

* Linimentum Arcaei, vel Unguentum Gummi Elemi.

℞ Gum: Elemi:
 Terebinth: Vulg: aa ℥iss.
 Sevi: Ovilli: purific: ℥ii.
 Axung: Porc: recent: ℥i.

Melt them over a slow fire, and strain the mixture through a linen cloth.

In scrofulous, and indeed in other ulcers, particularly when they have put on a cold and sluggish appearance, I have frequently found this a very good and suitable application.

† Pomat: Saturn: Goulard: now called in the London New Pharmacopœia, Ceratum Plumbi Compositum, Compound Lead Cerate.

a good application, as well as a bread and milk poultice. And here I think it right just to hint, that I have never seen any particular benefit derived from the use of issues and setons ; on the contrary, I am strongly inclined to believe that any thing, which tends to weaken the constitution, in scrofulous habits, must certainly be detrimental.

I have not yet laid down any rules for the regimen, which is necessary to be observed by persons afflicted with scrofula.

At breakfast, I would recommend coffee or tea, with a sparing use of butter ; at dinner, plain roast or boiled meat, with some good fresh porter or ale, or according to a person's custom, a little wine at or after din-

R Ceræ Alb : ℥iv .

Ol : Oliv : Op : ℥ix .

Camphor 3 ss.

Extract : Saturn : ℥ii vel ℥iiss .

Melt the wax in the oil, over a gentle fire, then add the camphor, and when dissolved take it from the fire, and add the extract, stirring it with a wooden slice, until it gets cold.

ner: for supper, a little cold meat, or bread and cheese, with some fresh porter or ale. There is no objection to tea, in the afternoon, for those who may like to take it. All acids, of every sort and description, such as vinegar, cyder, and lemon juice, must be strictly avoided. Much fermenting vegetables are bad. Potatoes, turnips, carrots, and a little spring cabbage, may be taken in sufficient quantities to relish the meat. Wine must be continued to those children, who have been accustomed to drink it: their mode of living must be increased on the side of generosity, rather than diminished.

Here it may not be improper to observe, that several gentlemen's sons and daughters, who have been for a length of time under my care, and have gone directly from me to a boarding school, have broke out again; and this I have no doubt was entirely owing to their having exchanged their regimen of good ale, and an occasional glass of wine, for poor small beer. The meat at the public schools is in general very good. But it may not be

amiss to remark, that the beer is in general very weak, and sometimes very bad.

Children should wear thick soled shoes, and be earnestly cautioned against wetting their feet. But if by chance they should, their shoes and stockings must be immediately changed.

The alkali is not only useful in scrofula : In asthma*, in the coughs of old men, in stomach diseases arising from obstructions in the organs immediately serving digestion, in dyspepsia, and in all diseases in which acid

* In cases of asthma, I have been accustomed to give one, two, or three tea spoonfuls of the alkali, according to the age and strength of the patient, twice or three times a day, in a teacupful of cold malt tea. I make the malt tea, by infusing half a pound of ground malt in two pints and a half of boiling water. In hot weather, the malt tea should be made fresh every day, as it is very apt to become sour. This is a very excellent beverage for persons troubled with coughs.

In the coughs of old men, I have frequently found equal quantities of the alkali, and syrup of poppies, of great service ; and have given two or three tea-spoonfuls, two or three times a day, in malt tea.

is generated, whether in the *primæ viæ*, or in the urinary organs, it is of the utmost service.

In spasmodick asthma, I have found the convulsion or paroxysm removed by two or three tea-sponfuls of the alkali, in a very short time after it was taken, and by continuing the use of it, the disease has been eradicated in some very stubborn cases of long standing.

I always inculcate a simple diet, and general temperance ; but I have found the alkali very efficacious, where these have not been strictly observed. Stomach diseases must always be remedied by attention to diet ; but the greatest assistance to them is

A very beautiful tincture may be drawn from rhubarb, by infusing half an ounce of rhubarb, grossly powdered, in a quart of the alkali. This tincture has proved very efficacious in removing habitual costiveness, when taken at night going to bed, or as occasion may require, in a tea-cup of water gruel or barley water, in the proportion of one, two, or three tea spoonfuls of the medicine, according to the age and strength of the patient.

afforded by the alkali, and perhaps in no disorders is the relief more certain than in them. It instantly neutralizes the acid; digestion proceeds, even where the appetite has been previously depraved.

In persons who have become dyspeptic, from intemperance, or from living in hot climates, I have found it equally beneficial. In fine, there is no disease of want of tone, in the digestive organs, of undue acidity or obstruction, in which I believe the caustic alkali may not be serviceable, both as an excitent, and a deobstruent.

In stone or gravel, and all urine complaints, it is clearly pointed out by the affinities, and doctrines of chemistry, as the means most probably curative, and preventative. Alkali is well known to pass through the system, and even to be discharged in the urine, undigested and unaltered. If it meets with an acid, under such circumstances, is it not then the rational and most probable curative application? In gout, for the same reason,

I believe, it would be most essentially serviceable also. The concretions in gout, have uric acid for their basis ; an alkali, therefore, is the proper preventive of the forming concretion ; and if we may reason a fortiori, of the foundation of disease.

Perhaps then we may be allowed to presume, that in all disorders of obstruction, whether glandular obstruction in the shape of conglobation and approaching schirrus, of tubercle, acid concretion, or whatever may be the shape it may assume, alkali in its pure state is the remedy.

This remedy I have dared to use, under the safe guidance of experience, in much larger doses than it was ever used before. Success has justified my daring, and I therefore venture to offer the medicine to the public, with the hope that in the manner, in which I have applied it, and this improved and extended by farther trials, and more enlightened science, it may one day or other be the safe antidote to some of those disorders, which

are so destructive to the health and happiness of the human race : indeed from the increased experience which I have had of the efficacy of the caustic alkali, *since* the publication of my observations, and from the reports which have been made to me of its success, when administered by others of the profession, I can no longer entertain the smallest doubt of its efficacy, but consider myself fully justified in asserting, that the treatment I have recommended may be fully relied upon to effect a complete and radical cure in all cases of scrofula whatsoever.

CASES.

THIRTY years ago, or more, a young lady, fifteen years of age, and in a very bad state of health, was brought to me with a scrofulous ulcer under her chin, on the right side, with a fungus upon it, about the size of a large plumb; she had also several sores on her right arm, with caries of the bone: I gradually destroyed the fungus with lunar caustic; I then found that the jaw bone on that side was completely carious. In a short time I perceived, that an evident separation was taking place at the chin, at the symphysis; in a few weeks the bone* came out whole,

* The bone is in the possession of my highly respected friend, Mr. Cline, Surgeon, and Teacher of Anatomy, in London.

Mr. Cline, and myself, were contemporaries at St. Thomas's Hospital, in the years 1771, 1772, and 1773; and we have kept up an occasional correspondence ever since. Some years ago I sent him three remarkable cases,

with the teeth in it, and the sores very readily healed up: many small exfoliations of bone came from her arm, and in three summers that got quite well. She has continued perfectly well ever since, and has not had the least occasion for any medical advice whatever; she took no other medicine than the alkaline drops, but of course used the mercurial ointment; she has the complete use of her arm, and eats on the left side of her mouth with perfect ease and comfort.

Several years ago I was desired to see a young girl, with a scrofulous ulcer on her right wrist, which had been of long standing; the end of the ulna, or small bone of the arm, protruded out of the wound two inches or more, and appeared quite smooth and polished, like the ivory handle of a knife; I

which are published in the Medical Journal: one was a case of a gun-shot wound, where a portion of the head of the thigh bone came away. Another was a case of mortification in the leg, where the separation took place at the knee. And a third was a case of caries of the jaw bone, occasioned by matter confined in the socket of a tooth.

gave her some of the alkali, and some ointment: in a few weeks I perceived a distinct motion of the bone at the elbow; in a short time it came off nearly whole, and the wound gradually healed.* She has the perfect free use of her arm, can knit, sew, spin, &c.; she is married, and has got seven or eight strong healthy children, who are all of them quite free from the complaint.

A little boy, six years of age, the son of a gentleman in London, was brought to me several years ago, who had been under the care of some of the most eminent surgeons in London, and had been at the sea; he had sores on his neck, on his groin, and on one of his feet, with caries of one of the metatarsal bones; one arm was almost covered with sores from his elbow to his wrist, and his elbow nearly stiff. He had been afflicted with the disease almost from his infancy; he

* This bone also is in Mr. Cline's Anatomical Museum, at St. Thomas's Hospital.

was perfectly well in three summers, is now grown a man, and has the free use of his arm.

A poor girl, aged seventeen years, was recommended to me several years ago, who had been a considerable time in Worcester Infirmary, under the care of a surgeon of great eminence, the late Mr. Russell. Her neck and bosom were almost covered with sores, and one under her chin went through into her mouth, so that when she drank any thing, she was obliged to cover the orifice with her thumb, to prevent the liquor from running out. One of her arms was very much swelled, so that she had completely lost the use of it: it had several sores upon it; she had also sores on the back of her hand, with caries of the metacarpal bone of the middle finger; she carried her arm in a sling, but her hand and fingers were so thickened and diseased, and so heavy, that she was obliged to support her arm with her other hand; she had also a large tumour at the bottom of her back, with an evident fluctuation in it. She appeared a good deal emaciated, had little

or no appetite, her spirits were very low, and in fact, her general health much impaired. I immediately gave her the alkaline drops, and ordered her to rub in the mercurial ointment every night. Her appetite very soon increased, her spirits began to revive and in about a month I ventured to open the tumour on her back, and discharged more than half a pint of bloody matter. In a few days afterwards, I left off the alkali and the ointment; and gave her, two or three times a day, some decoction of Peruvian bark, with a little of Huxham's Tincture in each dose; I continued this for about a fortnight, and then returned to the drops, and the ointment again: I desired she might live well, which, with the assistance of her friends, she was enabled to do. I dressed the sore with a little yellow basilicon, and occasionally with linimentum arcaeï, with a plaister of Turner's Cerate over them: in less than five weeks, the sore was perfectly healed; all the other sores gradually mended, and at the end of the third summer were completely well, and have never broke out at all since. She is

now married, enjoys very excellent health, and has the free use of her arm and hand.

Near thirty years ago, a girl about nineteen years of age came to me with a tumour of considerable size on her neck just under her ear. The account she gave of herself, was, that the swelling had been on her neck for several months; that every five weeks it gradually went away, and as it diminished, she began to cough and spit very much: this lasted about three weeks, and as the swelling rose again, the cough and spitting totally ceased. I thought it a curious kind of case, and took her into my own house, immediately gave her the caustic alkali, and ordered the mercurial ointment. In about three weeks the swelling began to subside; this as before was followed by cough, violent expectoration, and a great degree of apparently hectic fever: in truth, any one would have imagined that she was in a deep decline; notwithstanding this appearance, she went on with the alkali and the rubbing. About the usual time, the cough and spitting totally ceased, but the

tumour did not rise again : we steadily pursued the same process for about three months, when she returned home to her friends perfectly well. From that time I had neither seen her, nor received any intelligence of her, till about two months ago, when I was told of her residence ; I determined to call upon her, and was much pleased to hear from herself, that the swelling had *never* again appeared, that she *never* had had any return of the cough or spitting, and that her health had *never* suffered the least interruption from the period at which she left my house up to the time at which I last saw her.

* * * The Caustic Alkali, Mercurial Ointment, &c. as prepared by Mr. Brandish, may be had of Mr. Cobbe, Chemist to His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, Haymarket, London.

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