

**Observations concerning the prevention and cure of the venereal disease
... With an appendix, containing a list of the most approved medicines /
[William Buchan].**

Contributors

Buchan, William, 1729-1805.

Publication/Creation

London : T. Chapman, 1797.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/nt2r96am>

License and attribution

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

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



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



12941/B
F. IX

18/v

ℓ

John Person His Book
York Ceylon
pp
17.C.11840
Dembourth 23 1823⁶

M.
U.S.A.
1905



Observations
OBSERVATIONS

CONCERNING

THE PREVENTION AND CURE

OF THE

VENEREAL DISEASE.

INTENDED

To guard the Ignorant and Unwary against the baneful
Effects of that insidious Malady.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

Containing a List of the most approved Medicines now
used in the Cure of this Disorder, also their Doses,
Manner of Application, &c.

By W. BUCHAN, M. D.

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS,
EDINBURGH; AND AUTHOR OF THE
DOMESTIC MEDICINE.

Stultorum incurata pudor malus ulcera celat.

HORATII EPIST. XVI.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CHAPMAN, FLEET-STREET.

1797.





ADVERTISEMENT.

AS the Author of the following Pages has been long convinced that the office of a Mother, however neglected, is the most important in human life, he intends speedily to publish a Short Treatise, concerning *The Duties and Offices of a Mother.*

New Store-street,
Bedford Square.

D. A. H. M. E. L. L.

CONTENTS.

	Page
PREFACE	i
Preliminary Observations	9
Introduction	41
CHAP. I.	
Of Preventing the Venereal Disease	57
CHAP. II.	
Of the Virulent Gonorrhœa	73
Method of Cure	78
Of the Chordee	87
CHAP. III.	
Consequences of the Virulent Gonorrhœa	88
Of the Swelled Testicle	93
Of Gleets	96
Of Warts and Excoriations	101
CHAP. IV.	
Of the Lues Venerea, or Pox	103
Of the Treatment of Chancres	108
Of the Phymosis and Paraphymosis	113
CHAP. V.	
Of the Instruments of Cure	123
Of the Proper Regimen during a Course of Mercury	134
	Of

CONTENTS.

	Page
Of Buboës	138
Of Venereal Ulcers	146
Of Venereal Blotches, and other Affections of the Skin	152
Of the Venereal Node	156
Of Excrescences about the Seat	161
Effects of the Venereal Disease on the Organs of Sense	163
CHAP. VI.	
Of Infants, Mothers, and Nurſes	169
CHAP. VII.	
Of ſome Irregular Symptoms	180
Of Diſeaſes which reſemble the Lues Venerea	186
CHAP. VIII.	
Some Singular Effects of Mercury on the Mouth, Bowels, &c.	205
CHAP. IX.	
General Obſervations	216
CHAP. X.	
Of Impotence	231
A Summary View of the moſt Important Doc- trines, &c.	238
APPENDIX.	
Injectiõs for the Cure of Gonorrhœa	246
Medicines uſed in the Cure of Lues Venerea	249
Of Preventives	255

P R E F A C E.

THE rapid sale of a numerous edition of this book shews how much such aids are wanted, and how ardently they are sought after by the Public. This, indeed, is generally the case with works which have utility for their object. Though I have no objection to books of amusement, yet I am determined never to trouble the world with any thing but what I think will be of general use.

As this publication has greatly increased the number of my patients of a certain description, I have been farther confirmed in the belief of the doctrines contained in the following pages, nor have I found it necessary to retract one article of them, which I

A

certainly

certainly should have done, had they appeared unfounded. I have taken much pains to find any well-authenticated case where the lues venerea had been cured without the use of mercury ; but all my inquiries have proved unsuccessful. It is of no avail to say that symptoms will disappear under the use of other medicines, which seemed to resist the powers of mercury. This I meet with every day under the use of the bark, or of butter-milk : but it does not follow that either bark or butter-milk will cure the lues venerea.

It is often proper that patients should leave off the use of mercury for some time, though symptoms of the venereal disease still remain. In this case the patient, thinking himself not cured, runs to the quack, who throws in his nostrum. The disease disappears, and the quack gets the credit, though the same thing happens every day where no medicine is administered. I have reason to believe that the cures of lues venerea, said to be performed without mercury, are generally done in this way.

There is not a more common error than attributing the cure to the last medicine which
had

had been administered to the patient. Yet this mistake runs through the whole practice of physic; and, among the less enlightened part of mankind, it gives credit to many medicines which do not deserve any. Where mercury has been previously administered, any thing may get the credit of the cure. A medicine to deserve it, ought to be given from the first appearance of the disorder, and continued till the cure is completed. Till I can find some well-authenticated instances of this, I must beg leave to suspend my belief of the lues venerea being cured without mercury.

No man will decry the powers of mercury who knows them. It is the most extensively useful article of the whole *materia medica*; and I should have a very contemptible opinion of the physician, who said he could practise without it. That mercury may sometimes do hurt nobody will deny, who knows under what circumstances it is generally administered. If a man takes a dose of salts, he will keep the house at least for a part of the day, if not the whole; yet thousands are daily traversing the streets of London through dirt,

and wind, and rain, with their bodies fully charged with mercury.

The same language that is now held with respect to mercury, has been used with regard to every active medicine with which I am acquainted. I remember since the bark was accused of lying in the bones, and occasioning aches, pains, &c. all of which were afterwards found to arise from the bark having been used too sparingly. This is precisely the case with regard to mercury. The ills which ignorance attributes to the free use of that medicine are chiefly chargeable to its being used too sparingly : and I think, with Dr. Rush, that the time is not far distant when people will be no more afraid to use mercury than bark, or any other drug.

I have asserted that mercury may be taken for any length of time without curing the venereal disease, and am sorry to add, that too many woful proofs of this truth have of late come under my eye. Since the following pages were first published, I have had patients from every part of England, and not a few from abroad, who had been taking mercury
from

PREFACE.

from one to seven years, yet were not cured. What to some medical scribblers may seem strange, all these patients have either been cured, or are in the way of being so, by the sole powers of mercury.

If men use mercury improperly, and the patient is not cured, surely the medicine ought not to be blamed. I can, for my own part, affirm, that I never saw mercury fail, when properly administered, unless when it was the patient's fault. Considering how seldom patients under the use of mercury do justice to the medicine, it is wonderful that success should so often attend it, and that ill consequences should so seldom occur. There is not in the whole *materia medica* any thing more active than mercury; yet no medicine is taken with so little precaution.

Among the causes of the failure of mercury I had mentioned the timid practice of every now and then carrying it out of the body by purges. If there is any mystery in the administration of mercury, it lies in detaining it in the body till it has conquered the enemy. A man may take mercury twenty
years,

years, and the poison all the while lodge in the system; but I am inclined to think it will never be one year there if the antidote is properly administered. Where the system was sufficiently saturated with mercury, and kept so for a due length of time, I never knew the cure to fail. Few practitioners can give a more decided opinion on this subject than myself, as a day seldom passes on which I do not see this disorder in a variety of shapes; yet I can aver, with the strictest regard to truth, that the specific never has disappointed me.

Ignorance, with regard to medicine, tends to render men the dupes of empirics. Where people know nothing, they believe every thing. Thus they become the easy prey of those swarms of quacks who, like vermin, feed on the ignorant and unwary. The credulity of this country, with respect to quacks, is unbounded: they swallow all their lies; and the more improbable their stories are, they like them the better. Posterity will not believe that in the eighteenth century men amassed fortunes in London by only pointing their fingers at their patients; or, what is still more

more extraordinary, by what they call *treating* them at a distance.

The late Dr. Gregory, of candid memory, used to say, that the quack did not tell half so many lies for himself as his patients told for him. This is founded in human nature. Men will vindicate their own conduct, and often even at the expence of truth. I have met a man coming from the Mansion House, where he had been carried by a quack to make oath, before the Lord Mayor, that he was cured of what I knew to be an incurable disease. I do not say this man was perjured. His pain might have been suspended, and he might believe himself cured: but was soon undeceived; for he died in a few days, and, in all probability, his death was accelerated by the lullabies he had taken.

Magistrates ought to be extremely cautious how they administer oaths to people in favour of quack medicines. The quack himself is generally perjured in swearing that the medicine was his own invention; and he can at any time find needy men who, to get a morsel of bread, will swear to cures that never
were.

were performed. Nay, authors are to be found base enough to write books in support of any nostrum that quacks chuse to vend, provided they are well paid for their labour.

Should this tract tend, in any measure, to relieve the sufferers under the lues venerea, or to rescue them from the hands of daring empirics, at once the disgrace of England, and the reproach of medicine, I shall feel myself highly gratified.

PRELIMINARY

PRELIMINARY

OBSERVATIONS.

THE following pages were written in prosecution of my plan for rendering medicine more extensively beneficial to mankind. They treat of a disease which, at once, tends to poison the springs of happiness, and to debase the human race. To shew men how far it is in their own power, by due care and attention, to prevent its destructive influence, is the professed design of the ensuing treatise. How far I have succeeded in the execution of this design must be left for others to determine; but if these hints should in any measure conduce to put the young and unwary on their guard against the direful consequences of this

insidious malady, I shall think my time and attention have been well bestowed.

Many reasons have induced me to select the Venereal Disease as the subject of a separate treatise. It is one of those complaints which, for the patient's peace and happiness, he often finds it necessary to conceal; and, fortunately for him, this, by due care, may generally be effected. Besides, other diseases are often removed by the efforts of nature, or disappear of their own accord; but in the lues venerea, nature cannot effect a cure. A good constitution is doubtless in favour of the patient, but no constitution can conquer the virulence of this poison. Whoever trusts to that will be disappointed. As a specific remedy is discovered, its properties ought surely to be made known to the public. Since the powers of the Bark were understood by all, every one can cure an ague; yet this disease proves often more obstinate than a confirmed pox.

Unfortunately for those who labour under the venereal disease, its treatment has fallen into bad hands. Not only Quacks of all descriptions undertake to cure it; but every
idle

idle fellow who does not chuse to follow some useful employment, sets up for doctor, assumes some well known name, and advertises an infallible remedy for the venereal disease. The apothecary's man, or even the apothecary's man's man, often passes for an adept in curing this malady. Nor is it uncommon for the fellow who brushed the surgeon's coat, or cleaned his shop, to step into his master's shoes, and sometimes into his chariot, by his pretended skill in curing the lues venerea. These nostrum-mongers not only sell the same medicines to all their patients, however widely their symptoms may differ; but, unfortunately for them, the nostrum often does not contain a single grain of what we know to be absolutely necessary for their cure.

The credulity of mankind in regard to medicine is truly astonishing. Even those who affect to be sceptical in other matters are the easy dupes of every pretender to a secret medicine: They will neglect the advice of the most skilful physician, and run after the ignorant quack, because he promises them a sudden cure; but, alas! this sudden cure, nine

out of ten, turns out to be no cure at all, and the disease is by this means trifled with, till it becomes altogether incurable.

The most frequent dupes to quackery are the young and unwary. They credit the contents of every puff that is put into their hands as they walk the streets, and swallow with eagerness the drugs it recommends. I would beg leave just to hint to such inexperienced youths, that the advertising quack, is, ten to one, more ignorant of medicine than themselves, that his sole aim is to take their money, and when he has got that, he cares no more for the patient. I am warranted to say this from daily observation, and am sorry to add, that too many, from woeful experience, know it to be true. So great however is the influence of quackery over the young mind, that I have seen one of those unfledged gentlemen, while I was writing a prescription for him, take up a newspaper, and, casting his eye on an advertisement, which promised to do in a few days what I had told him would require weeks, if not months, to complete, put my prescription in his pocket, and haste away to the promiser of quick cures.

Unable to display this page

mit. By far the greater part are obliged to follow their necessary employments, however hurtful they may be, during the whole time they are taking the medicine.

It is easy to say, that every man, afflicted with the venereal disease, ought to have recourse to the best advice; but how is he to obtain it? The best advice is not easily purchased. Besides, men afflicted with the venereal disease are often in situations where no medical assistance of any kind can be had. These are the men for whom the following observations were thrown together. They are not designed to supersede the physician, but, in some measure, to supply his place where he cannot be had; and to prevent those who are not able to employ him, from becoming the prey of ignorance and avarice.

It is a just observation, that there is a greater difference between a good physician and a bad one, than between a good physician and none. When I say a bad one, I mean the self-created doctor, who, while he knows nothing, undertakes every thing. A man of common understanding, with the assistance of books, will conduct his own cure better than

than many of those who make a trade of curing the lues venerea. Nor is it a matter of small importance for a man to know when he is properly treated. It is on the ignorance of the patient that the Charlatan presumes. He knows there is no danger of detection while the patient is taught to dread, even the least dip, in medical knowledge.

A man should have at least as much information about this malady as to know when he has got it. Many have their pockets picked, by taking medicines for the disease, who never had it; while others are suffered to linger under the complaint for years, being all the while told that they had it not. I lately saw a remarkable instance of the latter in a young man, who applied to me to know whether or not he had the malady, as his medical attendant had told him it was no such thing. I never saw the lues more strongly marked, and advised him immediately to begin a course of mercury, which he did; but not being able to observe a strict regimen, it was ten months before he was well, though his mouth was kept sore during most of the time.

If men may fall into such hands, it is surely high time that they were taught, at least, to know the symptoms of this too common malady. To talk of making all men physicians, is the extreme of folly. Surely the man who writes a catechism does not intend to qualify his readers for becoming doctors in divinity; yet such is the folly of men, or rather the prejudice of the faculty, that whoever attempts to throw a little light on the public mind, with regard to diseases, is immediately branded with the intention of making every man a physician. Would to God that physicians were so easily made! To be a physician is the business of a man's life, and the candid will confess that, to the last, he has still much to learn.

It is often a difficult matter, in the cure of this disease, to persuade patients to take mercury for a sufficient length of time. The wish to be soon well is natural, but it is productive of much mischief. The victims to quick cures are innumerable: Yet men will run after those who promise them, though to their own destruction. Few days pass in which I do not see instances of the danger arising from imperfect cures of the lues venerea ;

nerea ; and I have reason to believe, that those which are not seen, nor regarded, are still more numerous.

Nor is the difficulty much less in getting men to take mercury in sufficient doses. Mercury may be taken for any length of time, but if it is not administered in such quantities as to produce sufficient effects on the system, it will not subdue the poison. This, however, is not an easy matter to estimate. The difference of constitutions is such, that two persons can hardly be treated exactly in the same way, and our conduct must be regulated chiefly by its effects.

Much has been said in favour of the alterative mode of administering mercury ; and it were greatly to be wished, that it could be depended on for completing the cure ; but with that view I dare not recommend it. No doubt it may succeed in certain cases, but it is not to be trusted as a general mode of treatment. When the constitution is too irritable to bear even the slightest degree of salivation, the mercury may produce its effects taken as an alterative. It may likewise be proper after a liberal use of mercury, when

it is deemed necessary to keep up the mercurial action on the system, to administer it in this manner.

It would be easy to bring forward a number of cases to prove the danger of trusting to the alterative method of cure ; but the following shall suffice :

Some years ago a merchant from North America put himself under my care, for what the physician, to whom he first applied, had treated as a cancer in the nose. I suspected the case to be venereal, and, from the patient's own account of the matter, there remained no doubt of it. Before he left America, he had taken mercury for above twelve months, and all the while the disease was preying upon the nose, till it had eat away both the *alæ nasi*, as they are called, occasioned an amazing degree of pain, and rendered him a shocking spectacle.

On looking over his apothecary's bill, I could perceive that the gentleman had used a sufficient quantity of mercury to have performed a cure, provided it had been taken in a fourth part of the time. Indeed the event proved the truth of this observation. I put him on a course of mercury and diet drink, confined him

to

to the house, and in less than two months his nose was perfectly healed, and continues so to this day. The deformity, however, for which he has to thank his American doctor, must descend with him to the grave.

About four months ago one of those unhappy females, who often contract the lues venerea, but are seldom thoroughly cured, applied to me for a fore leg. The fore was a little above the ankle, had been long open, and shewed no disposition to heal. She said she believed it was owing to an ill-cured pox, and added that she had been taking mercury, as an alterative, for upwards of twelve months, without the smallest benefit. As I was entirely of her way of thinking, I advised her to take the corrosive sublimite of mercury, in such doses as to keep her mouth sore for several weeks, and likewise to wash the fore frequently with the solution of sublimite, as strong as she could easily bear it. I was agreeably surprised to see her come back within six weeks, to return me thanks for the cure, with her leg perfectly healed, and in all other respects well. I have been long in the habit of treating these sores, which I supposed to be venereal, with the

sublimate, and have seldom been disappointed in its effects.

The next case that I shall mention is, that of a gentleman resident in London, who had every opportunity of taking the very best advice, yet followed the worst. He thought he could follow his business, and take mercury at the same time with safety and effect. This he tried for a series of years, his nose all the while suffering a gradual diminution. This was imputed to some other cause, till at length that organ totally disappeared. He then, too late, applied to an eminent practitioner in that line, who told him he had never taken the medicine properly; put him under a course of mercury, confined him to the house for some months, and made a complete cure of him. He now enjoys the blessing of perfect health, if health in such a mangled condition can be called a blessing, or deemed worth the enjoying.

After a very liberal administration of mercury there will often remain some marks of the disorder. In this case, if the alterative method is pursued, these will disappear, and this mode of treatment get the credit of the cure, while it was wholly owing to the mercury previously

viouſly adminiſtered. Whatever may happen in flight degrees of infection, or where the ſyſtem has been previously impregnated with mercury, I would not adviſe any one who has got a confirmed pox to truſt his cure ſolely to the alterative mode of adminiſtering mercury; otherwiſe he may have cauſe to regret the injuries done to his conſtitution, when it is too late to repair them*.

Many retard their cure, and ſometimes even prevent it, by leaving off the mercury as ſoon as it affects the mouth, and taking opening medicines to carry it out of the body. In fact the mercury is too apt to run off by ſtool, and never has its full effect on the ſyſtem when carried off too quickly, either by the bowels or

* The eaſe with which ſome people treat theſe matters, where life is concerned, is to me aſtoniſhing. A young gentleman lately applied to me, who was all over covered with venereal blotches. He had been treated on the alterative plan for a conſiderable time, but without effect. I changed the mode of treatment, and he was cured in about two months. While under my care he met his old doctor, as he was pleaſed to call him, and told him what I was doing. He ſaid I would make his mouth ſtink like the devil; ſo that he could not go into genteel company. This is delicacy with a vengeance! A man, rather than have a ſore mouth for a few weeks, is to be eaten up with the lues venerea; yet there are men who ſwallow theſe doctrines, becauſe they coincide with their own wiſhes.

the

the mouth. The great art in administering mercury is to regulate the dose in such a manner as to keep the system fully saturated, without forcing it off by any of the outlets. This may generally be done by gradually increasing the dose, till the mouth is sore, and then keeping it so by smaller doses.

There is no disease where the patient is so much inclined to impose on the physician as in this. He will seldom tell the truth, and, perhaps, never the whole truth; but what is still worse, he seldom implicitly follows the doctor's directions, with regard either to regimen or medicines. It is indeed to be regretted that many patients cannot observe a proper regimen; but it is always in their power to be honest, and not impose on the doctor by throwing one half of their medicines away, while he thinks they have taken the whole. This, instead of cheating the doctor, is cheating themselves; and, if they are disappointed of a cure, they certainly deserve it. The danger of doing too much is not less than of doing too little. A patient, who wishes for a speedy cure, will often take a double or treble dose of the medicine prescribed to him. Such a man may
escape,

escape ; but, by this conduct, he never fails to endanger his life.

Some patients think it is the business of the doctor to find out their disorders, without being told any thing about them. They treat physicians as conjurors, and think they need no information. A patient, who wishes for a cure, cannot be too open and explicit with his doctor. He should not only impart every circumstance he knows concerning his disease, but follow the doctor's directions, as far as it lies in his power.

Few things are more difficult than to ascertain the time when the patient is completely cured. It is more a matter of observation than of calculation. The quantity of mercury taken, the time the patient has used it, and the preparation he took, must all be considered ; but they will not ascertain the point. Even the disappearing of the symptoms is fallacious, as they will sometimes return ; especially where the patient's habit leans to the scrofulous or scorbutic. The safest method is always to continue the medicine for some time after the symptoms have disappeared ; unless in cases where the mercurial action has ceased,

ed, or the patient's strength is exhausted ; when he must be put on a course of tonic medicines, with nourishing diet, and allowed the benefit of country air, and sea-bathing if necessary.

Many absurd opinions still prevail concerning this disease, which lead to very improper conduct. Such opinions generally die away as the public mind becomes more enlightened ; but as that is by no means the case with regard to medicine, we shall mention a few of them, only to shew how little foundation they have either in reason or common sense.

One of the most absurd notions that ever entered the mind of man is, that a disease may be cured by communicating it to another. Yet in most countries this has been believed, and is at present in this, with regard to the venereal disorder. We might as well suppose that a mad dog, by biting one that had not the disease, would receive a cure ; or, that the wretch expiring under the plague, would recover by communicating the disease to those around him.

It would be difficult to say whether an attempt to obtain a cure by communicating the disease to another, is more wicked or absurd. Certain it is, however, that under this impression,

sion, innocence is betrayed, and loathsome diseases are disseminated, without the possibility of any advantage being derived from it. On this false idea infants are abused, and the most flagitious crimes perpetrated to remove what will yield only to the proper antidote; and, what still tends to aggravate the crime, this antidote is known to all, and is so easily purchased, that all may obtain it.

Nor is the idea of retaliation less wicked. Because a worthless woman has communicated the disease to a dissipated man, is he entitled to transfer it to as many as he can? The person who acts on this principle may as well alledge that, because he has been robbed on the highway, he has a right to make reprisals, by taking every man's money he meets. The law would tell him otherwise; and it is pity there should not be a law to punish the unprincipled libertine, who makes it his boast that, by way of retaliation, he has communicated the disease to as many women as he possibly could.

This conduct is not only base, but criminal. The man who knowingly communicates a disease to another, which might prove fatal, cannot, in my opinion, be considered in any other light

than that of a murderer. Nor is the crime much less where the constitution is ruined. A person had better be killed at once, than left to drag out a life of pain and misery under the influence of a loathsome disease.

The man who stops another on the highway, takes a trifle from him, and puts him in fear of his life, is hanged; while the marauder on the public health escapes with impunity, is looked upon as a man of gallantry, and makes sport of that which proves fatal to another. But sporting with disease is sporting with human life, a thing of the most serious nature, though too little regarded either by those who communicate this malady to others, or by many of those who pretend to cure it.

As regular tracts on this subject abound, I have contented myself with throwing together some loose observations, chiefly by way of caution, without much attention to composition or arrangement. Indeed the whole was the amusement of some leisure hours of an evening, when I thought my time might be worse employed, than in furnishing such hints to my readers as I have often had cause to wish my patients had been acquainted with.

Though

Though a flight degree of knowledge will not make a man a physician, it may teach him to know when he has occasion for one ; and, what is of no less importance, it will inform him when he has fallen into bad hands : nor will any one question its utility, where no regular assistance of any kind can be obtained.

Every attempt at theory has been carefully avoided, as it is apt to mislead the weak mind, and draw off the attention from facts, the knowledge of which is our surest guide in the cure of diseases. The speculative physician may amuse himself with plausible theories, and even believe that he can cure all diseases by his favourite system ; but, when he comes to real practice, he will find that his art can only be learned at the patient's bed-side. The knowledge of diseases is acquired, like that of men, by observation. Reading, no doubt, has its use, but it will never make a physician, any more than it will an expert mechanic, or a complete seaman. I would rather trust myself in the hands of an experienced nurse, than of a theoretical physician. I have known more instances than one of a physician falling a sacrifice to his own theory.

Although my motive in publishing the following tract is to lessen the sum of human evils; yet I lay my account with all the obloquy and abuse that the faculty, and their emissaries, can bestow on me. I have experienced a plentiful share of it already, and this attempt is not likely to lessen their malice, or conciliate their esteem. All who cannot, or dare not, think for themselves, are sure to be the avowed enemies of the author who entertains more liberal ideas than those of his contemporaries: while the sordid part, who think their trade in danger, allow him no quarter. Little do these malevolent spirits know, that their conduct is the direct way to establish what they wish to suppress. Useful works will force their way in spite of all opposition, and are often aided by it.

The man who attempts any thing out of the common road, has not only the ignorant and interested to contend with, but also the prejudices of past ages to overcome. Men are tenacious of established opinions, and quit with reluctance the paths in which they have been accustomed to tread. The most absurd customs gain a sanction from time; and it is deemed

deemed a kind of sacrilege to attempt to overturn them. In this predicament stands medicine at present; and the author, who endeavours to free it from trammels, and extend its utility, is sure to create an host of foes.

In other branches of science men consider themselves as entitled to have an opinion. But whoever has dared to think for himself, in matters relating to health, and was not of the faculty, has been looked upon as an intruder, and held up to ridicule. Even in divinity some excellent books have been written by laymen; but physic is still engrossed by the faculty, and has succeeded accordingly. While the science is confined to a set of men who live by it as a trade, it never will be on a liberal footing. The little arts used to disguise and conceal it, only render it suspicious, and, instead of gaining respect to its professors, serve to hold them up to contempt. While physicians affect mystery, they are fair game for men of wit, and their art will continue to be the standing butt of ridicule and burlesque.

To bring medicine out of the schools, to lay open its hidden treasures, and to teach men how to make a proper use of them, have been reserved

reserved for the present age. Something indeed has been done, but much still remains undone; and, in all probability, many years will elapse before mankind in general become acquainted with the extensive utility of the medical art. Legislators have not availed themselves of its use, because they did not know it; and those who should have taught them, *have taken away the key of knowledge* *. Professional men have been afraid to deviate from the paths of their predecessors, lest they should draw censure upon themselves, and incur the hatred and resentment of their contemporaries.

Those who have attempted to extend the benefits of medicine to mankind, have been few in number, and ill requited for their labour. This, however, shall not discourage me from endeavouring to render medicine more extensively useful. While I entertain a full persuasion, that men may derive many and solid benefits from a more general acquaintance with medicine, I shall never cease to give

* A code of laws for the preservation of health, properly digested, and duly executed, would be of more use to mankind than all the efforts of the faculty.

them all the information in my power, both with regard to the prevention and cure of diseases. I know the consequence will be fresh torrents of abuse from the faculty, but I am prepared for the worst they can do. While the rest of mankind are on my side, I can laugh at the malice, and despise the resentment of the faculty.

After the death of my worthy friend and collegiate, the late Dr. John Gregory, of Edinburgh, I considered myself, Dr. Tissot excepted, as the sole labourer in this vineyard. Dr. Gregory often told me that he and I entertained the same sentiments with regard to the emancipation of medicine, and that we ought to stand by and support one another. But, alas! he fell, to the loss of medicine and of mankind, and I was left to combat the whole phalanx of physic. This was my opinion till a late publication undeceived me, and proved that liberality of sentiment, even in physic, is not confined to any particular spot of the globe.

That my old school-fellow, Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, has the same liberal sentiments concerning medicine as I entertain, is evident from his late publication on the epidemical fever

fever which committed such ravages in that city. In this treatise, the doctor not only shews his liberality of thinking in medical matters, but also his benevolent wishes for the whole human race. In proof of this I shall take the liberty of making a few extracts from a work entitled, "An Account of the bilious remitting Yellow Fever, as it appeared in the City of Philadelphia, in the Year 1793, by BENJAMIN RUSH, M. D."—

"The history of the yellow fever in the West-Indies proves the advantage of trusting patients to their own judgment. Dr. Lind has remarked that a greater number of sailors, who had no physicians, recovered from the fever, than of those who had the best medical assistance. The fresh air of the deck of a ship, a purge of salt water, and the free use of cold water, probably triumphed over the julaps of the physicians.

"By committing the care of this and other pestilential diseases to the people, all these circumstances, which prevented the universal success of purging and bleeding in our late epidemic, will have no operation. The fever will be mild in most cases; for all will prepare themselves

themselves to receive it by a vegetable diet, and by moderate evacuations. The remedies will be used the moment the disease is felt, or even seen, and the contagion generated by it, will be feeble, and propagated only to a small distance from such patients. There will then be no disputes among the physicians, about the nature of the disease, to distract the public mind, as they will seldom be consulted in it.

“ They have narrow conceptions, not only of the divine goodness, but of the gradual progress of knowledge, who suppose that all pestilential diseases shall not, like the small pox, sooner or later, cease to be the scourge and terror of mankind.

“ For a long while air, water, and even the light of the sun, were dealt out by physicians to their patients with a sparing hand. They possessed for several centuries the same monopoly over many artificial remedies. But a new order of things is rising in medicine, as well as in government. Air, water, and light, are taken without the advice of a physician, and bark and laudanum are now prescribed every-where by nurses and mistresses of families with safety and advantage. Human rea-

son cannot be stationary on these subjects. The time must, and will come, when, in addition to the above remedies, the general use of calomel, jalap, and the lancet, shall be considered among the most essential articles of the knowledge and rights of men.

“ It is no more necessary that a patient should be ignorant of the medicine he takes to be cured by it, than that the business of government should be conducted with secrecy in order to insure obedience to just laws. Much less is it necessary that the means of life should be prescribed in a dead language, or dictated with the solemn pomp of a necromancer. The effects of imposture in every thing are, like the artificial health, produced by the use of ardent spirits. Its vigour is temporary, and is always followed by misery and death.

“ There are many things which are now familiar to women and children, which were known a century ago only to a few men who lived in closets, and were distinguished by the name of philosophers.

“ We teach a hundred things in our schools less useful, and many things more difficult, than

than the knowledge that would be necessary to cure a yellow fever or the plague.

“ I would as soon believe that Ratifia was intended, by the Author of nature, to be the only drink of man, instead of water, as believe that the knowledge of what relates to the health and lives of a whole city, or nation, should be confined to one, and that a small or privileged order of men. But what have physicians, what have universities or medical societies done, after the labours and studies of many centuries, towards lessening the mortality of pestilential fevers? They have either copied or contradicted each other in all their publications. Plagues and malignant fevers are still leagued with war and famine in their ravages upon human life.

“ Botallus in France, and Sydenham in England, it is true, long ago used the proper remedies for those disorders with universal success; but they were unable to introduce them into general practice. The reason is obvious. They recommended them in their writings only to physicians. At the expence of an immense load of obloquy, I have addressed my publications to the people. The appeal, though hazardous,

zardous in the present state of general knowledge in medicine, has succeeded. The citizens of Philadelphia are delivered from their fears of copious evacuations, of cold air, and cold water, and above all of a fore mouth from mercury, in the cure of the yellow fever; and the pride and formalities of medicine, as far as they relate to this disease, are now as completely discarded, in our city, as the deceptions of witchcraft were above a century ago."

What Dr. Rush thinks a bold measure at this time, I undertook above thirty years ago, and have ever since been the butt of medical malice. The period is not yet arrived when medical publications may be addressed to the people with impunity. The same spirit of persecution has been excited against Dr. Rush beyond the Atlantic ocean, which I have experienced on this side of it. In all probability some ages will elapse before physicians can be convinced that their art will never be truly honourable, nor extensively useful, till its doctrines are laid open, and candidly submitted to the examination of all men. While disguise of any kind is practised, quackery will prevail, and medicine will be little better than a piece of mummery.

There

There is not a greater mistake than to suppose that diffusing medical knowledge encourages quackery. Quackery is founded on ignorance. The man who writes a medical prescription, couched in mystical characters and in an unknown tongue, countenances quackery, the very existence of which depends on disguise. If the faculty wish to suppress these pests of society, the advertising quacks, they must lay aside all manner of disguise, and act like honest men. While quacks, and ignorant retainers to physic, engross the largest share of the practice, medicine will not be a blessing to mankind; but this will always be the case till men become so enlightened in medicine, as to be able to distinguish between the real physician, and the mere pretender.

As my former publication has been garbled, and served up in a variety of forms, I make no doubt but this will share the same fate. It is my duty therefore to inform the public, that no medical book, bearing my name, except this, and the Domestic Medicine, printed by Mr. Strahan, of London, is genuine. This caution is the more necessary, as the size, type, paper, title, and matter of my book have been so closely

imitated, that whole spurious editions have been fold.

Men have been emboldened to commit these frauds, from a persuasion that I was dead. A report to this purpose was circulated, by the faculty, soon after the publication of my book ; no doubt with a view to hurt my practice. It had a tendency, however, to promote the sale of the book *, and has been to me a perpetual source of amusement. I have seldom gone into mixed company without hearing many things which never could have reached the ears of an author supposed to be alive. This will enable me to tell the faculty many things they little think I know ; and, by-and-by, I shall tender them some wholesome ADVICE, without a fee. At present I shall content myself with giving them one hint, which is, to adhere a little more closely to truth. The misrepresentations which have been circulated concerning the Domestic Medicine and its author, would fill a folio volume ; and, what to some will appear surprising, it consists with his knowledge, that, by these misrepresentations, even Royal Ears have been abused.

* The works of dead authors are generally more esteemed than those of the living.

I am

I am sorry to observe, that of all those who have attempted to imitate my book, no one has been so fortunate as to improve upon it. This, however, I consider as very practicable. It was a juvenile performance, and is, in many things, defective. These defects I have, from time to time, endeavoured to supply, as the frequent editions afforded me opportunities. But, as the book is now become too bulky to admit of any farther additions, they must appear in a separate volume *.

As medical treasures of immense value still lie concealed from the public eye, it is my supreme wish to bring them to light, for the benefit of my fellow-men. Should I live to accomplish this important purpose, I hope it will be thought that I have not lived altogether in vain. If mankind is benefited, my end will be answered. The faculty may then vent their spleen in what manner they please. Their censure will always constitute my highest praise.

* I intend, as soon as leisure will permit, to publish a second volume of the Domestic Medicine, by way of Appendix. This, beside many new articles, will contain the practical observations of above thirty years, which have elapsed since the first part was written. When that is completed, I hope it will render the work not altogether unworthy of the favourable reception with which it has been honoured by the public.

CONTENTS

1. The first part of the work is devoted to a general survey of the subject, and to a discussion of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	1
2. The second part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	10
3. The third part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	20
4. The fourth part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	30
5. The fifth part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	40
6. The sixth part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	50
7. The seventh part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	60
8. The eighth part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	70
9. The ninth part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	80
10. The tenth part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the human race.	90

INTRODUCTION.

THE venereal disease has for many years proved the scourge of Europe. When and how it was introduced into this part of the globe, are questions of very little importance. To check its progress, however, and prevent the ravages it makes on the human species, are objects of the first consideration. These ravages are more extensive than is generally imagined. Though few die under the disease, yet its effects prove fatal to many. Numberless constitutions are inevitably ruined, even before the patient is aware of his danger, or the proper steps have been taken to prevent it.

Nor do these sufferings affect the guilty alone; the innocent are often involved in them: even the infant unborn is punished for the vices of its parents. Society itself is a sufferer. Instead of a robust and healthy race, men become weak and puny; are worn out with

the scrophula and other diseases, till at length, become unfit for sustaining the common functions of life, they dwindle off the face of the earth.

It has long been my opinion that much of the mischief occasioned by the venereal disease might be prevented; and that whoever effects this purpose will be one of the greatest benefactors to society. This important purpose can only be effected by teaching men how to avoid the malady; and, when they have been so unfortunate as to catch the infection, to point out the means by which its bad consequences may generally be obviated. And here I will venture to say, that if men were taught to do what is in their own power, and had resolution to put it in practice, there would seldom be occasion for the physician, and little reason to dread the consequences of the venereal infection.

While men are kept in the dark, and told that they are not to use their own understanding, in matters that concern their health, they will be the dupes of designing knaves; and a disease, tractable in its nature, and almost the only one for which we possess a specific

cific remedy, will be suffered to commit its ravages on the human race, and to embitter the most delicious draught that Heaven has bestowed for the solace of human life.

In the first edition of my Domestic Medicine the venereal disease was not inserted. The reasons which, at that time, induced me to leave it out were of a delicate nature. Though time and experience have long convinced me that they were groundless; yet there are not a few who have expressed a wish to see this disease treated of at more length, and in a separate volume. With this wish I chose, on many accounts, to comply. Several circumstances attending this disorder, which do not apply to any other, render it highly necessary that every one should be acquainted both with its symptoms and method of cure.

The venereal disease arises from the gratification of the strongest passion which Nature has implanted in the human breast; a passion which has often acquired its full strength before Reason has assumed her throne, and which not unfrequently sets Reason, even in the full plenitude of her power, at defiance. Nature never intended that the propagation of

F 2

the

the species should be left to the cool dictates of Reason.

Though the power of this passion is acknowledged by all, yet, in most countries, a degree of turpitude, unless under certain circumstances, is annexed to its gratification. This lays the foundation of concealment, which too often, both in a moral and medical view, produces tragical consequences. Shame, fear, or false modesty, have induced many a young man to conceal his situation, till the disease has become incurable, which, if taken in the first stage, would not have occasioned the smallest degree of danger, or done the least injury to his constitution.

What pity that a young man, the hopes of his country, and the darling of his parents, should be snatched from all the prospects and enjoyments of life, by the folly of one unguarded moment, and by a disease which is not, in its own nature, fatal; and which never proves so, unless from neglect or improper treatment! Yet these distressing scenes occur every day, while the afflicted parents often remain in ignorance with regard to the real cause of their misfortune.

When

When the unhappy sufferer by this disease perceives his situation, the same inclination to conceal it too often induces him to apply to those pests of society, the advertising quacks, who, while they promise a sudden and secret cure, generally disappoint him. Every man conversant in the cure of this disease will readily own, that the most deplorable cases he meets with, are those which have been under the care of quacks; till the patient, convinced of their ignorance, had recourse to proper advice.

The quack not only holds out the lures of expedition and concealment, but of cheapness. To some patients this is a matter of importance: in this expectation, however, they are sure to be disappointed. When the quack finds that the patient's pocket will hold out no longer, he generally dismisses him, telling him he is cured, or leaving him to find a remedy where he can. No doubt the most ignorant pretender may sometimes succeed; but as untoward circumstances will frequently occur, it is safer to be in the hands of one who knows how to treat them, than of him who practises at random, and treats every case alike.

We daily see a pill, a powder, or a drop advertised to cure the venereal disease. It would be equally proper to advertise a pill or drop to cure all diseases. The different symptoms of the venereal disorder require as different a method of treatment as any two diseases whatever. Indeed, properly speaking, it is two diseases; or, at least, appears under two such different forms, as to require a total different mode of treatment. Whoever advertises any one nostrum for the cure of this disease, evidently knows nothing about it: the different forms under which it appears, not only require different medicines, but even the symptoms, at different periods of the same species, differ widely from one another, and are not to be treated in the same manner.

The whole art of medicine consists in discrimination. Any man may know drugs, but few know how to apply them. When a man tells us that mercury will cure the venereal disease, he informs us of nothing, unless he points out the symptoms in which mercury is proper, and also the manner in which it ought to be administered. Mercury administered at random, which I fear is too often the case, must do more mischief than good.

One

One great misfortune attending those who are afflicted with this malady is the necessity of disguise. In many situations of life a man may be ruined by its being known that he laboured under the venereal disease. The peace of many families has been broken by the mistake of an unguarded moment, when all the injury might have been repaired, and the matter kept an absolute secret, had the unfortunate person known how easy a thing it is to remove this malady on its first appearance. Were any apology necessary for extending the knowledge of this disease, the above would be more than sufficient.

In all diseases it is of importance, as soon as possible, to know the nature and tendency of the complaint: but in none more so than in the venereal. This dreadful malady, which, in its advanced stages, commits such ravages on the human system, as to destroy even its most solid parts, may be disarmed of all its virulence by some gentle applications on its first appearance. To negligence, or to trifling with the first symptoms, we owe all the mischief arising from the venereal disease.

Other

Other diseases often attack men unawares ; but this is seldom the case with the venereal disease. It is generally the effect of an overt act, of which the patient must have been conscious, and has consequently reason to expect it. Thus warned, he is prepared to meet the disorder in its most early shape, and to use such means for preventing its further progress, as will be pointed out in the sequel.

A truly distressful situation frequently occurs, which makes an acquaintance with the early symptoms of this disorder necessary. It may be communicated in a variety of ways, and is often caught by nurses, and by married women, whose husbands lead dissolute lives, but who either want honesty or resolution to warn them of their danger. The deplorable situation to which such innocent persons are often reduced, before they are apprised of their danger, makes such communications as this highly necessary.

Though in nineteen out of twenty cases, where this disease occurs, the patient may be his own physician, yet, from peculiarity of constitution, or some unknown cause, symptoms of an untoward kind will sometimes occur, which
may

may render it necessary to take advice. These situations will be marked, and I would advise the patient always to apply to a man of character and skill in his profession, but never to trust himself in the hands of a quack. It will be said, why not apply to a man of skill from the beginning? When this is in the patient's power, it ought to be done; but in many situations men of skill are not to be found, and where they are, it is not always in the patient's power to obtain their assistance. It is chiefly for men so situated that the following pages are composed. They are not intended to supersede the physician, but to shew the patient what is in his own power in situations where better assistance cannot be obtained.

It is acknowledged on all hands that the venereal disease is less fatal than it was formerly. This does not seem to arise from any change in the nature of the disorder. Cases every day occur, where it displays all the virulence it ever possessed, and the miserable victims to its rage die in a condition too horrid to be named *. Thank Heaven, however, these

* In proof of this, I was informed, a few days ago, by the gentlemen who attend the Military Hospital at Woolwich, that some

these are few ; and, if proper attention were paid to the first symptoms of the disease, they would be still less numerous.

There is no disease which exhibits such striking proofs of the advantages of diffusing medical knowledge as this. When men were totally ignorant with regard to the nature and symptoms of this disease, they considered it as a plague, and gave themselves up for lost whenever they were afflicted with it : their friends and relations abandoned them, and they were not only denied all medical assistance, but often left to perish for want of the necessities of life.

It was held in such disgrace, that whole families, where it was supposed to be hereditary, were despised, and all connexions with them avoided. Individuals were not allowed to come into company, nor would any one eat, drink, or sleep with them. People were even afraid to live under the same roof with the patient, lest they should catch the infection.

cases of the lues have of late appeared there, which, in spite of all their efforts, destroy the whole genitalia, corrode all the muscular flesh on the neighbouring parts, and lay the abdominal viscera bare before the miserable patient dies.

Nor

Nor was this all; a degree of moral turpitude was annexed to this malady, which rendered the unhappy sufferer an object of religious abhorrence.

While such opinions prevailed concerning this disease, the consequences may be easily inferred. The unhappy patient would conceal his situation with all possible care, and would suffer every thing rather than become an object of disgrace and ridicule. I have heard many people say, that rather than it should be known they had this malady, they would lose their lives. While such sentiments as these prevailed, it is no wonder the disease should often have proved fatal.

In a fever or rheumatism, even when occasioned by the patient's imprudence, he is esteemed an object of compassion, and meets with general commiseration; while the unhappy sufferer under the venereal disease is seldom pitied—nay, some are even so cruel as to think he should be suffered to perish without assistance. Widely different is the language of humanity, which bids us do all we can to relieve our fellow-creatures in distress, from whatever cause it may arise.

People now, who are able to pay for it, generally apply for assistance on the first appearance of the disease, and seldom allow it to proceed till it becomes incurable. Unhappily, however, this description of people is not numerous. For one that is able to obtain proper advice, ten have either no advice at all, or, what is worse than none, *bad advice*. What was formerly called the gentleman's disease is now equally common among the lowest ranks in cities. It is here the poison lurks, which, I fear, will never be eradicated. Though gentlemen seldom suffer the disease to remain uncured; yet, when the infection has been caught, perhaps in its most virulent form, by an artificer, a common servant, or a day labourer, it is more than an equal chance against his ever obtaining a radical cure.

There is one class of society among whom this disease may be said to have its strong hold: I mean that description of females commonly called *women of the town*. However these unhappy persons were brought into this situation, they are certainly entitled to our pity, especially when, to all their other misfortunes, this loathsome and cruel disease is added.

Very

Very few of this class of patients ever get thoroughly well. They generally apply to the most ignorant retainers to the medical art, and even to these they never do justice. They seldom take the medicines prescribed to them, and, when they do, they are unable to observe a proper regimen. Their necessities oblige them to go out in all kinds of weather, and their dissolute mode of living is such as to counteract the operation even of the best-laid plan for effecting their cure, and to defeat the endeavours of the ablest physician.

Though unable to pay for advice, they have much in their own power, both with respect to the prevention and cure of the disorder. By a thorough attention to cleanliness, they may often avoid the infection; and, by observing the directions contained in the following pages, they will be able to prevent the disease from going so far as to endanger the constitution. It is my fixed opinion that those two scourges of mankind, the great and the small pox, might both be disarmed of their malignity, so far as to be no longer the dread and terror of the human race. If this is in the power of medicine, who will dare to say
that

that the art is not of the greatest importance to society?

In a former work I have endeavoured to shew that the small pox may be rendered almost harmless by inoculation; and, in the following pages, I shall attempt to prove that the venereal disease may be disarmed of all its sting, by a due attention to its first symptoms. When I have done so, I shall allow the faculty to censure my conduct as much as they please, and shall trust to those who reap the benefit of my writings to vindicate their author.

If the venereal disease has become milder than it was formerly, this change is not owing to the skill of the faculty, but to the general knowledge diffused among mankind, concerning this, as well as other diseases. Though almost ashamed to own it, I am old enough to remember a method of treating this disease taught in the universities, which to an apothecary's apprentice, of the present times, would appear trifling.

The progress made in the knowledge and cure of this disease, since the publication of the Domestic Medicine, is a sufficient apology for treating it here at more length; especially as
the

the opportunities I have lately had of seeing the disorder under every form, have been far more numerous than during the early period of my practice. My knowledge of the disease then was chiefly taken from books. I shall now do little more than transcribe my own observations, adding, from other authors, such as have not occurred to myself. I shall not wantonly reject the sentiments of other writers ; neither shall I implicitly adopt them, unless where I have reason to think they are well founded.

I am sorry to say that the conduct of one class of the faculty, who claim a kind of exclusive right to the treatment of the venereal disease, is a strong inducement for me to make mankind in general more acquainted with it. The delicate situation in which some persons who have received the infection, are placed, puts it in the power of those whom they entrust with their cure, to make very extravagant demands, as they know few people would chuse to litigate a claim of this nature. I am far from saying that this is the conduct of surgeons in general ; but that some are guilty of it, I well know ; and I cannot help considering

ing

ing it as the most infamous species of imposition that can be practised on any man.

It is far from my intention to write a complete treatise on the venereal disease. This has been very fully accomplished by others; neither would it suit the nature of my performance, which only aims at exhibiting such a view of that malady as will enable any person of common sense to know when he has caught the infection; and, at the same time, to suggest the proper means for preventing its progress, or removing it in the early stages.

C H A P. I.

OF PREVENTING THE VENEREAL
DISEASE.

TO prevent diseases must be of more importance than to cure them. Little attention, however, has been paid to this branch of the medical art, especially with regard to the venereal disease. Here the prophylaxis has been generally left to quacks, who, by puffing their pretended antidotes, have amassed fortunes, while credulous men, by trusting to their lies, have been tricked out of their money and their lives. I have known a dignified nostrum-monger insist that a gentleman had not the lues, merely because he had used his lotion according to the printed directions. In this opinion

H

Unable to display this page

I do not mean to quibble about names, but I maintain that a man who has a chancre only, cannot, with propriety, be said to be poxed. If the disease can be stopped in this state, which, in most cases it may, surely the pox is, to all intents and purposes, prevented; or, ~~what~~ what is nearly equivalent to prevention, the disease is rendered so mild as to be inoffensive to the system. When a disease cannot be eradicated, which I am convinced is the case, both with regard to the great and small pox, our business surely is to render it as mild as possible; and, thank Heaven! it is now in the power of medicine to disarm these herculean maladies, so as to render their influence on the human constitution very inconsiderable.

The business of prevention arranges itself under the three following heads; namely, the moral, political, and medical means of obviating this malady.

To the first of these, as far as my recollection goes, very little attention has been paid; the second, unless in some small states, has been wholly neglected; and the third, as has been already observed, is generally left in the hands of quacks.

A young man of good morals is certainly less apt to fall into those snares which, too often, lead to destruction, than one who has never been warned of his danger, but is left to follow the bent of his own inclinations. No saying is more true than, "that the wicked shall not live half his days."---I have seldom known a young man, whose morals had been neglected, who did not dash into every vice as soon as he was capable of it, and whose life was not, by that means, contracted. If parents knew how necessary a moral education is for prolonging the lives of their offspring, they would, perhaps, pay more attention to it, than when they consider it as merely subservient to their happiness in a future state.

An attention to health, which ought to be a primary object in the education of children, is seldom considered as even a secondary one; while trifling accomplishments, of little importance in the pursuits of life, generally engross the attention both of master and scholar. I am happy, however, to find that an attempt has lately been made by Dr. Faust, a German physician, to impress the minds both of teachers and their pupils, with an idea of
the

the importance of health ; and that this attempt has met with the warmest approbation of his Serene Highness the Prince of Wirzberg.

Young men are prodigal of life. They throw it wantonly away at the very time it is most worth preserving ; nor do they know the value of health till it is lost. Many painful hours might be prevented by a few cautions duly enforced on the young mind. Early impressions are seldom eradicated. They generally form the conduct, and become the rules of life. Were a young man taught to believe that the paths of pleasure lead to destruction ; that if he pursues them, he will never arrive at mature age, but fall the early victim of loathsome disease ; he would shun pleasure more than the gates of hell. The genuine consequences of vice need only to be painted in their true colours, in order to make it an object of horror to the youthful mind.

Young men ought not only to be taught to shun the allurements of vice ; but, if they should be so unfortunate as to contract the venereal disease, by no means to conceal it. Candour is a virtue ; and, as the poet says, the first fault is easiest to avow. The complicated

cated mischief arising from concealment of this malady is only known to those who have an opportunity of seeing it in every shape and form under which it appears. A young man ought certainly to stand in awe of parents and guardians ; but by no means to be so over-awed as to lose his life, rather than disclose his situation. This, however, is no uncommon case.

Though the best guardian of virtue is a good moral education, yet a young man who has had every advantage of this kind may go wrong ; he will seldom, however, persist in error ; whereas a youth, void of principle, will not only run headlong into vice and folly, but will seldom stop till he has ruined both his fortune and constitution.

As example has more influence than precept, it might be of use to young men, were they occasionally taken to places where the unhappy sufferers, under the venereal disease, are congregated. They would there see the wretched condition to which thoughtless youth may be reduced by the act of one unguarded moment. I have known the first mistake made by a young man, in this way, cost him
his

his life ; and have seen others, who, from a single unfortunate connection, were rendered incapable, ever after, of enjoying connubial happiness.

Though parents, tutors, and guardians, were to use every endeavour to keep youth from the snares laid for them by bad women ; yet, owing to the want of police in most great cities, they would find their efforts frequently frustrated. It is there the corruption of youth is almost unavoidable ; and their destruction, alas ! is but too often the consequence.

Much might be done towards lessening the ravages of this baneful malady by the exertions of the public magistrate. But to effect this purpose would require more skill and attention than one magistrate in a hundred is equal to. Undue interference in these matters does mischief, and to put them under proper regulations would require the most consummate wisdom. This, however, is no reason why lewd women should be suffered to prowl about in the public streets without the least restraint.

Were

Were men to be seen at the corner of every street in a great city, armed with swords and bludgeons to put every one in fear of his life, who would not comply with their demands; the public mind would be quickly roused, and proper measures taken to suppress them; yet the danger is nearly equal from those unhappy females, who lie in wait to ensnare the unguarded youth as he passes along. The young man must have uncommon resolution indeed, who can always resist these temptations; yet by yielding, in a single instance, he may be undone. One step leads on to another, till the unwary victim, immured in vice, finds it impossible to retreat. It signifies very little, if a man is robbed of his health or property, whether it is done under the influence of one passion or another.

Nor is youth alone in danger; even age and experience are not always sufficient protections against the allurements of beauty, and solicitation. Numbers, who would not go in quest of an amour, are not able to resist the temptation when thrown in their way with all its embellishments, especially after the social humour has been excited by wine and agreeable

able company. It is then the prostituted beauty becomes dangerous, and the health, happiness, and peace of families are sacrificed.

Even the delicacy of modest women is hurt by the number of common prostitutes which they daily see in the open streets; and their example must have an unfavourable influence on the younger part of the sex.

I shall be told there are laws in this country for punishing such women. True; but are any measures taken to prevent the evil? the means used to suppress them are at once cruel and ineffectual. There is no want of good laws in this country for punishing crimes; but there are few, or none for preventing them. Preventing crimes, like preventing diseases, would be of infinitely more importance than punishing the criminal.

Were it my province here to dip into affairs of police, I should think it an easy matter to suggest a plan by which the public streets of great cities might be freed from those women, who, by night and by day, infest them, without laying any unnecessary or improper restraints on the intercourse between the different sex, dictated by nature and reason. Indeed all

undue restraints on that intercourse do mischief. They lead to the commission of unnatural crimes, and to the formation of connexions which prove injurious to the dearest interests of society.

Proper laws for the preservation of health, do not exist in any country with which I am acquainted ; but it does not from hence follow that they are not of great importance. Even those laws which are made for the protection of property are not, in my opinion, more necessary, for the happiness of society, than those which relate to health ; though every man thinks he can take care of the latter, but wishes the former to be secured by penal statutes.

With the legislators of ancient states, health seems to have been a primary object of consideration ; nor do we think it would derogate from the honour of modern legislators were they to follow the example. Moses, who was certainly one of the most ancient legislators of whom we have any account, has evidently employed a great part of his excellent code of laws, in laying down rules both for the prevention and cure of diseases.

I know

I know the washings, separations, and purifications enjoined by Moses, are supposed to be religious institutions, and to have a reference to inward purity. Be that as it may, they were certainly well calculated to preserve health in that country, and among the people for whom they were intended. Indeed I know no country where cleanliness can be dispensed with, or is not necessary to the preservation of health.

Nor is Moses singular in this. Many of the laws of ancient Egypt related to health; and, as we are told, that he was instructed in all the learning of that country, there is little doubt that he availed himself of this information in framing his code of laws, many of which are so excellent as to have been adopted by the most enlightened European nations.

As impure connexions, however, will take place in spite of all precautions that can be given, we shall next proceed to point out some of the medical preparations which have been recommended by way of preventives.

Preventives, as might naturally be supposed, consist chiefly of washes variously prepared, and composed of detergent ingredients. Here,

however, I must beg leave to premise that all *specific* washes are impositions on the public. They not only possess no specific virtues for the prevention of the disease, but they divert the attention from the main object, which is washing, by holding up the idea of their being possessed of some peculiar qualities calculated to counteract the poison, and prevent its taking effect.

Much may be done by washing, if properly performed. We have been told it sometimes fails; it would be wonderful indeed if this should never happen. The wonder is, that it happens so seldom, considering the circumstances under which it is generally performed. Most of my patients tell me that when they caught the disorder, they were so far intoxicated as not to be capable of paying proper attention to the business of washing.

Another cause of failure is the propensity most people have to despise every thing they know, or that is plain and simple. Give them any disguised nostrum, and they will use it; but they have no faith in the virtues of plain water, and, if they have not some secret wash at hand, the business is neglected. Even when
patients

patients have what they esteem proper washes by them, they are seldom properly used. Immersion alone is deemed sufficient ; but no lotion, let its powers be what they may, can prevent the venereal disease by simple immersion.

Such is the effect of washing alone, that a gentleman told me he had tried to communicate the disease to a lady, with a view to ascertain a point of jealousy, but could not effect it. This he attributed solely to her extraordinary attention to cleanliness. I have known men who for many years had lived freely, with regard to the sex, yet never caught the venereal infection, owing to their strict attention to ablution.

In all cases cleanliness is a virtue ; but, in the commerce between the sexes, it is indispensable, and those who neglect it are little better than beasts. There is a merit in practising this virtue, even from the fear of disease ; but, to a person thoroughly clean, this stimulus will not be necessary. If any virtue prove its own reward, it is cleanliness.

Nor would I have the modest matron less attentive to it than the impure. Men often
apply

apply to me who think themselves injured by their wives. They have inflammations, and often slight excoriations of the parts, which would never happen if their wives were sufficiently attentive, even to the use of cold water.

As a great number of different washes have been recommended for preventing infection, I shall insert a few of them, premising, at the same time, that all their virtues amount to little more than those of plain water properly applied; or water impregnated with such ingredients, as may render it more detergent, or cleansing, as soap-lees, and such like.

Some recommend water that has been impregnated with the virtues of quick-lime; while others prefer the caustic alkali, or even the caustic volatile alkali, properly diluted. These, we have reason to believe, are the active ingredients in most of the washes commonly kept as secrets, and sold at a high price to enhance their value. We have no objection to their being used, provided the active ingredients are so diluted as not to hurt or excoriate the parts.

Many use Goulard's extract of lead as a wash: It is not so much a detergent as a dryer;
and,

and, though it makes a good injection in the gonorrhœa, we cannot infer from hence that it is proper as a preventive lotion. It may be used of different degrees of strength. What I commonly use, both externally and internally, consists of a tea-spoonful of the extract to a tea-cupful * of common water. The corrosive sublimate of mercury, dissolved in water, has been recommended as a proper preventive wash. It may, no doubt, be used, but requires great caution, otherwise it will inflame the parts. One or two grains to a tea-cupful of water is as much as can be used with safety. The sublimate is doubtless a powerful remedy in the lues; but how far its specific virtues may operate as a wash, I cannot say, as I never made trial of it in this way.

Even the crude mercury is by some used as a wash: It must be well triturated with honey and turpentine, and afterwards mixed with a quantity of water sufficient to dilute it. It is a clumsy preparation. If mercury is to be used for this purpose, we would recommend the sublimate.

* A tea-cup is supposed to contain about four ounces.

I am inclined to think that a solution of soap, or a little of the shaving powder, made into a lather, would answer this purpose as well, if not better, than any other wash whatever. It must, however, be used immediately, and applied properly. People often blame the wash when the fault is their own. No wash will succeed unless it is applied early, and with due care.

I know many gentlemen, who, instead of trusting to any particular wash, make use of whatever liquid is at hand, as beer, wine, punch, negus, brandy and water, rum and water, &c.; indeed some recommend brandy alone in preference to any thing else. I have reason to believe it is a good wash, but cannot think it the worse for being diluted with water, especially with warm water, if at hand; but it ought rather to be used cold than time lost by waiting till it is made warm. Any liquor may be sufficiently warmed by holding it for a short time in the mouth.

C H A P. II.

OF THE VIRULENT GONORRHŒA,
OR CLAP.

IT is not my intention to enter into a critical inquiry concerning the distinction between syphilis and gonorrhœa. It would only tend to embarrass and bewilder my readers. My aim is to mark the symptoms peculiar to each, and to point out the method of cure. It is not material to know whether gonorrhœa ever produces the pox; or if the pocky matter can excite gonorrhœa; so long as we know that each is attended with symptoms peculiar to itself, and that they require a totally different method of treatment.

Many who pretend to cure the venereal disease, treat every symptom in the same way. The very name with them implies the use of

mercury, which they throw into the system, with a liberal hand, upon all occasions. I have seen constitutions totally ruined by the use of mercury, where there was not occasion for a single grain. Indeed mercury generally does mischief in a gonorrhœa, but seldom any good.

The term gonorrhœa is improper: it signifies a discharge of semen. Whereas the true *gonorrhœa virulenta* is only a discharge of mucus from the urethra, without any feminal evacuation whatever. When this discharge is accompanied with a sensation of heat, and some degree of pain in passing water, which the patient has frequently an inclination to void, there is little reason to doubt that he labours under the gonorrhœa virulenta.

It is impossible to ascertain the precise period after impure coition, at which the running will appear. Sometimes it takes place in a few hours; at other times it requires several days; and in some cases the discharge does not appear for several weeks. This variety, however, does not seem to have any considerable influence either on the duration or virulence of the disease. In most cases the running
makes

makes its appearance from the third or fourth, to the seventh or eight day.

The appearance of the discharge varies in different patients. It is generally thin, and of a yellow colour, with a greenish cast; though sometimes it is white, and nearly of the consistence of purulent matter. In some cases the discharge is brown, and in others bloody, owing to the erosion of the vessels in the urethra. In common cases the discharge from the urethra and heat of urine are the only symptoms which occur: Though sometimes these are accompanied with painful and involuntary erections, uneasiness of the testicles, and of the abdominal viscera.

Though in a gonorrhoea some degree of uneasiness is generally felt along the whole course of the urethra; yet the pain is commonly seated about an inch from the point of the penis. In some cases indeed the disease spreads backwards, so as to extend over the whole length of the urethra, and even to the bladder itself. Nor are the prostate glands and internal coat of the bladder alone affected. Sometimes the pains stretch from these parts along the ureters, even to the kidneys.

It is impossible, at the beginning, to say precisely in what manner any case of gonorrhœa will terminate. Symptoms of the mildest kind will occasionally succeed to a violent discharge; while, in other cases, the contrary takes place. It is generally supposed that the disease will prove mild, and of short duration, when the running is white or yellow; and that, when it is first green, or tinged with blood, the running will prove obstinate: but though this may be generally true, it is by no means universally so.

It is reckoned a favourable symptom in gonorrhœa when the discharge becomes thick and ropy. Though this is unquestionably one of the most favourable occurrences in every clap, yet it is by no means a certain proof that the discharge will soon terminate. In certain constitutions the running will prove obstinate, even where the symptoms are all favourable.

When the running does not soon become ropy, but continues thin, and of a pale colour, there is reason to fear that it will terminate in a gleet. This, though by no means a dangerous symptom, is one of the most unpleasant
fant

fant that attends the venereal disease, and in many cases proves very obstinate.

There is a kind of spurious gonorrhœa, commonly called *gonorrhœa simplex*, which, in many respects, resembles the real one. Married people are often alarmed at the appearance of this complaint, and medical men, who are not sufficiently acquainted with this disorder, may do much mischief. No man should declare any running from the urethra, in either sex, to be venereal from the appearance only. In this case his opinion must be guided by circumstance, otherwise he will be apt to err.

A married man has applied to me several times, thinking himself injured, at the same time assuring me that he had not been guilty of any deviation from his wife, whom I knew to be an amiable and virtuous woman. I only advised him to wash the parts with Goulard's extract and water; and occasionally to throw up a little of it diluted, as directed in the gonorrhœa. This was all that I ever found necessary to remove the complaint, which generally disappeared in a few days.

METHOD

METHOD OF CURE.

IT has already been observed that mercury is not necessary for the cure of a gonorrhœa. Some people imagine that as soon as the infection is caught, the system is tainted; but this is by no means the case: the clap is, at first, perfectly a local disease, and may be cured by local applications. These are generally of the astringent kind, and may be varied in a variety of ways. Many people are afraid to use astringent medicines, lest they should drive the disease into the habit; but this is owing to their want of experience. I have used astringent injections in the cure of the clap for many years, and cannot fairly say I ever saw any disagreeable consequences that could justly be imputed to them; unless in such cases as will afterwards be pointed out.

As soon as the running appears, and there is no inflammation, stricture, or swelling of the parts to forbid it, my practice is immediately to use an astringent injection. Of these there are a great variety. What I prefer is the white vitriol dissolved in water: This may be used in various proportions, from half a dram

Unable to display this page

of time, it may be carried to sea, or on a journey of any length. Several patients have told me, that, after curing themselves, on a voyage to America, they had enough left out of the above quantity, to cure one or two of their neighbours.

If the injection occasion great pain, I order it to be weakened, by adding some water to it, so as to lower it to the patient's feelings. If the running does not stop in a few days, I desire him to make it stronger, by adding a little more of the solution, till it is as strong as he can bear. In this way the medicine can always be adapted to the patient's feelings, and to the exigencies of the case.

The preparation of lead, which commonly goes by the name of Goulard's extract, may be used in the same manner as the solution of vitriol, and will have nearly the same effects. Where the one does not succeed to my wish, I commonly try the other; but am more partial to the vitriol, as I think lead ought always to be applied with caution to interior surfaces.

As one or other of these injections made stronger or weaker, according to circumstances, generally succeeds, I seldom find occasion for
any

any of a different nature ; but, that patients may have it in their power to make a choice, I have subjoined various forms of injection at the end of the book.

This injection generally cures a clap in a few days, provided no untoward symptoms appear. I make it a rule, however, to keep the body gently open during the use of the injection. This may be done various ways, but gentle purgatives are the best. What I generally use for this purpose, is a cooling, opening powder, composed of cream of tartar and gum arabic, in powder, each an ounce ; jalap in powder, two drams : these are to be mixed, and a tea-spoonful taken at bed-time in a cup of gruel, or any other weak drink. Should this have no effect, another tea-spoonful may be taken in the morning, and a third at noon, if found necessary to keep the body open. If a tea-spoonful of the powder gives more than one motion, it will be sufficient to use it every second or third day.

The patient's body is not only to be kept open, but he ought to avoid all food and drink of a heating or stimulating nature. He is
L likewise

likewise to avoid violent exercise, and every thing that may heat or inflame the parts, as hard drinking, running, wrestling, riding, and such-like. Cold is also to be guarded against, especially exposure to wet, sitting in damp places, sleeping in damp beds, keeping on wet cloaths, and the like.

Sometimes untoward symptoms will occur, in spite of all our care; but these would be less frequent were due attention paid to the patient's diet, and the other articles mentioned above. It is to be regretted that patients have not this always in their power; and when they have, they are often very negligent.

Though injections will be found by far the most agreeable, safe, and expeditious method of cure; yet they are not to be indiscriminately used in all cases, and in every stage of the gonorrhœa. By not distinguishing between those cases where injections may or may not be used, much mischief is done, and the practice brought into discredit.

There are particular habits of body where injections do hurt; such as the highly-inflammatory,

flammatory, or persons of a very irritable nerve. In such habits injections are either not to be used at all, or to be begun in a very diluted state, and gradually increased in strength, till they produce their effect. If any symptoms of inflammation or swelling appear, they are immediately to be discontinued.

While the inflammation is confined to the lower part of the urethra, and does not extend upwards towards the root of the penis, or neck of the bladder, it is safe to inject; but when the inflammation extends upwards, and seems to threaten the prostate gland, the bladder, and parts adjacent, injections would prove hurtful.

In the first stage of gonorrhœa the discharge proceeds from a part of the urethra, not above an inch, or at most an inch and a half, from the point of the penis. While this is the case, even though a considerable heat of urine*, and some degree of chordee takes place, injections may be used with great ad-

* *Ardor urinæ*, or heat of urine, as it is usually called, is an improper name for a symptom which depends, not on the heat of the urine, but the tenderness of that part of the urethra where the inflammation is seated, and over which the urine passes.

vantage; and these symptoms, instead of being aggravated, will, by their means, be alleviated.

What is called the inflammatory diathesis is so strong in some patients, that I have seen a large tumor rise in the groin merely from the application of cold water externally to the parts of generation, during the progress of a gonorrhœa, which was so gentle, that the patient mistook it for a gleet, and took this method of removing it.

The true criterion with regard to injecting is the state of the inflammation. When this runs high, with great tension, pain, and swelling of the parts, it would be wrong to inject. Indeed, when this is the case, the running ought rather to be encouraged than checked, and the patient put upon a cool and diluting regimen, assisted by bleeding and other evacuations.

When the inflammation is considerable, it sometimes terminates in suppuration, a circumstance by all means to be guarded against; as it not only proves highly distressing to the patient, but is frequently destructive to the parts of generation. In this case every effort is to be

be made to ward off the impending danger, by lessening the inflammation.

To check the progress of inflammation, besides the means already mentioned, I would recommend poultices, with the sugar of lead, or Goulard's extract, to be constantly applied to the parts, and bleeding with leeches. This, which has been my practice for many years, now begins to become general. In almost every local inflammation, leeches may be applied with advantage, but in none with greater benefit than those of the genitals. I have often been a witness of their good effects in such cases, and would recommend a re-application of them as often as the symptoms may render it necessary, or till the inflammation is abated.

The gonorrhoea in women differs so little from the same disease in men, both in its symptoms and method of cure, that it hardly merits particular notice. The symptoms, however, are milder in women than in men; and, from some of the most distressing, they are wholly exempted: but the seat of the disease being nearer the bladder in women, that organ is more liable to inflammation than in the
other

other sex ; nor do they suffer less from what is called the heat of the urine.

As women are subject to other discharges, which have a great resemblance to the gonorrhoea, it is more difficult to ascertain the existence of the disease in them than in men. It may, however, be known from the heat of urine, which rarely occurs except in gonorrhoea, and likewise from the colour and consistence of the discharge, which is thinner and more pale in the *fluor albus* than in the gonorrhoea.

The discharge is to be removed in the same manner, and by the same means, as in men : and, if the inflammation runs high, the same cooling medicines will be necessary ; likewise bleeding, and gentle purges. It is fortunate that the same astringent injections which are used for the gonorrhoea, are equally proper in the whites. The only circumstance that can forbid their use is a high degree of inflammation, especially when the inflammation extends to the coats of the bladder, which may be known by the pain affecting that very sensible organ in a high degree.

OF THE CHORDEE.

A painful symptom, which often attends the virulent gonorrhœa, is called a chordee. This is peculiarly troublesome in the night, or when the patient has an erection. In habits liable to inflammation, or where the pain is violent, bleeding and other evacuations are necessary. Some recommend emollient injections, with laudanum, and rubbing the parts with mercurial ointment.

I generally order the parts to be frequently rubbed with camphorated oil, or some emollient ointment; and the patient to take from thirty to forty drops of laudanum in a draught, at bed-time. As this symptom is connected with inflammation, the patient ought to live sparingly, and to avoid the sight of such objects as may excite lascivious ideas.

Few things tend more to relieve this painful symptom than drinking plentifully of linseed tea.

C H A P. III.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE VIRULENT
GONORRHOEA.

ALTHOUGH *gonorrhœa virulenta* is only a local disease, and does not seem to affect the system, yet it often occasions symptoms which prove both tedious and troublesome; symptoms which, though not always dangerous, are very vexatious, and sometimes continue during the patient's life. Of these the most common are, obstructions in the urethra, swellings of the testicles and of the lymphatic vessels, gleet and feminal weaknesses, warts, excoriations, and other affections of the glans and prepuce.

OF OBSTRUCTIONS IN THE URETHRA.

Of all the symptoms subsequent to a virulent gonorrhœa, the most painful and dangerous

ous

ous are strictures of the urethra, or urinary passage. These not only endanger, but often destroy life; and, when the patient falls into unskilful hands, he may be deprived of his virility. When these symptoms do not yield to bleeding, cooling purges, emollient fomentations, and the use of bougies, the assistance of an able surgeon should, if possible, be procured. He will generally find occasion for all his skill in removing these untoward affections, which, notwithstanding the most skilful treatment, will sometimes occur.

Obstructions in the urethra may be occasioned by spasmodic affections of the part, tumors in the substance of the urethra and neighbouring parts, fleshy excrescences, caruncles, &c. In all these affections the patient is to expect relief chiefly from the proper use of bougies. Though a degree of science might seem necessary for the proper management of bougies, I have always found patients, with a very little instruction, able to make a proper use of them, without any trouble or danger to themselves. Indeed, if a patient does not know how to introduce a bougie himself, it will often be of no use to him.

A man may be seized with an obstruction of urine on a journey, or in many situations where he can neither procure a bougie, nor find a person to introduce it. Patients have often told me that they must have lost their lives on a journey, if they had not carried bougies along with them, and known how to use them. Indeed every person subject to obstructions of urine, ought to carry bougies in his pocket.

It is not here necessary to give any instructions concerning the making of bougies, as they can always be had ready made, of a superior construction to any that men not practised in the art, can pretend to make themselves. They ought, however, to be made with care. Should a bougie break in the urethra, it might be attended with very serious consequences*. Nor is care less necessary in introducing them, otherwise much mischief may be done by wounding and irritating the tender parts about the neck of the bladder.

In using bougies it will be proper always to begin with a small one, and gradually to

* Catgut bougies are preferable to any other, being less liable to break, and capable of being dissolved in the bladder.

use them of a larger size, as the urethra becomes dilated, and is accustomed to bear them. They ought also to be gently introduced, avoiding force as much as possible, and humouring the passage so as not to give pain, or fetch blood.

A knowledge of the force that may be necessary in passing a bougie cannot be acquired but by practice. Indeed the whole art of surgery is, in a great measure, acquired in this way. A man will learn more from seeing the operation once performed, or from having it done upon himself, than from twenty pages of description.

The time that a bougie should remain in the urethra must be regulated by the patient's feelings. Few people at first can bear to keep them in above half an hour ; but, by custom, they come to be able to let them continue for several hours, and some sleep with them in all night. Walking and other exercise, while a bougie is in the urethra, ought to be avoided, as it is apt to hurt and inflame the parts.

Another mode of regulating the time for keeping a bougie in the urethra is the intention for which it is used. If it is introduced

only with a view to draw off the water, there is no occasion for its remaining in, as the urine generally follows as soon as it is withdrawn. When the intention is to remove carruncles or strictures, it ought to be kept in for several hours, or all night, if the patient can bear it.

In using a bougie great care should be taken to prevent its slipping into the bladder, otherwise a painful and dangerous operation would be necessary for extracting it. This may always be prevented by bending about half an inch of the thicker end of the bougie, and tying a piece of narrow tape or pack-thread round it, of a sufficient length to prevent its getting into the bladder; or, if it should slip in, to draw it out again.

A bougie ought always to be tried before it is introduced, by bending it the whole length with the finger, so as to be satisfied that it is elastic and tough at every part. Whether they had been improperly formed, or kept till they were rotten, I do not know; but I have seen bougies, when attempted to be bent, snap like a bit of glass. The best way to have them genuine, is to apply to a person of character

rafter who makes them himself, and to pay the best prices, as they are sold at very different rates; but cheap articles of this kind are never to be trusted; indeed, in every thing belonging to medicine, whatever is sold low, is generally doubtful.

OF THE SWELLED TESTICLE.

A swelling of the testicle is not peculiar to the gonorrhœa. I have seen it where no such disease ever had existed: but as it frequently occurs during the progress of this disease, and is a very troublesome symptom, we shall mark its progress, and point out the most likely means for lessening the pain, and removing the disorder.

Sometimes both testicles swell; but it more frequently happens only to one, though occasionally they are affected in turns. The first attack is very painful, but afterwards the pain is inconsiderable. The swelling at first is chiefly confined to one part of the testicle; afterwards, however, and sometimes in a very short space, it affects the whole. In the progress

gress of the disease the testicle becomes hard, the skin which covers it puts on an inflammatory appearance, and the pain is accompanied with a sensation as if the testicle was moving or rolling about.

When the testicle swells, the running generally abates. This leads people to imagine that the swelling is occasioned by the matter falling on the testicle; but it evidently proceeds from a transfer of the inflammation from the one part to the other, arising from sympathy, or from irritation. Whatever is the cause, it ought to be removed with all possible speed, as it has many disagreeable consequences, some of which continue for life, and even tend to destroy the power of procreation.

As the consequences arising from an inflamed testicle are dangerous in proportion to the degree of inflammation that takes place, our great aim must be to keep the inflammation as much under as possible. This will be best effected by keeping the body gently open, applying anodynes and repellents to the parts affected, using opiates internally, and leeches externally.

It

It has been already observed that in all local inflammations one of the best remedies is bleeding. In full habits blood may be taken from the arm; but it will have a better effect if taken from the part, or as near to it as possible. This may be done by applying leeches to the scrotum. I shall be told that, as the bite of a leech cannot reach the testicle, it will be of no use; but reasoning is of little weight against daily observation. Long experience has taught me the benefits of this practice; and I will venture to say, it is both the safest and best remedy for the inflamed testicle with which we are yet acquainted.

What first led me to try this practice was the case of an officer of the army, who had the misfortune to get a swelled testicle a few days before he was obliged to embark with his regiment for the West Indies. Something was to be done immediately: I ordered as many leeches as conveniently could, to be applied to the scrotum, and to be renewed occasionally, as circumstances might require. By this means the swelling and inflammation
had

had so far subsided in three or four days, that he was able to attend to his duty.

When the bleeding is properly conducted, there will be little occasion for any other medicine. It will be necessary, however, to keep the body gently open, by such things as are recommended in the gonorrhœa. When the pain is very intense, from twenty-five to thirty, or thirty-five drops of laudanum may be taken in a little of the patient's drink, twice a day, or oftener, if necessary, to ease the pain.

Repellent applications are recommended, and may have their use. Some apply cloths dipped in brandy, others use a mixture of Goulard's extract and water, a tea-spoonful to a tea-cupful, or so; while many prefer poultices, made with the extract or sugar of lead: I think a poultice of oat-meal, or of rye-meal and vinegar, equal to any of them.

OF GLEETS.

In the gonorrhœa a discharge from the urethra will, in some cases, continue after the symptoms of inflammation have disappeared.

This

This is commonly known by the name of a *gleet*, and often proves very obstinate. While the discharge is capable of communicating the infection, it cannot properly be called a gleet; but it is difficult to determine the precise time when this takes place: Some suppose, when the discharge becomes transparent and viscid, like mucus, that it ceases to be infectious, while others affirm, that, notwithstanding these appearances, the infection may still remain.

While the inflammation, which produced the running, continues, there is reason to suspect that the infection is not subdued, and that the matter then discharged is equally capable of communicating the disease as at the beginning. Till, therefore, the discharge becomes clear and transparent, and the pain which accompanied the inflammatory state of the disease has entirely ceased, we can never be certain that the gonorrhœa is radically cured.

Sometimes the discharge will entirely disappear, and the patient think himself well, when, from irregularity, violent exertions, riding on horseback, too early commerce with

women, or such-like, the running will break out again, with every mark of a fresh infection: But when the patient has no reason to suspect that he has caught the disease anew, he has no occasion to be uneasy at this appearance; as it will soon cease on a re-application of the medicines which stopped it before.

When people find that this discharge does not communicate infection, they are apt to be indifferent, and to let it run on without using any means to put a stop to it. This, however, is wrong, as a long continuance of the running, not only weakens the system, but lays the foundation of some affections of the urethra and neighbouring parts, which may prove very troublesome and obstinate.

This complaint furnishes a strong argument in favour of astringent injections, as it is often the consequence of a long-continued gonorrhœa. Indeed the best method of cure, in its most obstinate state, is by injections. Astringents taken by the mouth have, no doubt, their use; but the most efficacious medicines, after all, are those which belong to the class of astringent injections.

Though

Though astringents, taken internally, are useful, yet they are not solely to be relied upon. Among these we reckon the bark and steel, either taken separately or conjunctly. They may be used in the follow manner :

Take Huxham's tincture of the bark, three ounces.

Tincture of steel, two drams. Mix, and take a tea-spoonful in a glass of red wine, three or four times a day.

Or, if the patient prefers a pill---

Take filings of steel prepared, one dram.

Extract of Peruvian bark, two drams.

Oil of carraway seeds, twenty-five drops.

Let these be made into thirty pills, one of which may be taken three or four times a day.

External astringents, which ought rather to be called tonics, have also their use. The principal of these is the cold bath ; but what I chiefly recommend is sea-bathing. This is not only more safe than the fresh water bath, as the patient is not so apt to take cold ; but as obstinate venereal complaints are often accompanied with a scrophulous taint, it may prove doubly useful.

We have few better tonics than the Tunbridge waters. As they prove beneficial to women afflicted with the whites, we may conclude that they would be of use in gleets. They ought, however, to be drunk with caution, as they prove heating, if taken in large quantities. Those who drink them ought likewise to live regularly. I have known much mischief done by using these waters, and at the same time making free with wine.

The stimulating astringent balsams are likewise recommended in the gleet; as the balsam of Capaiba, the Canada balsam, &c. From twenty to thirty drops of either of these may be taken on a bit of sugar four or five times a day. But what I have found to answer still better than the balsams, is the tincture of Catechu. A tea-spoonful of it may be taken in a glass of red wine three or four times a day.

When tonics and injections fail, sometimes bougies will succeed. They answer nearly the same purpose as stimulating injections, and are more safe. Bougies, composed of the most simple ingredients, will often effect the purpose of exciting a sufficient degree of inflammation:

But,

But, if they should fail, they are easily rendered more active by dipping them in oil of turpentine, in a thin liniment of wax and oil, with a small proportion of red precipitate, or in common basilicon, reduced, with oil of turpentine, to the consistence of a liniment.

There is reason to believe that the most efficacious medicine for this complaint is the cold bath ; but few patients have the resolution to persist in the use of it for a sufficient length of time. I have been told by a gentleman who had been afflicted with a gleet for above twenty years, that he had often put a stop to it, for some time, by bathing in cold water ; but that not having sufficient resolution to persist in it, the complaint had always returned. This gentleman, though very dissipated, had, at the time I saw him, a wife and some healthy children ; which shews that the disease does not prevent procreation.

OF WARTS AND EXCORIATIONS.

Warts sometimes affect the glans and prepuce on the termination of a gonorrhœa.

They

They are more troublesome than dangerous, and may generally be removed by the application of caustics : Of these the most gentle are first to be tried, and, if they fail, recourse must be had to the more active. I have often cut them off with a pair of sharp scissars.

When excoriations happen, they only require the application of some astringent wash. Bathing the parts frequently with a solution of white vitriol, or a mixture of Goulard's extract in water, of the same strength as that recommended in the gonorrhœa, will answer every purpose.

C H A P. IV.

OF THE LUES VENEREA, OR POX.

THIS dreadful disorder, which makes such havoc of the human species, when neglected, is generally so gentle at its first appearance, and so very tractable, that there is no disease where the practitioner gets so much money and credit for doing so little: But that little must be done in due time, otherwise the disease acquires a force, which the most skilful physician is not always able to overcome.

The lues venerea is generally introduced into the system by means of a chancre. If this is properly treated, the disease seldom proceeds any farther; but, where it is neglected, it will produce the pox, and a train of dreadful consequences. If all these consequences can be prevented by a proper treatment of the chancre,

chancre, on its first appearance, it will amount to nearly the same as eradicating the lues venerea altogether. How far this is practicable will appear from the following observations.

For the last twenty years, I do not think one day has passed on which I have not seen the venereal disease in one shape or other; yet during all that period I do not recollect one instance of a patient, who applied to me, on the first appearance of a chancre, becoming poxed. Though a chancre is the origin of, and will seldom fail to produce a pox, if suffered to take its course, yet it cannot, with propriety, be called a pox, any more than the person, who has been inoculated for the small pox, can be said to labour under that disease before it appears in the habit.

Though chancres are not confined to any particular part of the body, yet they generally appear on the glans or prepuce, and frequently on the frenum which joins the two together. Sometimes I have seen them on the back of the penis, and even on the scrotum and pubis. When chancres appear on other parts, as the fingers, lips, &c. the infection has not been received in the common way, but
by

by means of a wound, or by some of the softer parts coming into contact with a venereal ulcer.

The period at which chancres appear, after impure connexion, is uncertain. They generally make their appearance in a few days; though sometimes weeks elapse before the patient is informed, by a chancre, that he has received the infection. This may depend on the irritability of the parts to which the poison is applied, on the degree of acrimony with which the matter is endued, or on the quantity lodged on the part.

Though chancres assume different appearances, a person accustomed to look at them will seldom be deceived. To others a definition would be of little use. Every person must know when he has been in danger of catching the infection. If, in a few days after a suspicious connexion, he perceives a small speck of a pale reddish colour on the parts where chancres commonly appear, and if this speck gradually becomes a small boil, which afterwards bursts into an ulcer, he has reason to believe that the infection has taken place,

place, and that he has been inoculated* for the greater pox.

Sometimes there is only one chancre; but they more frequently come in clusters, and often run into one another, so as to cover almost the whole prepuce, and give the appearance of a foul spreading ulcer. These ulcers generally have callous edges, and discharge a thin ichor. In this, however, as well as in their size, they differ widely from one another. The most certain criterion of a venereal ulcer is, that, instead of healing like another sore, it spreads and grows worse, unless where mercury is administered. If under the use of this medicine the sore shews a disposition to heal, there is little reason to doubt of its being venereal.

Though chancres, under proper treatment, soon put on a healing appearance; yet, in

* There is a wonderful similarity in the progress of the infection in the lues venerea and inoculated small pox. If a small quantity of matter taken from a pustule on the point of a lancet is introduced under the cuticle, in two or three days a small speck of a reddish colour appears, which gradually becomes a pock. The matter of this pock, taken up the lymphatics, and carried into the system, communicates the disease.

some cases, owing perhaps to the patient's constitution, or the peculiar virulence of the matter, they will spread, become phagedenic, or eating ulcers, and destroy, not only the glans, but even the whole penis. As this never happened to any patient who had been under my care from the commencement of the disease, I am inclined to think it is owing either to improper treatment or neglect.

Some authors think that these corroding chancres are owing to the peculiar acrimony of the matter by which the infection was communicated; but to me this matter appears doubtful. I have found these chancres, even where they had destroyed a part of the penis, yield to a proper treatment as readily as any other. That the matter which produces the lues may possess different degrees of acrimony, I will not pretend to deny; but that this will not account fairly for its effects on different habits, is presumable from what happens in other diseases. Twenty patients inoculated for the small pox with matter taken from the same person, shall each of them have the disease in a different degree, and to some one of them it shall prove fatal.

OF THE TREATMENT OF CHANCRES.

The first caution which I shall give concerning chancres, is to keep them easy, and free from all irritation. The cure of a chancre may be greatly retarded by walking, riding, or violent exercise of any kind. These not only tend to fret the sore, but to increase the inflammation, and promote the absorption of the virus, to diffuse it more quickly over the system, and to render the disease both more dangerous and difficult of cure.

The next caution concerns the patient's mode of living. There is no occasion for starving a patient during the cure of a chancre ; but some restraint should be put upon his appetite. No person should indulge in wine and a luxurious diet during a course of mercury ; otherwise he will not only retard the cure, but endanger an hemorrhage, by keeping up too great a plethora, or fulness of the vessels.

An important rule with regard to the treatment of chancres is, to keep them clean. This alone would go far to prevent all the mischief done by what are called corroding chancres.

chancres. The discharge from a wound acts as a kind of balsam, and promotes the cure ; whereas the matter thrown out by a chancre is generally of an acrid nature, and corrodes the parts with which it comes into contact. The more frequently, therefore, this matter is removed, the better.

I have often found the penis so corroded by these eating chancres as to be almost destroyed. In such cases I order the fores to be washed several times a day with milk and water a little warm, applied by means of a syringe ; and, when washed, to be filled with dry lint. After the lint has stayed in for some hours, and has become moist by absorbing the matter, I order it to be taken out, the fores again washed, and the lint to be applied as before. By this treatment, and the use of mercury, I have always been able to stop the progress of any corroding chancre that came under my care, and I have reason to think it always might be done.

To a patient who has got a chancre, my first advice is, to keep it clean. This he can easily do by means of a syringe, or a rag dipped in lukewarm water. The part may afterwards

afterwards be dried by pressing it gently with a soft rag. I never apply any healing salve to a chancre; it will always heal of itself, provided a sufficient quantity of mercury is thrown into the system. Should it be healed by any other means, the consequences might be dangerous.

When the chancres are dried up suddenly, there is always reason to dread some bad consequences. Instead of skinning over the chancre, and making the patient believe he is cured, a practice but too common, I generally endeavour to keep it open, especially when it seems disposed to heal quickly. I think it is safer practice not to use any escharotics, as they tend to heal the chancres too soon, and to excite buboes. When the chancres seem disposed to spread, I generally order them to be sprinkled with calomel, which is one way of throwing mercury into the system.

On the very first appearance of the chancre I begin to throw in the mercury in whatever form is most agreeable to the patient. If he prefers a pill, I order him to take two grains of calcined mercury, made into a pill with crumb of bread, evening and morning. If his mouth
is

is not fore in a few days, he may take two pills at night, and one in the morning; and if these do not excite some degree of salivation, two may be taken morning and evening.

I seldom find more than four grains in the day necessary to make the mouth fore; and, after it has been made fore, one grain or two a day will generally be sufficient to keep it so: I say keep it so; for whatever boasting quacks may pretend, if the mercury does not make the mouth fore, and if the foreness is not kept up for some time, the cure is not to be depended on.

Should the pills gripe, or run off by stool, it will be necessary to correct them by adding the quarter of a grain of opium to each pill. If the bowels are so tender as not to retain them even when corrected, the mercurial ointment must be used in their stead. It is fortunate for those who cannot take mercury by the mouth, or whose bowels will not bear it, that it can be administered by the skin with equal, if not greater effect.

The patient may begin with a dram * of the ointment every day, which is to be rubbed into the inner side of the thigh with a warm

* In the apothecary's ounce there are eight drams.

hand before the fire. Should the skin become inflamed and tender, the part must be changed; and if the patient is not able to rub it in sufficiently himself, he must employ some other person to do it for him. The quantity of ointment may be gradually increased to two drams a day; one half to be used at night, and the other in the morning.

It is impossible to ascertain beforehand the exact quantity of ointment that will be necessary to perform a cure. It ought, however, to be continued till the symptoms disappear, and for some time longer, as it is better to go a little beyond the mark than to leave any remains of the disorder in the system. It is seldom we can trust to fewer than thirty or forty drams; and, in many cases, double that number will be necessary before the symptoms disappear.

Though the mouth ought to be kept tender for some time, it is not the fore mouth that cures the disease; that is only a mark of the system's being impregnated with the medicine. Under these circumstances, if the symptoms disappear, we have reason to conclude that the patient is cured; but, for the greater security, the medicines ought always to be persisted in for some time longer.

Though

Though a chancre will generally produce a pox, yet, if the preceding course is duly persisted in, this will seldom be the case; at least I have seen few instances of its having happened. I must therefore conclude, that when a pox is the consequence of a chancre, it is, generally speaking, either the fault of the patient, or of his physician; as this dreadful malady may, in most cases, be prevented by proper medicines, duly persisted in, during, what I call, the chanced state. Improper treatment, or neglect, during this period of the disease, does most of the mischief.

OF THE PHYMOSIS AND PARAPHYMOSIS.

When the foreskin is so contracted, that the glans cannot be uncovered, the disease is called a phymosis; and, when the contraction is formed behind the glans, so as the skin cannot be brought forward, it goes by the name of a paraphymosis: Though, generally speaking, these symptoms accompany a venereal taint, yet they may both exist where there is no infection.

fection of that kind; but, when this is the case, they are not so dangerous.

I have seen the phymosis in such a degree, where there was not the least symptom of infection, that it was necessary to lay open the prepuce, to enable the patient to pass his urine. This patient had symptoms of the gravel, and such a continual itching in the point of his penis, that he could not refrain from rubbing it. This seemed to be the cause of the contraction, which was so great, that he could not pass one drop of water without using a knitting-needle to remove the feculent matter that stopped up the passage.

These parts are so differently formed, in different men, that some may be said to have a natural phymosis, while others have the reverse. I have seen the foreskin so long, that above three inches of it were amputated, in order to uncover the glans; in others, the glans never is covered, but remains exposed during life. Neither of these is attended with any considerable degree of inconvenience, unless in a diseased state. When inflammation occurs, in such a construction of the parts, strictures are more likely to be formed, and
are

are likewise with more difficulty removed, than in patients where the prepuce moves easily over the glans.

There is a species of phymosis, owing to constriction, which I have found it necessary to remove, though not accompanied with any disease: I mean, where the frenum adheres to the glans all the way to the mouth of the urethra. This not only impedes the business of generation, but, when disease takes place, it proves highly inconvenient, as the simple operation of separating it from the glans cannot then be performed, on account of the inflammation and swelling: Nor can the glans be completely uncovered while this adhesion remains.

Cases of paraphymosis likewise occur without infection. A feeble old man had drawn back the prepuce behind the glans, and not being able to return it, was suffered to remain in this situation for above a week, though daily visited by a country surgeon. Notwithstanding a considerable degree of inflammation and swelling had taken place, I was able to remove the complaint, without an incision, in less than a quarter of an hour. Had the stricture con-

tinued much longer, a mortification must have ensued; yet the patient was never apprized of his danger*.

I have known some young men bring on a violent paraphymosis by their own improper conduct. One who had pulled back the skin, and kept it there till it could not be returned without making incisions on both sides, said he did it on purpose to keep the glans cool. In this case, though the stricture was removed, yet the glans was never completely covered, and the foreskin remained thickened, which, in all probability, will be the case during the patient's life.

Though every method should be used to keep the glans clean by injections, and cool by fomentations, poultices, &c., yet no attempt should be made to draw the skin forcibly back, till the inflammation has abated; otherwise, in all probability, a stricture will be formed be-

* Boys frequently bring on a disorder similar to this by slipping rings over the glans: Not being able to bring them back, a violent inflammation ensues, which cannot be removed, unless the ring is cut or broken, a thing not easily effected when it is deep sunk in the flesh. The boy, either from fear or shame, is generally deterred from making his situation known till the case becomes extremely dangerous.

hind the glans, which will be more dangerous and difficult to remove than the former.

A phymosis frequently occurs in gonorrhœa; but the most dangerous is that which arises from a chancre concealed under the prepuce. This, if neglected, will not only keep up the inflammation and thickening of the prepuce, but will corrode the glans, and even the body of the penis, so as totally to destroy the powers of generation, and of connubial enjoyment.

As a phymosis from a venereal cause is always accompanied with inflammation, our great aim must be to remove that, or to prevent its running too high. To effect these important purposes, the patient ought to avoid all violent exertions, to live temperate, or rather low, to bleed, and use cooling purges, with emollient applications to the parts affected. The genitals should be suspended in a proper bandage, and the penis frequently soaked in warm milk and water: The glans ought likewise to be cleaned by throwing up some milk and water with a syringe between it and the prepuce several times a day.

Where

Where these things are duly persisted in, the inflammation may generally be kept under, and in time removed; but if neglected, and the inflammation suffered to run on, much mischief may ensue. Most of the cases which have come under my eye, where the penis was materially injured, belonged to this class, and the injury had been occasioned either by the improper conduct of the patient, or the inattention of those who had the care of him.

A man of an inflammatory habit, and very irregular in his mode of living, while afflicted with a virulent gonorrhœa, went to a feast in the country, where some athletic games were celebrated: He excelled in running, wrestling, and playing at foot-ball. Not contented with coming off conqueror at all of these, he must likewise be the hero of the bottle, to accomplish which he sat up all night, and, according to the vulgar phrase, laid all his companions under the table. The consequence was a violent inflammation, which did great injury to the parts, and had nearly cost him his life.

For the consequences of such conduct, men have themselves only to blame: But sometimes the Faculty are in fault. A few days
ago

ago I attended an operation, which evinced the danger of suffering chancres to lie concealed under the prepuce. A young man, who had been eight months under the care of a surgeon, and, during all that time, had been swallowing mercury for the cure of a phymosis, was so far from getting better, that he grew daily worse. Night and day he was racked with extreme pain, till at length, worn down to a shadow, he was advised to apply to me.

Convinced that his pain was occasioned by concealed chancres, I desired my son to lay open the prepuce to the very bottom of the glans, when all that appeared of this part of the penis was about the size of a common pea. The patient, in less than a fortnight, without taking one grain of mercury, was perfectly well. Had this operation not been performed, the young man must have been totally deprived of his virility, and probably of his life. This is not the only time I have seen the operation attended with equal success.

Whenever a patient finds a phymosis prove obstinate, and is tortured with pain, he has reason to suspect that some bad work is going on under the prepuce. It is then time to take
further

further advice ; and, if an incision is recommended by a man of experience and observation, it ought to be performed without delay. I am no friend to operations where they can be avoided ; but in such cases delays are dangerous.

I am inclined to think, if due attention were paid to fomentations, poultices, emollient injections, &c. incisions would seldom be necessary ; but people are very apt to neglect things that are in their own power, and trust to medicine, which they think possesses a specific virtue to remove this complaint, under whatever form it may appear. This, however, is a great mistake : The parts of generation are often destroyed where immense quantities of mercury have been taken.

If, after all endeavours, the prepuce cannot be drawn back, and if livid-coloured spots should appear on the outside, the foreskin should be immediately cut asunder, and the ulcers laid open. Many people think the very name of an incision implies mutilation ; in this case, however mutilation seldom takes place, but from the neglect of incisions.

The

The paraphymosis, during the state of inflammation, must be, in all respects, treated as the phymosis. The prepuce must, if possible, be brought over the glans, by pulling it forward with the hand, and, at the same time, compressing the glans, and pushing it backwards with the fingers. This operation will be greatly assisted by the use of some oil or soft liniment.

To lessen the inflammation, low diet, bleeding, soft poultices, and emollient fomentations, are to be used in the same manner as for the phymosis. In both cases I have always experienced the greatest advantage from the application of leeches: Nor do I recollect to have seen any bad consequences from them.

Should all attempts to bring the foreskin over the glans fail, and there is danger of a mortification taking place, it will be necessary to make incisions quite through the folds of the prepuce, in order to prevent a strangulation and consequent mortification of the part. In some cases of strangulation, the glans absolutely drops off, and the patient is relieved by an effort of nature without an operation.

I am inclined to think that most, if not all, of the baneful consequences arising from the paraphymosis, might be prevented by a sufficient attention to the disease in its first stages. Were the patient careful to avoid cold, hard drinking, and violent exertions, during the inflammatory state, he would seldom have occasion to regret the mangling and maiming which may afterwards be necessary to save his life.

I have dwelt the longer on these symptoms, because they are rather slightly passed over by most writers on this subject ; and likewise because I have seen more mischief occasioned by neglecting them, than any other symptoms of the venereal disease. These occur in the early stages of the disorder ; and the novice in the venereal practice suffers them to run on till they become not only more than a match for his skill, but sometimes sufficiently formidable even to the most experienced veteran of the Faculty.

It is necessary to observe, that where symptoms of syphilis, or pox, prevail, which is generally the case both in the phymosis and paraphymosis, it will be proper to administer mercury in the same manner as is recommended under the treatment of Chancre.

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF CURE.

MANY medicines have been recommended in the cure of lues venerea, some of which have been deemed specifics ; but none of them, except mercury, is entitled to that appellation, or has stood the test of time. This medicine may be truly called a specific. When duly administered in the lues venerea, it will be found almost infallible. When mercury fails in making a cure, it is either owing to its being badly prepared, or improperly administered. A cure is not to be expected from the use of mercury, after the parts necessary for carrying on the functions of life have been destroyed. These cannot be restored by mercury, and the patient must die. I have been consulted for a man, the half of whose face was eaten away

by the pox, and part of the brain laid bare. No one would blame mercury if it did not succeed in such a case.

When, by repeated poxes, the constitution has been destroyed, and the powers of life exhausted, mercury cannot be expected to restore them; but while there is a constitution to work upon, this medicine will do wonders. I have known it succeed even where a consumption, arising from a venereal taint, had made great progress; and Mr. Bell says, he has seen the asthma, rheumatism, epilepsy, and lunacy itself, when induced by the venereal taint, yield to mercury.

It is now a common practice to administer mercury as an alterative. This manner of taking mercury must meet the wishes of most patients; but, to use an old saying, there is reason to fear "it is shutting the door while the thief remains in the house." It is a pleasant thing for a man to hear that he may go about his business, may eat and drink what he pleases, go abroad in all weathers, and be radically cured of a confirmed pox.

The delicate beau, who would not, for the world, have his breath smell, will grasp at a method

method of cure without affecting the mouth. Such a method may succeed now and then, but I would not advise any one to trust to it. Till the mouth is affected, we can never be certain that the mercury has entered the system; and, unless the system is saturated, the effects are seldom permanent.

I do not mean to recommend the old practice of exhibiting mercury, so as to raise a violent salivation. This was productive of many bad consequences, and is by no means necessary. All the purposes of mercury may be answered in a much milder way: I mean by a gentle salivation; or a moderate degree of foreness of the mouth being kept up for a considerable length of time.

If man could keep a medium, he would be perfect; but this is not in his nature: He flies from one extreme to another, and is equally wrong in both. This has been strictly the case with regard to the exhibition of mercury. Many constitutions have been ruined by pushing it too far; and now effects equally hurtful are produced from its being too sparingly administered. We are, therefore, to follow a middle course, and, if possible, to avoid
the

the bad consequences arising from either of the extremes.

All attempts to ascertain the precise mode of operation of mercury, in the cure of lues venerea, have hitherto proved abortive : Nor would it be of much importance were it known. To establish the character of a medicine, it is sufficient to know, that, exhibited in a given quantity for a certain length of time, it will remove a disorder, which, without it, would prove destructive to the patient.

There is no standard by which we can fix the exact quantity of mercury necessary for effecting a cure. The difference of constitutions is such, that what will cure in one case, will not be sufficient in another; besides, there are many other circumstances, as age, sex, climate, constitution, situation in life, and such like, that must be taken into consideration in the administration of mercury.

Mercury is, notwithstanding, the most certain medicine with which we are acquainted. Even the bark is not so sure to succeed in intermitting fevers as mercury in the cure of the venereal disease : But the success of both depends on the mode of exhibition. Bark
may

may be taken for a twelvemonth without curing an ague; yet the same quantity, taken in the course of one month, will remove the disease.

The same rule holds with regard to mercury: Its effects cannot be estimated by the quantity given, without attending to the time in which it is administered. Indeed this rule applies to most medicines. If the patient begins with small doses, even of poisons, he may use them till they lose their effect, so as hardly to have any influence on the constitution.

Mercury, as a mineral, or taken in its crude state, is almost inert: If it acts at all as a medicine, in this state, its action depends chiefly on its weight and fluidity. Its virtues, as a medicine, must therefore depend on the modes of preparing it. These, indeed, are manifold; but, as my practice is confined to a very few, I shall only take notice of them, and shall add a few observations relative to the modes of preparing, and of administering them in the different stages of the disorder.

The preparations of mercury chiefly employed by me are, the ointment, the calcined mercury, the mild muriated mercury, the calomel, and the corrosive sublimate: But, as I do
not

Unable to display this page

of mercury ; yet the mode of applying it is so troublesome and disagreeable, that most patients wish to avoid it. No other mode of application, however, has yet been thought of, which effectually answers the same purpose. For this reason we must continue the use of the ointment, till time or observation shall discover a better mode of throwing mercury into the system.

One of the greatest inconveniences attending the administration of mercury is the effect it often has on the stomach and bowels. The bowels of many patients are quite unable to bear the mercury in such quantity as is necessary to cure the disease. Indeed, when mercury runs off by stool, it is very apt to disappoint the expectations of the physician ; and the quantity of opium necessary to correct this tendency is often so great as to render the patient stupid and uncomfortable. Mercury will, no doubt, sometimes affect the bowels, even when used externally ; but this is not near so apt to happen as when the medicine is taken by the mouth.

Though the mercurial ointment has many advantages, and will succeed in most common

cases, yet, in obstinate venereal affections, I never trust to it alone. I have seen nodes of long standing yield to the calcined mercury, after an immense quantity of the ointment had been applied without any apparent benefit. A patient, who had lost a great part of the penis, told me, that, by the advice of an eminent physician, he had used above sixty drams of mercurial ointment without any benefit; yet this gentleman was perfectly cured by the corrosive sublimate, accompanied with the Lisbon diet drink, in less than six weeks, and continues well to this day.

Though the corrosive sublimate possesses great powers as a medicine, it is not so much in use as formerly. The taste is highly disgusting, and it is rather hurtful to the stomach and bowels. Where these effects can be obviated, it is an excellent medicine, particularly in venereal affections of the skin. The best way to prevent its hurting the stomach or bowels is, to accompany its use with some soft decoction made of farinaceous substances, as the decoction of sarsaparilla, or what is called the Lisbon diet drink.

The

The most common preparation of mercury now in use, for the cure of the venereal disease, is calomel. Though inferior to the calcined or the muriated mercury, yet, in common cases, it seldom fails to perform a cure. Being perfectly insipid, it excites no nausea, and may be given, even to infants, with great safety. As it is a cheap medicine, there is less danger of its being adulterated than those which are ten times the value. It does not however follow, that calomel is never adulterated, though it might be imprudent here to mention the modes in which it is done.

I know no syphilitic taint that will not yield to one or other of these preparations, when applied in due time; but there are some auxiliaries, which, though they will not cure the disease, may nevertheless be of use, as either aiding the operation of the grand specific, or preventing its doing injury to the stomach and bowels. The chief of these are, antimony, guiacum, sarsaparilla, mezereon, and opium.

Guaiacum has been highly extolled for the cure of lues venerea; but, since the powers of mercury were better known, it has lost

much of its reputation, and is now used chiefly as an ingredient in the Lisbon diet drink. Some pretend to have had experience of its good effects in ulcers and blotches of the skin; but never having used it alone, I cannot vouch for its effects; nor would I advise any one to trust to it for a cure, unless when accompanied with mercury.

Sariaparilla has also been said to have cured the venereal disease. It is given in powder, extract, and decoction. The last of these is the most common form in which it is administered, and is generally found to answer the best. I will not assert that it has any considerable effect on the cure of lues venerea, but I think it is friendly to the stomach and bowels; and some think it proves serviceable where mercury is found to have too great a tendency to run off by the mouth.

Of mezereon I can say little, never having used it but in combination with the two former articles. It is, however, an active, pungent medicine; and, when combined with things of a milder nature, may, no doubt, have its use. The root and bark are both employed, especially

especially the latter, which is by far the most active part*. It is believed to have entered into the composition of Dr. Kennedy's Decoction, which is now supposed to have been nearly the same as the Lisbon diet drink: to which, judging from its effects, I should think a little mercury, under some form, had been added.

In a decoction which I have long used, as an accompaniment to mercury, all these ingredients are combined, and I think form a better medicine than can be extracted from any one of them separately. I have occasionally used antimony in the crude state; but, as this gives the decoction a very dirty appearance, of late I have added to each quart of the decoction a tea-spoonful of the antimonial wine, more or less, as the patient's stomach could bear.

Opium has likewise been recommended as an aid to mercury, in the cure of lues venerea, and some have gone so far as to say, that it possesses powers as an antisyphilitic. I have not, however, been able to discover them: All the use I have ever found in opium was from

* A decoction of the bark is said to have proved successful in the cure of ulcers in the throat.

its sedative effect in preventing the mercury from running off by the bowels. When the bowels are too irritable to retain mercury, it will not cure the disease. In this case opium may act as an auxiliary, by detaining the mercury in the system.

OF THE PROPER REGIMEN DURING A COURSE OF MERCURY.

The success of mercury is often frustrated by an improper regimen. Few men have sufficient resolution to break off their former habits of living while under a course of mercury. They will take the medicine, but cannot refrain from their usual luxuries. I have often seen the cure protracted to twice the usual time, when no other reason could be assigned but the patient's luxurious manner of living.

As any one stimulus may counteract another, why may not the stimulus of wine counteract that of mercury? I do not mean that a patient, under a course of mercury, is to live too low, neither do I approve of very copious evacuations

evacuations prior to the patient's entering on such a course; nor indeed of any at all, provided the patient is not of a full or inflammatory habit. When that is the case, bleeding and purging may be necessary, as well as other evacuations. As far as my recollection goes, I think the cure of lues venerea goes on more slowly in fat than in lean patients.

Though the patient is not to be starved under a course of mercury, yet there are some things that will disagree with the stomach, and ought, therefore, not to be used: For example, all raw vegetables, and whatever is apt to turn sour or rancid on the stomach, ought to be avoided. When the mercury is rubbed in, these cautions are less necessary; but at all times 'crude, acid vegetables, used freely, are injurious to the stomach and bowels.

Few things are more injurious to a patient, under a course of mercury than exposure to cold. In a mild climate I should think there was no occasion for any confinement under a course of mercury; but with us, who have all the seasons in a few days, and often even in one day, this is a matter of the greatest importance. Patients get well under every
kind

kind of treatment, but circumstances of a very untoward nature are often occasioned by cold. I am fully convinced that one half of the medicine generally used for curing the lues venerea would succeed, were patients confined to the house during a course of mercury*.

It has already been observed that one of the most disagreeable effects of mercury is its tendency to run off by the bowels. No doubt this may be, in some measure, corrected by opium; but as few patients like to take that drug, I would again beg leave to recommend a due attention to warmth. While a sufficient degree of perspiration is kept up, mercury will seldom fall on the bowels. No sooner, however, is this evacuation checked, than the bowels are affected. All the patient's food and drink ought to be a little warm, and rather of easy digestion. When I recommend

* I am sufficiently aware that many patients cannot keep the house while they are using mercury for curing the lues venerea; but these patients must lay their account with many inconveniences, and those sometimes of a very serious nature. Indeed most of the bad consequences, imputed to mercury, are, in my opinion, owing to taking cold. Some speculative writers have thought otherwise; but a long series of observation has convinced me that fluxes, fevers, and even madness, may be produced by cold under a course of mercury.

warmth,

warmth, I do not mean that the patient is to be kept in a profuse sweat : this, instead of promoting, would retard the cure, and weaken the patient to no purpose.

Few things are of more importance, during a course of mercury, than to regulate the patient's clothing. If linen is worn next the skin, it is not only cold and chilly, but, when moistened by the perspiration, it becomes damp ; and the moisture is taken up by the absorbent vessels which open on the skin. It would be a good rule, if every person labouring under lues venerea were to wear flannel next the skin during the whole time of the cure.

It is not only necessary, during a course of mercury, to avoid every thing that is highly stimulating, as hot spices, high-seasoned dishes, and such-like ; but also all violent exertions of bodily strength, as running, wrestling, hard riding, &c. : nor is tranquillity of mind less necessary. All the bodily functions may be disordered by violent passions ; and when that is the case, the most powerful medicines will not have their proper effects on the system.

OF BUBOES.

Buboes may arise from different causes; but we mean only to treat of the venereal bubo: this is generally seated in the groin, and is attended with swelling, pain, and inflammation of the part. The true syphilitic bubo is commonly preceded by a chancre on the glans or prepuce, though a chancre is not necessary to the production of a bubo: it is sometimes, though seldom, the first symptom after impure coition. The bubo is generally single, though sometimes both groins are at once affected.

There is no occasion to describe the whole absorbent system to explain the theory of buboes. It is sufficient to say, that every part of the body, both external and internal, is replenished with absorbent vessels, whose open mouths take up more or less of every fluid that is applied to them. These vessels carry the venereal poison into the system, and serve likewise to convey its antidote.

Whether the bubo arises from an immediate absorption, without any previous local eruption, or from an absorption from chancres,

or

or a virulent gonorrhoea, the symptoms are nearly the same. Some, indeed, suppose that the bubo may arise from the poison being conveyed from the mass of blood, when universally tainted with the infection; but this opinion is by no means well founded. From whatever cause buboes proceed, they commonly hold the following progress:

A small hard tumor is felt in one or both groins, accompanied with some degree of pain, though not acute; this tumor gradually increases, till it has arrived at maturity. When matter begins to be formed, the bubo becomes very painful, and sometimes excites a slight degree of fever, which subsides when the suppuration of the bubo is completed. The size of buboes at the time of their suppuration is very different; some of them are not larger than a walnut, while others exceed the bulk of an hen's egg. The suppuration of the bubo will be quick, if it is attended with much pain; but, if not accompanied with great pain, its progress will be slow.

Buboes, in their first stage, may generally be dispersed; by which much trouble, pain, and inconvenience to the patient will be prevented.

ed. But this method of treatment is, by some, believed to be dangerous: they suppose that a bubo is an effort of nature to carry off what they call the morbid matter of the disease; and that, by discharging it, the venereal poison is repelled, and thrown into the system. On this supposition, it was formerly deemed good practice always to promote suppuration, and bring the bubo to discharge matter as soon as possible. But this practice is not founded on sound reasoning, and is by the more enlightened practitioners rejected.

In some of the most obstinate venereal cases which have fallen under my observation, the buboes have suppurated, and sometimes in succession; but I could never perceive that the suppuration tended to promote the cure, or to render mercury less necessary. Besides, the sores, occasioned by the breaking or laying open of the buboes, prove often extremely troublesome and difficult of cure. For these reasons, I always, in the first instance, attempt the dispersion of a bubo.

To effect this purpose, evacuates are in the first place to be used, as bleeding, purging, vomiting, &c. I have known one brisk purge
carry

carry off a bubo*, and local bleeding has often had the same effect. This may be done by cupping or leeches : I generally prefer the latter. The sores, indeed, occasioned by the bite, are sometimes slow in healing ; but this is a slight inconvenience, when compared to the advantages derived from the bleeding. In full and inflammatory habits, the patient may lose blood from the arm ; but, in general, local bleeding succeeds better. Blood, taken from or near the part affected, will relieve the patient more, while it weakens him less, than a much greater quantity taken from the general mass.

Some local applications ought to accompany the bleeding and purging, which are to be repeated according to circumstances. I generally use repellent poultices, made with Goulard's extract, or the sugar of lead ; though some prefer the following ointment, as being less troublesome :

* When a bubo disappears in a few days, the quack imputes it to his great skill ; and when it proves obstinate, which will happen under the best treatment, the physician is blamed, when he is not in fault. Random cures often establish the reputation of medicines which possess no real virtues, and fill the pockets of pretenders to physic, who are totally ignorant of that science.

Take

Take of mercurial ointment, one ounce ;

Goulard's extract, fifty drops ;

Powder of opium, one scruple : mix them together according to art.

A little of this ointment may be rubbed on and near to the part affected, several times a day.

While these attempts are making to disperse the bubo, the patient must use an abstemious regimen, avoiding all strong and fermented liquors ; also food of a heating or stimulating nature. The body must be kept gently open, and all violent exertions are to be avoided, as riding, running, wrestling, and such-like. This rule is of more importance than is generally imagined, as muscular motion of every kind tends to increase inflammation.

During these attempts to disperse the bubo, the use of mercury is not to be omitted : it may be administered nearly in the same manner as for the chancre ; only, that in this case some prefer the ointment to every other preparation of mercury. Their reason for giving it the preference is, that it can be applied near to the parts affected, and in such a manner

Unable to display this page

cure rest, he may take from half a grain to a grain of opium in a pill at bed-time. This will likewise tend to hasten the formation of matter, and shorten the inflammatory stage.

When the bubo has arrived at maturity, and matter is formed, the common practice is to open the abscess with a lancet, or by means of caustic; but it often happens, when the bubo is opened by these methods, that it is not perfectly ripe; but when Nature is left to make the opening in her own way, it always happens when it ought, and generally heals much sooner, and with less inconvenience, than when opened either by incision or caustic.

As soon as the abscess is broken, the patient ought gently to press out the matter, endeavouring, at the same time, to enlarge the orifice. If the discharge is thick, and the suppuration has not been tedious, there will be every reason to expect that the abscess will soon heal; but if the sore discharges a thin sharp ichor of a greenish colour, and its lips are ragged, and of a loose, flabby appearance, the cure will prove both tedious and troublesome.

After squeezing out the matter, a little of any digestive ointment may be applied to the sore, on a bit of lint or soft rag, and the whole covered

covered with a soft poultice. This may be renewed twice a day, pressing out the matter very gently before it is applied. The sore ought to be kept clean by washing it, every time the poultice is renewed, with milk and water a little warm. The time that may be necessary for healing the bubo cannot be ascertained, as it depends entirely on the patient's constitution.

It sometimes happens, after several weeks' trial of the above method of treatment, that the sores grow worse, and the patient's health and strength decline. In this case it will be necessary to discontinue the mercury, and to put the patient on a light and nourishing diet, with an allowance of three or four glasses of sound red port wine in the course of the day. The bark must also be taken in as large quantities as the stomach will bear it.

I have seen a patient so much weakened by the use of mercury, that he was not able to walk, or even to stand; yet, by going into the country, living on a light nourishing diet, and drinking the decoction of sarsaparilla, with equal parts of new milk, he got well in a few weeks. If any symptoms of the disorder re-

main after this course, it will be necessary to resume the use of the grand specific, mercury, as soon as the patient is able to bear it.

Though mischief is, no doubt, done by pushing the mercury too far, yet I am fully persuaded that ten times more proceeds from leaving it off too soon. The patient tires of taking medicine, and the doctor, willing to indulge him, gives him permission to desist before the business is completed. Of this, I am sorry to say, one meets with too many proofs to question the fact.

OF VENEREAL ULCERS.

A venereal ulcer may appear on any part of the body, and is a sure sign that the poison has pervaded and infected every part of the system. These ulcers are usually preceded by blotches, which appear first about the roots of the hair, or on the forehead, where they go by the name of a *corona veneris*. They gradually spread all over the body, and are attended with itching and some degree of pain. A venereal ulcer, though not very painful,

ful, quickly becomes deep, and even reaches the bone, which it renders foul. It discharges a thin, foetid, corrosive matter; and cannot be cured but by a complete and well-conducted course of mercury.

It is of importance to distinguish the venereal from the common ulcer, as mistakes in this matter may have serious consequences, both with regard to the character of patients, and the method of cure. If the patient has reason to suspect that the ulcer may be venereal; if its margin is hard, the surrounding skin preternaturally red, and the bottom covered with a white slough, there is ground to believe it is venereal. But the most certain conclusion may be drawn from the use of mercury: if the ulcer either appears, or grows worse during the use of mercury, it is probably not venereal; but if it gets better under a proper course of mercury, there is little doubt of its belonging to that class.

Though a chancre, which is a venereal ulcer, generally appears on the genitals, yet those ulcers which proceed from a contaminated state of the whole system, seldom affect the parts of generation: indeed, there is no

part of the surface of the body where they occur so seldom. This clearly proves, what we have before asserted, that the chancre is a local affection, and affords no proof that the system is contaminated. Almost every chancre may be traced to a local application of the venereal poison; and when the poison can be arrested in its progress, the system will not be generally affected.

Though venereal ulcers are often preceded by blotches, yet this is not always the case: sometimes they come without any previous eruption, and at other times a number of small pimples rise upon the skin, previous to the appearance of an ulcer. Nor is it uncommon for a slight degree of itchiness only to be felt on the part, before the ulcer is perceived.

Venereal ulcers are generally pretty tractable, and heal almost as soon as other sores, unless there is some fault in the patient's constitution. When this is the case, they often prove very obstinate; and sometimes even bid defiance to the great antidote, mercury. The habits, where venereal ulcers prove most obstinate, are the scrofulous, and persons deeply affected with the scurvy. As both these ha-

bits

bits are very common in this country, it is no wonder that venereal complaints should so often prove tedious, and difficult to cure.

There seems to be some affinity between the pox and scrofula, that has not yet been defined: where the system is deeply affected by the latter, the former will always be found obstinate. I have known even a bubo, in such a habit, continue for years before it could be cured, notwithstanding the liberal use of mercury; and sometimes ulcers, which seem to rise from a venereal taint, and will not yield to mercury, may be cured by sea-bathing, which is almost a specific in scrofula.

Venereal ulcers often affect the throat. Sometimes an ulcer in this part is the first symptom of the disease; and, being mistaken for a common sore throat, it is often improperly treated. The ulcer generally makes its appearance on the glans called *amygdalæ*, from their resemblance to almonds, with an erysipelatous or reddish colour in the parts adjacent, and a buffy colour at the bottom. It is not, however, confined to these glans, but sometimes attacks the *uvula*, tonsils, roof of the mouth, and other adjacent parts.

It

It is of the greatest importance to be early acquainted with the nature of these ulcers, as they often spread rapidly; and, if not checked by mercury, they will corrode the parts on which they fix, and destroy the organs of deglutition. Where there is the least reason to suspect that ulcers of the throat may proceed from a venereal taint, the patient ought immediately to have recourse to the best advice.

The first step towards the cure of an ulcer in the throat is, to ascertain its cause. One often meets with ulcerous throats in married women, which have been under the care of the family apothecary for many months, without any progress having been made towards a cure; the attendant either not suspecting the real cause of the complaint, or not daring to inquire into it. The husband, who takes care to get cured himself, and leaves his wife to find out her disorder, and to get cured as she can, is at once cruel and unjust.

A venereal ulcer sometimes affects the womb. This too is apt to be mistaken, and treated as a cancer. As it cannot be examined, like the fore throat, the best and safest way

way is to consider it as venereal, and to treat it accordingly. If it should not yield to mercury and its accompaniments, the cause becomes doubtful. I would then recommend sea-bathing, or the waters of BAREGES, as most likely to perform a cure.

In whatever part of the body a venereal ulcer appears, its cure must be attempted by mercury. Where this fails, there is reason to suspect either that the ulcer is not truly venereal, or that it has assumed a different character, and requires a different mode of treatment. In this case, the patient's strength must be restored by nourishing diet and generous wines. The use of tonic medicines, as the bark and steel, will likewise be proper; and, above all, we would always recommend cold sea-bathing.

A variety of ointments, &c. have been recommended in the cure of venereal ulcers, but we lay no great stress upon them. The chief business is to keep the sore clean, and to throw in the antidote as freely as the patient's constitution will bear it. A list of the most approved medicines for local application will, however,

however, be given in the Appendix, with directions for using them.

OF VENEREAL BLOTCHES, AND OTHER AFFECTIONS OF THE SKIN.

It has been observed, that venereal ulcers are often preceded by blotches. They, as well as the ulcer, prove that the system is contaminated, and that the poison has diffused itself through the whole frame. There is no part of the body exempt from their attack, though they appear more frequently on some parts than on others. Some ingenious attempts have been made to account for this; but they are more specious than solid.

Though blotches are sometimes a primary symptom, yet I have more frequently found them a secondary one, and generally the effect of cold, when the body was charged with mercury, and the disease not totally subdued. The eruptions, in this case, have a very unseemly appearance; but there is reason to believe, if the disease were not thrown upon the
the

the skin, that the consequences might be worse.

A few years ago, a patient of mine, who had for some time been under a course of mercury, refused to take it any longer, because it made his mouth sore, and was attended with other inconveniences : contrary to my advice, he went down to the sea-side ; and, as it was the season for bathing, like many others, without any precaution, he plunged headlong into the water, and swam about for his amusement. How often this was repeated I do not know ; but, on his return to town, he came to me with a face so covered with blotches, as hardly to resemble the human figure. As these had every mark of venereal blotches, I was induced to put him under a fresh course of mercury, and to continue it till they disappeared.

At present I have a gentleman under my care, who, during the severe frost of last winter *, was taking mercury. I could not persuade him to keep the house : he not only went abroad, but was very irregular in his manner of living. The consequence was, an

* 1794-5.

universal eruption, or blotches all over, but particularly on the face. They are now going off by the use of mercury; but at one time they exhibited the appearance of a confluent small pox, a little after the turn, so exactly, that any one, at first sight, would have supposed the patient was just recovering from that loathsome disease. From the resemblance I am inclined to think this disease took its name.

Venereal blotches are not attended with much pain; they excite, however, an itchiness, which makes the patient restless and uneasy. They often attack the points of the fingers, especially under the nails; and, when suffered to proceed, a separation takes place, and the nails as well as the cuticle fall off: indeed, whatever separates the cuticle will take off the nails. When they attack the parts covered with hair, they not only prevent its growth, but frequently it falls off.

There are other cuticular eruptions, as the herpes, &c. which may be mistaken for the venereal, by people not accustomed to see these things. Herpetic eruptions generally appear in a circular form, from whence they get the
name

name of ring-worms. They are broader than the venereal blotches. Besides, the herpes is more local than venereal eruptions, which often cover the greater part of the body. But they are best known from the circumstances of the case, and the patient's manner of life.

These, like other venereal affections, generally yield to a proper course of mercury; though sometimes it is found necessary to call in the aid of antimony. This may either be done by administering Plummer's pill, or by adding such a quantity of the antimonial wine, or of crude antimony, to the Lisbon diet drink, as will be directed in the Appendix.

Some have supposed, and not without reason, that the corrosive sublimate, in affections of the skin, is preferable to the other preparations of mercury. In obstinate cases, where the other mercurial medicines have failed, it has often, in my practice, succeeded: indeed I have seldom known it to fail. It ought, however, to be administered with care; and it will be more safe, if accompanied with the decoction of sarsaparilla.

Some recommend mercurial ointment, or lotions, to be applied externally; but I am no friend

friend either to wet or greasy applications to the skin. When the eruptions are hot or uneasy, I treat them in the same manner as the erysipelas, by sprinkling them with fine flour. Should the eruption, however, prove very obstinate, an appropriated ointment may be applied, as directed in the Appendix.

OF THE VENEREAL NODE.

The venereal virus, when suffered to remain in the system, fastens at last on the bones; and, what is very remarkable, it commonly seizes on the most solid parts of the bones, and where they are most thinly covered with flesh, as the shin-bones, the bones of the head, of the arm, &c. Nor is it less worthy of remark, that wherever it fixes, there it remains, and is never known to leave the part till it is destroyed, or the poison conquered.

The true node, which is a hard tumor rising on a bone affected with the venereal virus, does not appear at an early period of the disease; but, in cases where patients are exposed to cold, or in damp situations, swellings of the muscles,

muscles, ligaments, and tendons, will appear soon after the infection has been received into the system. These, however, are not to be considered as genuine venereal nodes.

In the early stage of the disease, a venereal node occasions little pain, and is, for that reason, often neglected; but as the tumor increases, so does the pain, till it sometimes becomes quite excruciating. I had a patient, who was so tormented with a node, that he used to get out of bed, almost every night, and sit for hours together with his leg immersed in a pail of cold water. In such cases, some recommend an incision to be made as deep as the bone for the whole length of the node; but few patients will submit to this operation, and I have always succeeded without it.

Sometimes these pains are mistaken for the rheumatism, but they may easily be distinguished: the rheumatism generally affects the joints, while the node rises in the middle of the bone. Besides, the rheumatism often changes its place, and even shifts from one joint to another; but the node, as has been already observed, is permanent.

The

The cure of nodes evinces the wonderful powers of mercury as a medicine. That it should be able to pursue the enemy into his last retreat, and, when he has seized on the most solid parts of the system, which he is sure, if neglected, to destroy ; I say, that, in this case, a few grains of mercury should dislodge the foe, and restore the patient to perfect health and soundness, is a thing scarcely credible.--- Yet it is so certain, that I do not recollect ever to have seen mercury fail in the cure of a node ; and, even where the bones have become carious, and have exfoliated, the patient has received a complete cure, and has not only enjoyed perfect health himself, but been able to transmit a sound constitution to his progeny.

In the cure of nodes, it is of the greatest importance to apply the antidote as soon as possible : delay not only renders a greater quantity of mercury necessary, but endangers the bone. I do not recollect to have seen a bone become carious, or an operation necessary, where the mercury had been applied in due time and quantity.

The mistake is generally made in this way : the patient puts himself under what he thinks proper

proper care; the symptoms disappear, and he is declared to be cured. Some months, and sometimes years, afterwards, a slight pain is felt, and perhaps some degree of swelling appears on the shin-bone: this is supposed to be rheumatic, and is of course neglected, till the poison has rendered the bone foul, and perhaps carious.

Every person who has had the lues venerea, ought to be on his guard with respect to the appearance of nodes; and, if he feels pain, or perceives any swelling on those parts of the bone where nodes are known to rise, he ought to have immediate recourse to the antidote. Some, in this case, prefer the ointment, and even rub it on the part affected; but this I consider as bad practice. The ointment will have the same effect if rubbed on the sound parts, and the friction is apt to hurt the diseased one. The ointment, however, in this case, is not my favourite remedy; at least I never trust to it alone. I have seen great quantities of the ointment used for the discussion of a node with little or no apparent benefit; where pills, made of the calcined mercury, effected a complete cure. In nodes of long standing, more mercury will be necessary than in any other syphilitic affection.

As the true node is never an early symptom, there is reason to suspect that it is owing either to improper treatment or neglect.---A married gentleman, either to save his money or appearances, put himself under the care of an apothecary in the environs of London, who, after some months' attendance, told him he was cured. Some time after, he came to me, with a large node on one of his legs, for which I put him under a course of mercury. He had sent his wife into the country, to live with her friends, till he should get well; but unfortunately she had carried the infection along with her. Finding herself unwell, she applied to a country apothecary, who, being a mere gossip, blabbed the matter among her friends: they took the alarm, abused the husband, and had very near effected a separation. I advised him to bring her up to town, and put her under the same course of medicine as himself. In a few months they were both well, and have since had several fine children.

A man may have a misfortune, or be off his guard at one time or another. When this happens, and he has reason to think, or even to suspect, that he has injured his partner, he ought immediately to acquaint her with his situation, and to take the same advice for her
as

as for himself; otherwise he may have reason to repent of his conduct as long as he lives. She will impute all her future complaints to this disease, and will never believe that she has been thoroughly cured.

When the matter of the venereal disease falls upon the tendons, muscles, or ligaments, so as to produce tumors, which have a resemblance to nodes, we must depend entirely on mercury for the cure; and, if ulcers should appear, they must be treated in the same manner as other venereal ulcers.

OF EXCRESCENCES ABOUT THE SEAT.

We have already taken notice of those warty excrescences which occur in gonorrhoea, and of their proper method of treatment: they are always local, and require only topical applications. But the fleshy excrescences, which appear about the seat, generally mark a confirmed lues. They shew that the whole system is contaminated, and will only yield to a complete course of mercury.

Sometimes these excrescences appear along with the blotches in other parts of the body : nor do they unfrequently fall into ulcers, which discharge a very offensive matter. These ulcers are not very superficial : they often run to a considerable depth, and I have once and again seen them degenerate into fistulous sores.

These excrescences may be cut off with a knife, or eaten away by caustic ; but, unless the cause is removed by a mercurial course, duly persisted in, they will return with as much virulence as before. If once subdued by a proper course of mercury, they are seldom known to appear again on the same parts. But it does not follow, when the excrescences disappear, that the poison is eradicated : the disease will often break out again with great virulence. When this happens, recourse must again be had to the grand specific. Whatever aid may be derived from other medicines, they are only to be considered as auxiliaries. In this way they may have their use ; but whoever trusts to them for a radical cure, in a confirmed lues, will be miserably disappointed.

When the surfaces of these excrescences discharge matter, some employ astringent lo-
tions

Unable to display this page

most dangerous affection of the eyes is that which proceeds from a confirmed lues. This, though not attended with much pain or inflammation, frequently ends in total blindness.

When an inflammation of the eyes succeeds to a sudden stoppage of the discharge in a gonorrhœa, means should be used to restore the running. This may be done by stimulating injections frequently thrown up the urethra by means of a syringe. The manner of preparing and using these injections, as well as stimulating bougies, will be taken notice of in the Appendix.

The treatment of this is nearly the same as the common ophthalmia. The inflammatory symptoms must be taken off by bleeding, purging, and other evacuations. If leeches are used, they must be applied as near to the eyes as can be done with safety. The same observation applies to blistering-plasters. Slips of blistering-plaster may be applied on the temples, or behind the ears, and kept running by converting them into issues. I have known some people, who are apt to have their eyes inflamed, reap great benefit from wearing threads

of worsted, smeared with the issue ointment, behind the ears.

What is called the chronic ophthalmia is often a symptom of the pox, and can only be cured by mercury. In this case, mercury must not only be given in as large quantities as the patient can bear, but must be continued for a considerable length of time, which must be regulated by its effects, as well as the nature of the disease; for the lues venerea induces different disorders of the eyes, any of which may end in blindness. Sometimes the patient is affected with a gutta serena; at other times with a cataract; and not unfrequently, with what is worse than either, a suffusion of the humours, or an opacity of the cornea. A cataract may be extracted, and sometimes mercury will cure a gutta serena; but when the humours become confused, or the cornea loses its transparency, very little is to be done.

Besides throwing mercury into the system in general, some local applications are recommended. When the eye-lids are affected, they may be frequently anointed with the mercurial ointment; or, what is more active, with

with an ointment composed of three or four parts of hogs-lard to one of the *unguentum citrinum* of the common dispensaries. This may be made stronger or weaker, as the parts can bear it. Some recommend bathing the eyes, five or six times a day, with a weak solution of the corrosive sublimate: this must likewise be adapted to the patient's feelings.

There is one affection of the eye, which, though truly venereal, is sometimes mistaken for a *fistula lacrymalis*. It is seated in the interior angle of the eye, and is attended with an almost constant discharge of tears, which keep trickling down the cheek. These tears are prevented from finding their way into the nose through the lacrymal sac, by the viscid matter that closes up what are called the *puncta lacrymalia*. This matter may be squeezed out, by pressing the part with the finger.

I had a patient some time ago, who had long laboured under this complaint: he was attended by a surgeon of no great experience, who had not the least suspicion of what was the real cause of his patient's disorder, and proposed curing him by the operation for the *fistula lacrymalis*.

malis. As I took it to be a venereal symptom, I advised him to try a course of mercury, by which the complaint was entirely removed.

The ears, as well as the eyes, are sometimes the seat of the venereal disease; and, in some instances, it destroys the sense of hearing altogether. When the external parts of the ear only are affected, it is not so dangerous; though, in some instances, the external passage is so stuffed up with a dry, scurfy matter, as to obstruct the hearing. But the greatest danger arises from the venereal disease fixing on the bones. When this is the case, a discharge of ill-coloured matter ensues, which is followed by an exfoliation of the bones, and a total loss of hearing.

It is observed, that no symptom of the venereal disease proves more obstinate than deafness. External affections of the ear may be removed by a course of mercury; and so may deafness, occasioned by an ulceration or swelling of the eustachian tube, where it opens into the throat; but when the disease has fixed upon the membrane,

brane, or bones of the ear, no advantage is to be expected from mercury, or any other medicine with which we are acquainted. The virus, however, may be totally removed from the constitution by the use of mercury, though the local symptom of deafness still remain.

C H A P. VI.

OF INFANTS, MOTHERS, AND NURSES.

SOME speculative writers have asserted that a child cannot bring the venereal disease into the world with it, unless it contracts it in the birth : I am sorry to say, however, that proofs of the contrary are too numerous to admit of a doubt *. A man must have had little prac-

* We have frequently had occasion to mark the resemblance between the great and small pox, especially with respect to the mode in which the infection may be communicated. But we have the most unequivocal proofs of pregnant women communicating the small pox to the infant in the womb. Children have not only been born marked with the small pox, but with pustules on the skin ;—these pustules have come to maturity ; matter has been taken from them for inoculation, which has produced the genuine small pox ; and these again have produced others, &c. No theory can set aside facts : they are stubborn things ; and will force their way, in spite of the most ingenious reasoning. No argument can be brought against a mother's infecting a *fœtus in utero* with the *lues venerea*, that does not apply with equal force against her communicating the small pox.

tice, who has not seen children born with symptoms of the lues venerea, which could not be contracted in the birth. Fortunately, indeed, when an infant comes into the world, with the most unequivocal symptoms of this disease on its body, it can be cured. The great specific can be administered to infants as well as to adults; and, what is very remarkable, the former often bear it better than the latter.

An infant born with the venereal disease is commonly very delicate. Its flesh is soft, and its joints are feeble. But the most certain marks of the disease appear on the skin, which is generally covered with blotches, resembling those of the venereal kind in adults. Sometimes, indeed, the child appears as if it had been flayed, or had the cuticle taken off with scalding water: in this case, the fingers and toes seem as if the nails had been taken off along with the scarf-skin.

Occasionally the disease does not appear till some days after the birth, when the symptoms are somewhat different from the above; although, in general, there is a resemblance. The eruptions are at first local, but afterwards, if not prevented by mercury, they spread so as
to

to cover a great part of the body ; nor are instances wanting, where they discharge a thin ichor of a very acrimonious nature.

When the disease does not appear till some time after the birth, its first symptoms are generally perceived about the seat and parts adjacent. These are covered with irregular blotches, of a reddish cast, rising somewhat above the surface of the skin, and covered with moisture : though, in other parts of the body, the eruption has a crusty appearance, and often falls off in dry scales. On the forehead, eyelids, &c. it generally assumes the form of scabby excrescences.

For curing the venereal disease in infants, some recommend giving mercury to the mother or nurse : as the mother generally has occasion for medicine as well as the child, there can be no impropriety in this practice ; but we would not advise any one to trust to it alone for completing the cure. The infant ought to take mercury at the same time with the mother, regard being had to the difference of age and constitution. It is worthy of remark, however, that an infant will require more mercury to affect its mouth, in proportion to

its apparent strength, than an adult. Indeed I have always found, in exhibiting mercury for the hydrocephalus, that it was difficult to excite a salivation by any quantity that one could venture to give to a child.

The skin of an infant is so tender, that it can hardly bear friction with the mercurial ointment; otherwise this mode of application would be a relief to the stomach and bowels. But as the dose is very small, and the taste can be disguised by sugar, there is no difficulty in administering the mercury internally. The fourth part of a grain of calomel, or of calcined mercury, may be rubbed with a small quantity of sugar, and given in a little pap three or four times a day.

Some give as much of the common mercurial pill, as contains the fourth of a grain of mercury, four times a day. Others prefer the *mercurius alkalifatus*, which they administer in the dose of half a grain. Whichever of these is given, it must be duly persisted in, otherwise no benefit is to be expected. After the child has taken mercury four or five weeks, it may be discontinued for five or six days, but not longer, as the action of the mercury should never be suffered

Unable to display this page

Unable to display this page

ten to one if she continues to suckle the child any longer. Indeed, it is more than probable, that, by fretting and vexation, she will lose her milk, or turn it into a poison; so that the poor infant, instead of one enemy, has two to combat.

On these and other considerations, I would advise, where there are signs of infection, and the mother cannot give suck, that the infant should always be brought up by the hand. Some recommend this method of nursing till the child is cured, and then to give it the breast; but to this plan there are several objections. Few children will suck after they have been two or three months without the breast; besides, it is almost impossible to ascertain the time when the infant is completely cured. Many nurses have been infected by giving the breast to children after the doctor had announced them clean.

But in these matters guilt does not attach to parents alone; nurses are often to blame: nor can parents be too careful in investigating the characters of those women whom they employ to suckle their offspring. An innocent woman may communicate the infection by not knowing she is injured; but when a woman, who has reason to suspect that she has received
the

the infection, conceals it, and undertakes to suckle a sound child, I hardly know any punishment too severe for her. This, however, to my knowledge, is no uncommon practice.

Married people, or people about to be married, cannot be too cautious in their conduct respecting this disorder. What a dreadful inheritance is the lues venerea to transmit to posterity ! yet many men are wonderfully inattentive to this matter. I have often been applied to for a quick cure, as the party was going to be married. In this I always refused to be concerned ; knowing that the patient would either take the medicine too quickly, or leave it off too soon ; both of which might have serious consequences. But there are abundance of undertakers for this disease in London, who will make no scruple of promising a complete cure in three days.

No doubt, an apparent cure may be performed in three days ; but woe be to him who trusts to it. It is an easy matter to dry up a sore ; but if the poison has been taken into the system, it is only fixing the disorder. It would be difficult to ascertain the extent of the mischief done by pretenders to quick cures : indeed, when the system is infected, the thing is impossible. Nor is it easy to settle the precise time at which

which the poison has, or has not, entered the system.

As the pox generally proceeds from a local affection, some trust for a cure to burning out the part with caustic. It may sometimes succeed, but the risk is too great. Should the poison have entered the system, this painful operation will be of no use; the infection will shew itself in one shape or another, and the cure will be more difficult than if it had been taken in time. Even in pregnant women the antidote is not to be neglected; otherwise the mother and child will both be sufferers.

When it is necessary to give mercury to pregnant women, it ought always to be done with caution; should it run off by the bowels, there will be danger of an abortion. I have known one drastic purge cause an abortion, and cost the woman her life; indeed, when an abortion is occasioned by violent means of any kind, the mother's life is in danger. Mercury ought, therefore, always to be administered to pregnant women in form of ointment. This mode of application will generally cure the disease, without endangering the life of the mother or foetus.

One common consequence of venereal infection lurking in the habit, is abortion. This should make breeding women very careful to avoid the contagion ; and when they have the misfortune to catch it, no means should be left untried to get thoroughly cured. By frequent abortions, women not only lose their progeny, but ruin their health. A woman is more hurt by one abortion, than by bringing several children to the full time : besides, every abortion paves the way to another, till at length the constitution is ruined. I hardly recollect one instance of a woman who had had this misfortune often, that was not broken down by some particular disease, or laboured under a train of nervous affections, which were more than sufficient to render life completely miserable.

Abortions from this cause generally happen about the sixth or seventh month ; and we have reason to believe they are more numerous than is commonly imagined. Mr. Bell, of Edinburgh, considers the lues as a frequent cause of abortion ; and adds, that a well-conducted course of mercury will seldom fail to prevent it. The mode of administering mercury

cure to pregnant women has already been pointed out. The course, however, must be continued for a considerable length of time; otherwise the success will be doubtful. In this disease nothing is done, while any thing is left undone.

C H A P. VII.

OF SOME IRREGULAR SYMPTOMS.

THOUGH few diseases are better understood, or have had their symptoms more accurately described, than the lues venerea; yet it sometimes appears in such a questionable shape, that the most experienced practitioner may mistake it for some other malady. This indeed seldom happens, unless where the disease has lodged long in the constitution, or has assumed a character different from its real one.

It is of great importance to know when a disease proceeds from a latent venereal taint; as, in such case, no medicine except mercury can be depended on for a cure. One often sees symptoms where mercury would seem to be highly improper, yet they will not yield to any other medicine. When the real cause of
these

these symptoms is not suspected, the patient is suffered to linger out a miserable existence till he dies.

In dubiis suspice luem---in doubtful cases suspect a pox---was a maxim with the great Dr. Boerhaave, and ought to be so with every practitioner in physic, especially in a great town. When symptoms appear, for which an obvious cause cannot be assigned, the physician ought to make the strictest inquiry concerning the patient's character and manner of life; particularly, if at any time he has had the venereal disease? what were its symptoms, and how were they treated, &c.? If he has reason to suspect a lurking lues, the specific must be administered in such manner as is best suited to the patient's constitution.

When doubtful symptoms appear, it will sometimes be difficult to say whether they proceed from the remedy, or the disease. The only way in which this can be ascertained, is to try if the symptoms will yield to mercury. If they grow worse under the use of this medicine, it ought to be discontinued; but when a cough, hectic fever, or other dangerous symptoms, seem, in any measure, to give way

to

to mercury, it ought certainly to be continued till they disappear.

Affections of the skin, which pass for scorbutic, are not unfrequently of the venereal kind; as the dry scurfy chaps on the feet and palms of the hands, the thickening of the skin in several parts of the body, &c. All these require the use of mercury both externally and internally. The best external application is the unguentum citrinum, or yellow ointment, which must be reduced by hog's-lard, as directed in the Appendix. I know no better medicine for internal use, than pills made of calcined mercury.

Sores, which assume a cancerous appearance, are sometimes occasioned by the venereal poison lurking in the habit; and some are of opinion that it will produce the real cancer. Be this as it may, these sores require the use of mercury; nor will sores of a venereal kind yield to any other medicine. Sometimes, indeed, external applications are necessary; nor can the sores be healed without the use of caustics and escharotics of the most active kind.

Pains, which resemble the rheumatic, are often occasioned by a venereal taint lurking in
the

the habit ; and some think those sharp, flying pains, which affect the jaws, neck, and parts adjacent, arise from the same cause. When these pains are excruciating, it will be necessary to administer opiates along with mercury for their relief. Some, in this case, recommend Dover's powder, which is far from being an improper medicine. It acts both as an anodyne and sudorific.

It has been alleged, that fevers of the intermittent kind have sometimes been induced by the venereal poison lurking in the habit. I can only say, that these have not occurred in my practice ; nor do I think it follows, that a fever was excited by the venereal poison, because it is cured by mercury. If, however, there is ground to suspect that the intermittent fever proceeds from this cause, the antidote ought certainly to be administered.

Whether intermittents occur or not, there is no doubt that fever is often excited by the venereal poison. The fever which occurs in the early periods of the disease is symptomatic, and generally goes off with the buboes, and other symptoms, that gave rise to it. But the fever which comes on in the advanced periods, without

without any apparent cause, yet owes its existence to the venereal infection, is of an obstinate nature, and sometimes will not yield to any medicine.

This fever is generally accompanied with a quick pulse, loss of appetite, decay of strength, wasting of the flesh, colliquative sweats, and other symptoms of a consumption: nor are anxiety, restlessness, and extreme irritability, uncommon symptoms. Even here, where there is reason to suspect that the fever arises from the venereal contagion, the specific must be administered. It should, however, be given with the greatest caution, and discontinued if the symptoms grow worse, or the patient is unable to bear it.

What is called the alterative course must here be strictly observed, beginning with the very smallest doses, as half a grain, and enlarging them by degrees. If the fever abates by the use of mercury, and the sweats, &c. grow better, it ought of course to be continued. It may be assisted either by the Lisbon diet-drink, or the sarsaparilla in powder, a tea-spoonful of which may be taken in a little of the patient's drink five or six times a day.

The

The patient's diet in this case must be light, but rather of a nourishing nature. Some recommend a milk diet; but, when the powers of digestion are weak, milk seldom agrees with the stomach. To asses' milk, however, I have no objection. This seldom disagrees even with the weakest stomach, and has the double advantage of serving both for food and medicine. It may be taken from a gill evening and morning, to a pint, or a pint and a half in the day.

When the venereal disease has so far changed its nature, as to resist the powers of mercury in every shape in which it can be administered, I would advise the patient to discontinue its use for some time, to go into the country, take gentle exercise in the open air, and change his low diet for one that is generous and invigorating. This may be assisted by taking, three or four times a day, a teaspoonful of Huxham's tincture of the bark in a glass of generous wine.

When the patient has sufficiently recovered his strength and spirits, if there is any reason to suspect that the poison still lurks in the constitution, recourse must be had to mercury

for its expulsion. But as this is a very difficult question to resolve, I would advise the patient, in this, and every doubtful case, to take the opinion of an able and experienced practitioner.

OF DISEASES WHICH RESEMBLE THE LUES VENEREA.

It is of great importance to be able to distinguish the venereal disease from others which bear a resemblance to it. Where due attention is not paid to this, great errors may be committed in practice. The medicines necessary for the cure of lues venerea will often do mischief when administered in cases which, though they may resemble the venereal, yet do not belong to that class.

Nor is the danger less, when, in cases truly venereal, the specific is omitted. I have often occasion to see patients, who had been told that their disease was not venereal, and had been neglected or tampered with, till their situation was truly deplorable. It is certainly true, that many who pretend to cure this disease,

ease, do not know all the forms under which it appears in different patients. These indeed are various, and will sometimes deceive even the most experienced practitioner.

A disease can only be known from its symptoms, and even these will sometimes mislead an inattentive observer. It is the aggregate of symptoms which constitutes the disease, and not any single one. There is hardly one symptom of the venereal disease, which may not exist where the infection had never been received; but where all the leading symptoms are found, and the circumstances of the case concur to prove it is venereal, we may almost arrive at a certainty.

There are certain modifications, however, of the venereal disease, which, though they differ in some symptoms, are so similar in their effects on the system, that they require nearly the same method of treatment. These, in different countries, are known by different names; as the Yaws in the West Indies, Mal Anglois in Canada, and in North Britain, Sivvens or Sibbens. As this disorder has never come under my inspection, in any shape, I shall here insert Mr. Bell's account of it, who says he

has had many opportunities of seeing it; and I believe him to be a man of candour and observation.

“ He says it never appears in the form of a gonorrhœa, and seldom at first in any form on the genitals, owing to the manner in which it is most frequently communicated. The infection being for the most part received by eating or drinking out of the same utensils with those labouring under the disease, it often appears at first in the throat, or some part of the mouth. In the mouth the sores have the usual appearances of venereal ulcers. This is likewise the case in the throat when the disease has been of some duration; but at first, and often for the space of several weeks, although the patient complains of a good deal of uneasiness in swallowing, and a constant hoarseness, there is nothing perceived upon inspection but a degree of tenderness, accompanied with an erysipelatous redness of the emygdalæ, uvula, and velum pendulum palati. If not prevented, however, by the use of mercury, ulcers at last form upon these parts, and commonly spread more quickly than venereal ulcers usually do in other parts of the body; infomuch,

inſomuch, that the uvula and amygdalæ will ſometimes be entirely deſtroyed in the courſe of a few days, and a degree of hoarſeneſs and loſs of voice produced, from which the patient never afterwards recovers.

“ It is particularly apt to affect the internal parts of the noſe ; and when the ſores penetrate to the oſſa ſpongioſa, theſe ſoon become carious, and come away in ſmall pieces along with the matter, which is always exceedingly foetid. When not prevented by mercury, the ulcers ſpread to the hard bones of the noſe, and from theſe to the bones of the cheeks. In this manner the whole cheek becomes ulcerated ; for when theſe bones are affected, the contiguous ſoft parts likewise become ſoon diſeaſed. It is not uncommon for theſe ulcers to attack the eyelids.

“ When the infection is not received by the mouth, the diſeaſe appears in a variety of forms in different parts of the ſurface of the body. When the virus has entered the ſyſtem, the parts upon which it firſt commonly breaks out are the genitals, the parts contiguous to the anus, the anterior parts of the thighs and legs, the under part of the abdomen,

men, the breast, arms, fingers, and toes, and hairy scalp. It does not so readily fix upon the fleshy parts of the legs or thighs, or on the back. In some, the parts become covered with an infinite number of small pustules; and, as they are itchy, the disease is at first often mistaken for the itch. This happens the more readily, from its prevailing almost entirely among the common people; who, from want of cleanliness, frequently labour under itch; and so much is scabies confined to this set of people, that, excepting children, who are more particularly exposed to receive infection from servants, those in the higher ranks of life are scarcely ever attacked with it; at least, few instances of their being so have fallen within my observation.

“ This eruption, however, soon assumes appearances which sufficiently distinguish it from itch; the skin, upon which it is seated, becomes thickened, and somewhat elevated, and acquires the characteristic marks of blotches, a peculiar copper-coloured appearance.

“ The late Dr. Gilchrist, of Dumfries, in a paper upon this subject in the *Physical and Literary Essays of Edinburgh*, remarks, ‘ that
‘ these

‘ these scabby eruptions are often met with on
‘ the scalp, forehead, inside of the thighs, groins,
‘ and parts contiguous. Inflammation and
‘ excrescences about the fundament are frequent ; and it sometimes appears in the form
‘ of a herpes exedens, healing in one part, and
‘ breaking out in another.’

“ Some have small tubercles, or hard elevated knots upon the face, arms, and breast, somewhat resembling small pox at the height, but of a red or copper colour, and accompanied with a painful degree of heat. If mercury is given early, these tumors gradually subside, otherwise they become large, and discharge a foetid, viscid matter, which forms into crusts or flakes; and, on their falling off, the parts beneath are red, tender, and, in some cases, in a state of ulceration.

“ Instead of this more numerous eruption, some are attacked with small inflammatory boils, which do not readily suppurate, but remain for a considerable time hard, and of a copper colour, and at last discharge a thin bloody ichor. These at first resemble the common anthrax, or carbuncle, but soon after, bursting, they assume all the appearances of the true venereal ulcer.

“ But

“ But the most characteristic symptom of this variety of syphilis, is a soft spongy excrescence, in size and colour resembling a common rasp, which is apt to appear on all such parts as either become ulcerated, or that are attacked with any kind of eruption; fifteen or sixteen being in many parts of the Highlands the name of a wild rasp; and this being a very frequent symptom of the disease, is the cause of its being distinguished by this appellation. In some instances this spongy substance rises to a considerable height; nor can it be kept down by any of the common escharotics; for, although entirely removed, if the virus of the disease be not eradicated by the use of a full course of mercury, it soon returns to a greater extent than before; but as mercury is commonly given as soon as this symptom becomes evidently marked, the excrescence is seldom so much elevated as it otherwise would be.

“ These fungous productions are occasionally met with in every part of the body; but they are particularly apt to form on such parts as have become tender, whether from previous eruption, or from the cuticle having separated and come off from the skin beneath; a circumstance which sometimes takes place in this disease

ease, and when to any considerable extent, always with much inconvenience and distress.

“ In the treatise which I have mentioned, Dr. Gilchrist observes, that this disease does not attack the large and solid bones, and very rarely any of the others. I have, however, seen several instances of the contrary, in which both the bones of the legs and arms have been affected ; and it is by no means uncommon to find this disease fix upon the bones of the head. I have seen it indeed in every part of the body, and in every form under which lues venerea usually appears, except in chancres on the genitals. I have seen it produce sores resembling chancres on the lips, and on the nipples of nurses ; and where an infection has been of long duration, I have known ulcers form upon the penis ; but I have not known an instance of its producing chancres either in men or women from coition ; owing, I imagine, to all who are attacked with ulcers upon these parts, from this cause, avoiding venereal intercourses, which they very universally do, till a cure is obtained by a course of mercury. But although fibbens is not usually met with in the form of chancres upon the penis, this,

as well as other parts of the genitals, are particularly apt to be attacked with such ulcers as appear from the virus having entered the constitution. In different instances I have known the whole penis and scrotum destroyed with it ; but this has commonly happened from the patient having neglected too long to call for medical assistance, or from mercury being given in too small quantities.

“ These ulcers, like the usual form of venereal ulcers, proceeding from the constitutional form of the disease, do not commonly produce buboes. This, however, is not universal ; for buboes sometimes take place in fibbens, not only from the primary ulcers of the disease, as I have in more than one instance perceived in the arm-pit, from sores produced upon the nipple in nursing an infected child, but also from those which appear upon the penis and other parts of the genitals, from the virus having entered the system ; and the appearance of buboes produced by fibbens, whether in their swelled or ulcerated states, is in every respect the same with that of the ordinary form of venereal bubo.

“ Syphilis,

“ Syphilis, in whatever way the infection is communicated, is readily transmitted, as I have already had occasion to see, from parents to the foetus in utero, and this is particularly apt to happen in fibbens. Sibbens, therefore, proves a frequent cause of abortions, although, in some instances, children are born with it at the full time, and in a few it breaks out in the course of the first month after delivery.

“ In the treatment of fibbens, as of every variety of lues venerea, mercury is the only remedy upon which we can place dependence. Sarsaparilla, guaiacum, and mezereon have occasionally proved useful; but we trust to mercury alone for a radical cure. The observations we have already had occasion to offer on the employment of mercury, apply with equal propriety to the treatment of every symptom of fibbens. It is therefore unnecessary to consider the subject farther at present; but, while we refer for this purpose to different parts of the preceding pages, I think it right to observe, that a greater quantity of mercury is, in most instances, required for the cure of fibbens, than we usually find to be necessary in the ordinary form of the disease.

Relief is obtained with, perhaps, equal ease, and a stop may be put to the farther progress of the disease, by the same quantity that we employ for the common symptoms of pox ; but it is more apt to return if the medicine be not given in larger quantities, and continued for a considerable time after every appearance of infection is removed. . When the disease has been of long duration, mercury ought to be continued for seven or eight weeks after every symptom has disappeared.

“ A practitioner of experience and observation, and who had many opportunities of seeing every symptom of fibbens, informed me, that mercurius sublimatus corrosivus frequently proves successful in the cure of the more inveterate symptoms of the disease, when the milder preparations of mercury fail. He gave it in the form of drops : sixteen grains were dissolved in an ounce of water, with the addition of eight grains of crude sal ammoniac ; and of this ten drops were given three or four times a day.

“ When ulcers in the throat and other parts do not yield to the use of mercury, we have recourse to caustics and escharotics, and they
prove

prove equally useful here, as in every variety of fore proceeding from lues venerea. In various instances they have been rendered clean, and brought into a healing condition, by fumigating with cinnabar, when they had previously resisted every other remedy.

“ The public, however, are equally interested in the prevention of this disease as in the cure of it, particularly in those districts where it has long prevailed; and with proper attention there is much reason to suppose that it might soon be eradicated. In some parts of Scotland this has already indeed been accomplished; and the means by which it has been done are simple, and easily practised. They consist entirely in a due attention to cleanliness, and in preventing nurses and other servants from being employed, where there is the least reason to imagine that they are infected. In the choice of a nurse, this is a point of the utmost importance; for in fibbens, as in every form of syphilis, I have had many proofs of the disease being communicated by the milk alone; and as this is almost the only way by which it has found access to families of rank, they are particularly interested in preventing it.

“ The

“ The chief difficulty which occurs to the prevention of this disease, proceeds from those who ought most anxiously to wish for it. The infected are so much afraid of a discovery being to injure their reputation, that they do all in their power to conceal it; by which they are often prevented from taking mercury in that complete manner by which alone a cure can be accomplished. I know, however, that this anxiety for concealment may be removed; and, with proper attention, that those poor people, who otherwise would fall victims to the baneful effects of the disease, may be easily induced to apply for medical assistance. The clergy have this so much in their power, that through their interference the fibbens might soon be eradicated. In one parish this was actually done. The disease had spread to such an alarming height, that above three-fourths of the inhabitants were infected, and many of the more delicate, particularly young children and females, died under it. This had gone on for many years, when, by the exertions of the clergyman of the parish, it was entirely removed in the course of a short time. He went personally to every individual of his parish,

rish,

rish, and convinced them of the propriety of applying for medical assistance immediately on the disease breaking out, which they agreed to the more readily, from their being sensible that all of them had got the disease in the most innocent manner. In this way it was soon carried off; and by due attention to cleanliness, and avoiding all kind of intercourse with those whom they suspected to labour under it, the disease has now for a considerable time been entirely subdued. This has in some degree, indeed, been the case in every district of Scotland where fibbens ever prevailed. In some situations it has been nearly eradicated, and in none is it now so frequent as it was some years ago. There is much cause therefore to hope, that, by the superior attention to cleanliness, which of late years has prevailed among our common people, it will soon become every-where unknown.

“ If the disease, as it prevails in Canada, is the same with the fibbens in Scotland; and from all that I have heard of it, there is no cause to doubt of its being so; the same method of cure will prove effectual, and the same means of prevention must be observed.”

I have

I have inserted this article at full length, because it throws considerable light on the nature of the venereal poison, and the means of preventing its progress. Another reason is, that the fibbens prevails chiefly among a class of people, who, from their circumstances and situation, are either deprived of all regular medical advice, or are obliged to put up with that of the very worst kind.

Mr. Bell seems to think, that this species of the venereal disease might be eradicated by due attention to cleanliness. I am entirely of his opinion ; but do not see why the advantages of superior cleanliness should be confined to one species of the venereal disease. I have already recommended it as the best preventive in every shape under which that disorder appears, and think a due regard to it would go a great length towards extirpating the contagion altogether.

The same author observes, that the clergy might be of great use in eradicating this malady, in which I cordially agree with him ; but do not see why their usefulness should be confined to the extirpation of one disorder. It consists with my knowledge, that the itch,
and

and other diseases arising from neglect of cleanliness, may be extirpated in any parish by the exertions of the clergyman. Of this I have seen instances, and therefore know it to be practicable.

But there is another disease which proves more fatal to mankind than the lues venerea, that it is in the power of the clergy almost wholly to disarm of its sting---I mean the small-pox. The clergy alone have it in their power to render inoculation universal, which would save the lives of millions of innocent babes, who annually perish in Europe by the ravages of that baneful malady. Some of the clergy, to their immortal honour, have effected this in their own parishes; and it is to be hoped that many others will follow so noble an example. Though I think a clergyman cannot be better employed than in preserving the health and lives of those under his care; yet I do not mean to overload him so much as to recommend the drudgery of attending the sick: this might be both disagreeable and dangerous; but the pastor of a parish has, generally speaking, great

influence over his flock, and may almost induce them to do what he pleases, merely by giving them good and wholesome advice.

It is observed, that the fibbens prevails chiefly among the lower class of people ; but these people can seldom afford to have any good advice ; for this reason the clergyman, who is always a man of reading and knowledge, ought to give them such instructions as will enable them to be their own physicians. The most ignorant peasant of that country where the fibbens prevails, knows how to cure the itch ; but I will venture to say, that the one is as easily cured as the other. People are alarmed at the name of mercury, and think it requires to be administered with the greatest skill and attention. No doubt, mischief is done by administering mercury at random ; but with common care and prudence, this will not be the case.

People of more zeal than knowledge are apt to think that those who suffer by the venereal disease deserve no commiseration, and ought not to be pitied nor relieved. Though this is an illiberal idea, yet it may have some foundation

foundation where guilt is connected with punishment. But this can never apply to patients afflicted with fibbens. Their complaints do not proceed from any illicit commerce, but are generally the effect of that intercourse in families, which must subsist among children, servants, and nurses, and which renders the choice of both the latter an object of considerable importance.

Some doubt if the fibbens is the same disease as the lues venerea, as they do not, in all their symptoms, exactly agree; be this as it may, their effects on the system are so similar, that we may venture to recommend the same mode of treatment, and have reason to believe it will seldom fail to accomplish a cure.

The different forms that this disease assumes, give reason to suspect that the poison has existed much longer among mankind than is generally imagined. At its first appearance in Europe, it bore a greater resemblance to the fibbens than to the lues as it now shews itself. If we can believe the first writers on the subject, this was the case. If it has

changed once, it may change again; and, as the inhabitants of Europe live in a much more elegant manner, and are more attentive to cleanliness, than at the time this disorder first appeared, we have reason to hope that it will become milder. The change of living has almost banished the leprosy; and why may it not have the same effect on the lues? These two diseases do not differ so essentially from one another as some may imagine. The use of mercury in curing the leprosy led to its application in the lues venerea.

C H A P. VIII.

SOME SINGULAR EFFECTS OF MERCURY
ON THE MOUTH, BOWELS, &c.

THE effects of mercury vary so much in different patients, arising either from a peculiarity of constitution, or some morbid affection of the system, that, previous to the administration of this medicine, particular inquiry ought always to be made concerning the patient's habit of body, manner of life, &c. ; otherwise some very unpleasant circumstances may occur in the progress of the cure.

A quantity of mercury that will not have the least effect on one patient, will throw another into a violent salivation, and even endanger his life. There is no rule by which we can judge, before-hand, of the effects that mercury will produce on any individual. The safest method, therefore, as has already been observed,

observed, is to begin with small doses, and to increase them gradually as circumstances may suggest. A physician, in many cases, must feel his way ; and this is not more necessary on any occasion than in the exhibition of mercury.

It has been observed, that those who have their mouths soonest affected with the mercury are easiest cured. This is certainly true ; but it is also true that some will receive a complete cure, where little or no salivation is excited. To effect this purpose, however, the system must be fully impregnated with the mercury ; and its use should be continued for some weeks after all the symptoms disappear. This ought to be an invariable rule*.

Though

* An attention to this rule cannot be inculcated too often. I am at this moment called upon by a young gentleman, who, in a few days, intended to sail for the West Indies. About four months ago he applied to a surgeon, of some celebrity in this line of practice for the cure of a common chancre, who advised him to wash it frequently with Goulard's extract, and rub in the mercurial ointment. In three weeks the symptoms disappeared, and he was considered as cured. He had occasion to go a pretty long journey into the country ; but before he reached the end of it, he was seized with a sore throat, and blotches appeared in several parts of his body. A practitioner of physic, in the town to which he went, advised him to go through a course of mercury. To this he agreed, and, during its use, the symptoms again disappeared.

But,

Though the lues venerea proves most obstinate in persons of a scrofulous habit ; yet the administration of mercury is more difficult where the patient is affected with a deep scurvy. I have met with several cases where it was almost impossible to cure the disease without endangering the patient's life by an excessive salivation. I would therefore advise those who have been long at sea, and on their return have had the misfortune to contract this malady, to be extremely cautious how they use mercury ; otherwise they may have cause to repent of their rashness.

I saw a remarkable instance of this some years ago, in a young man who belonged to the navy, but was at that time on his way to his friends in the country, having been dismissed from an hospital as incurable. When I saw him he was almost in the agonies of death.

But, on his return to London, the blotches appeared again, and he complained of his throat being sore. Though, first and last, he has taken medicine for about seven weeks, yet it is evident he is not cured, and I have advised him to go through a fresh course of mercury, accompanied with the decoction of sarsaparilla. This gentleman is convinced, if he had gone to sea after he was dismissed by his first attendant as cured, that he would have lost his life ; and I am convinced if he had married, which was likely to have happened, that he would have injured his wife, and had a rotten progeny, if any.—Such are the blessings of *hasty cures* !

His

His countenance was pale as ashes, his pulse feeble, and his voice faltering. But the most remarkable symptom was a continual dripping of blood from every outlet of the body. Though I say blood, it hardly deserved that name, for it was so thin as just to be perceivable upon a white cloth. I did not learn how long this discharge had continued; but it had reduced him from a remarkably fine young man, by all accounts, to a mere skeleton. I tried to throw in astringents and cordials, but in vain. The powers of life were too far exhausted for medicine to take any effect.

All I could learn of this young man was, that he had been long at sea; that on his return to England he had the misfortune to be injured, and had been sent to an hospital. I neither know how he was treated, nor how long he had been ill; but from several cases which have since fallen under my observation, I am convinced that he owed his premature death to the improper use of mercury. Of this the following case will leave little room to doubt:

A young sailor, who had made four voyages, in succession, to the East Indies, and who was too complete a tar to pay any attention to his health, was, soon after his arrival from the fourth voyage, so unlucky as to get injured.

He

He concealed his situation from his uncle, who was his guardian, till he was completely poxed. I was then consulted, and found it necessary to put him immediately under a course of mercury ; but, not being aware of the state of his body, I had well nigh lost my patient. Before he had taken half the quantity of mercury necessary to cure his disorder, he was seized with such a violent discharge of saliva, mixed with blood, as required all my skill and exertions to check. It ran in a continued stream from his mouth, so as to fill several wash-hand basins in the course of a day.

By the application of opiates and astringent medicines this discharge was got the better of, but not before the patient's life was in imminent danger ; and I am convinced, if it had happened at sea, or in any situation where he could not have had proper nursing, and every kind of medical assistance, he must have lost his life. He was indeed an irregular patient, and could not be induced to keep himself warm, even when the salivation was at the highest ; but I imputed the excessive discharge chiefly to the effect of mercury on a habit deeply tainted with the sea scurvy.

When, from the patient's manner of life, or other circumstances, there is reason to suspect a lurking scurvy, every method should be taken to remove it previously to his entering on a course of mercury. This may be effected by a vegetable diet, and the use of antiscorbutic medicines duly persisted in. It will, however, be necessary in such cases to administer those preparations of mercury which are least apt to affect the mouth, and to give them in very small doses.

Some with this view recommend the Plummer's Pill, which, being a combination of mercury and sulphur, is rendered very mild in its operation. But I prefer the corrosive sublimite in small quantities, which, while it is less apt to run off by the salivary glands than the others, is one of the most active preparations of mercury, and seldom fails to remove the lues when properly administered.

When mercury runs too much to the mouth, it is common to have recourse to purgatives; but these will seldom be found to answer the expectations of the practitioner. They weaken the patient, already too much exhausted, and seldom put a stop to the discharge,

Unable to display this page

Unable to display this page

diet; and he may take frequently from ten to twenty drops of the oil of turpentine in a glass of cold water. In discharges of blood from any part of the body I have found this to be an excellent medicine.

Mercury sometimes occasions a discharge of blood from the bowels, as well as from the mouth. This symptom is not without danger, and ought, as soon as possible, to be removed. The patient's diet ought chiefly to consist of mild farinaceous substances, as flour boiled in milk, rice boiled or baked, animal jellies, and such-like. Opium may be given as recommended above, with the addition of from five to ten grains of gum kino to every grain of the opium. If the kino is not at hand, a tea-spoonful of the tincture of Catechu may be taken, in any liquid, three or four times a day, and a clyster of thin starch, with a tea-spoonful of laudanum in it, may be thrown up every night at bed-time, or oftener if it is found necessary.

Few things tend more to injure the constitution under a course of mercury than profuse sweating. On the old plan of administering
mercury

mercury it was impossible to avoid this. The patient was shut up in a small apartment; his bed was placed by the side of a large fire, and often between two fires; while every method was taken to prevent even the smallest particle of fresh air from having access to him. Profuse sweats will never affect the patient, if he is kept in a proper temperature. His apartment ought to be large, and he may go from one room to another, unless the weather be uncommonly severe, or his constitution very delicate. The most likely way to avoid taking cold is to keep the body in an even temperature, and never suffer it to be too much heated: in short, the safest way is, to avoid all extremes.

Should the patient, however, be seized with profuse sweats, he must not only be kept cool, but put on a nourishing diet, with a moderate allowance of wine, and take two tea-spoonfuls of Huxham's tincture of the bark in a glass of red port, three times a day. This medicine will be improved, by adding to every ounce of the tincture, a dram of the acid elixir of vitriol.

Mercury

Unable to display this page

C H A P. IX.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

PATIENTS, who have been afflicted with the venereal disease, although they have received a complete cure, are apt to be alarmed at every trifling symptom which they think bears any resemblance to that malady. Under this impression I have known some go through a complete course of mercury for a pimple on the nose ; and others ruin their constitutions by swallowing drugs, sold by advertising quacks as infallible remedies for a disease under which they did not labour.

It is the misfortune of hypochondriacs to be continually haunted by one disease or another. If a person of this description has the misfortune to get poxed, he seldom loses sight of it, or leaves off taking medicine till his constitution is destroyed. A young man belonging

ing to this class, after a slight infection, kept teasing me for above a twelvemonth, from a persuasion that his nose was daily growing thicker. At last I refused to see him, when he went to a quack, who indulged him in his whim, till he drained him of his last guinea, and then dismissed him for a fool.

Women are still more apt to be alarmed in this situation than men. Many of them believe that a person, once thoroughly infected, can never be radically cured. Under this persuasion they impute every ach, pain, or pimple, to the venereal poison lurking in the system, and lead both themselves and husbands most miserable lives. Humanity should induce medical men to do every thing in their power to eradicate these hurtful notions. But this is, to my knowledge, not an easy task. The lady, whose case was mentioned in a former chapter, made herself and husband both so unhappy, notwithstanding all I could say to her, that I advised her at last to go to the late Mr. John Hunter, and take his opinion of her case. He told her she was perfectly well. But even this did not fully satisfy her, till she

brought forth at a birth two of the most healthy babes I ever saw.

Women, however, are more apt to have relics of this disease lurk about them than men. Their constitutions are not so able to undergo a thorough course of mercury ; neither have they so much resolution as men to persist in its use for a sufficient length of time. It is here the female patient generally misses her cure. A few days ago a man brought his wife to me to see if I thought her perfectly cured. On asking some questions, I told him I had every reason to believe she was well ; but, according to my custom, said she had better continue to take medicine for a few weeks longer, that no ground of suspicion might remain. At this she began to cry ; said she had been taking mercury for above three years, and desired to know when she should have done taking it. On inquiry, I found what she said was true, but that she had never persisted in its use above three or four weeks at one time ; but as soon as her mouth grew a little sore, she left it off, and when the symptoms reappeared, returned to its use again.

I told

I told her she might keep taking mercury for twenty years in that way, and not be cured: That the only certain way to get well, was by persisting in the use of the specific, not only till all the symptoms disappeared, but for several weeks after. It is here the quack fails; and the hasty cure turns out to be no cure at all. Nor are the Faculty themselves always sufficiently aware of this trap. The idea of a quick cure is very soothing; and when the patient says, Why should I take medicine after I am well? the physician often suffers him to go from under his care too soon. If the smallest spark is left, it will kindle up into a flame. Here it may be truly said, "A LITTLE LEAVEN LEAVENETH THE WHOLE LUMP."

When the patient's conduct, or any doubtful symptoms, give the least ground to suspect that the poison still lurks in the system, the best plan, both for the satisfaction of the physician, and the safety of the patient, is to put him through a complete course of mercury, taking care at the same time that his constitution receives no injury. What will greatly tend to prevent the constitution from

being hurt by the mercury, and likewise promote its beneficial effects on the system, will be a liberal use of the decoction of sarsaparilla, or of the Lisbon diet-drink.

The venereal disease has, by some, been supposed to induce a variety of other complaints; while others deny that this ever happens. The truth is, that this, like other maladies which weaken the constitution, certainly predisposes it to disease. But it does not follow, that the lues venerea will produce the small pox, or any other disease that originates from a specific infection. The small pox or measles do not engender the rickets or scrofula; yet every practitioner knows that the latter often succeed to the former, especially if they are of the malignant, or what are called the bad kind.

When the venereal disease seems to induce other maladies, there is generally reason to suspect that there has existed in the constitution a predisposition to such disorder, and that the venereal taint, by weakening the constitution, might act as a predisposing cause in exciting the other malady. Every one knows that people afflicted with the scrofula are more
liable

liable to diseases of the lungs than those who have no tendency that way ; and that if symptoms of a consumption appear in such persons, they seldom recover.

Mr. Bell, of Edinburgh, mentions a number of cases, and says he is in possession of many more, where the symptoms were occasioned by the venereal poison lurking in the system, though the disease assumed an appearance very different from that of the syphilis. In all the cases, however, which he mentions, symptoms of a suspicious nature, sooner or later, seem to have made their appearance, as blotches on the skin, obstinate sores, or ill-conditioned ulcers, swelling of the joints, tumors with a fluctuation of matter in them, &c. When such symptoms as these appear, and no adequate cause can be assigned for them, there is certainly ground to suspect a lurking lues venerea.

In cases where no suspicious symptoms appear, but which do not yield to the usual methods of treatment, the strictest inquiry ought to be made concerning the patient's former manner of life ; and if it is found that he has ever been unfortunate in the venereal
line,

line, and has received what is called an expeditious cure, there will be reason to suspect a lurking lues as the cause of his disorder, and the cure must be conducted accordingly.

It seems to be a question, whether or no a specific poison introduced into the system can produce any other disease, except that from which the poison is taken. It is not my intention to go into difficult disquisitions on obscure subjects; but I am inclined to think that a specific poison may induce morbid affections very different, in their appearance, from the disease which gave rise to them. I have more than once seen affections of the skin follow the inoculation of the small pox, which no one, unacquainted with the circumstances, would have supposed to have any connexion with that disease.

Any one conversant in the business of inoculation, must know that an erysipelatous inflammation often succeeds to that operation, and goes regularly off before the small pox make their appearance. Nay, I have known the measles make their appearance about the time when the small pox were expected, go through their course, and the small pox seem
to

to wait till they had done so, and then appear. I do not say the matter of the small pox actually produced the measles, but it would seem to have predisposed the body to that disease.

It is well known that nurses who attend patients in the small pox are often much disordered by it, especially if they sleep in the same bed with them. I have once or twice seen a putrid fever, which seemed to me to have been occasioned by the nurses lying night and day, for three weeks, in bed with children, who died of a very bad kind of small pox. This conduct also hurts the patient.

A medical man of my acquaintance, in taking matter to inoculate a number of children, happened to cut his finger with a lancet covered with the matter of the small pox. He wrapped it up, and thought no more of it, till about eight or nine days after, when he began to feel an unusual sensation, or rather an irritation, about his heart, which he could not account for. Some degree of sickness and nausea ensued, and he was seized with a fainting fit. On recovering from this he had some warm drink, and was put to bed. Next morning a rash appeared all over him, that
had

had some resemblance to the measles ; but he thinks it kept out rather longer than the measles usually do.

Though one would not venture to assert that this rash was occasioned by the pocky matter absorbed from the wound, yet so many circumstances concurred to make the gentleman think so, that, to this day, he cannot be persuaded to the contrary. This gentleman had the small pox in the natural way, when young, but has no recollection of having had the measles.

Whether or not a specific poison, taken into the system, at a time when it is not disposed to take on the disease, will produce another, or induce any morbid affection whatever, are questions that we shall leave to the discussion of future physiologists.

Mr. Bell is of opinion, that where the poison of the syphilis exists in the system, but not in sufficient force to shew itself by the usual and more obvious symptoms of the disease, it may, notwithstanding, in various instances, be, capable of exciting a great deal of derangement, and even many diseases which otherwise might not take place, and that it will more especially

especially be apt to produce those diseases to which the constitution is predisposed, or those to which the patient is rendered liable by exposure to particular occasional causes. The diseases induced by the venereal poison, of which he gives instances, are p^hthⁱsis, asthma, rheumatism, drop^y, head-ache, epilepsy, and madness.

Diseases succeeding to the lues venerea are not always occasioned by the poison lurking in the system; they are sometimes the effect of the means used to expel that poison. Medicines, possessed of such active powers as most preparations of mercury are, cannot be thrown into the stomach in large doses, for any considerable length of time, without materially affecting that organ so necessary to the existence of every animal.

Mercury will occasionally hurt the stomach and bowels, even when it is administered with the greatest care and attention; and it must be still more pernicious where these are neglected. We may venture to assert, that not one in a hundred of those who take mercury have it in their power to observe a proper regimen.

All active stimulants frequently applied to the organs of digestion destroy their power ; hence the wine-bibber, and still more the dram-drinker, generally loses his appetite, and falls the early victim of indigestion. Few stimulants are more active than many of the preparations of mercury ; indeed, some of them are so acrid as to be justly ranked among poisons. Such edge-tools as these can seldom be long used with impunity. I have known few people who had taken great quantities of mercury, free from complaints of the stomach or bowels.

The lungs, as well as the stomach, are often hurt by means of mercury. The number of young men who die every year in London of consumptions, brought on by the improper use of mercury, is a sufficient proof of the baneful effects of that mineral on the lungs. But it is not the direct effect of mercury on the lungs that does the mischief ; it is owing to the uncertainty of our climate, and to the necessity many patients are under of exposing themselves to all weathers, even when the body is fully charged with mercury.

The

The effects of mercury on the nervous system are more direct; I have often seen paralytic affections brought on by the imprudent use of mercury, by which, even young men, have been rendered lame and miserable for life. But the slow and less perceptible effects of mercury are more frequent, and likewise more hurtful; by them the best constitution may be undermined, and the most robust man reduced to an absolute invalid, shivering at a breeze, and dragging out a wretched existence under a load of nervous maladies, for which medicine knows no cure.

To obviate the ill effects of mercury on the stomach and bowels, it will be proper always to use the milder preparations, where they will succeed, in preference to the more acrid and stimulating. Where the more active preparations are found necessary, they ought to be administered in small doses; and when they excite fever, or occasion great pain in the first passages, they should be discontinued for some time, and their use resumed after these affections are removed.

Few things are better calculated to prevent mercury from hurting the stomach and bowels.

bowels, than the proper use of Peruvian bark : it may either be taken in substance, tincture, or infusion, and ought to be alternated with the mercury in such a manner, as to prevent that mineral from tearing those tender and delicate organs to pieces. The way in which I commonly give it, is in the dose of two tea-spoonfuls of the compound tincture in a glass of the Tunbridge or Pyrmont water, three or four times a day ; or it may be taken in common water, or wine.

For affections of the nerves, occasioned by mercury, we would recommend, besides tonic medicines, the cold bath, provided there is no particular weakness of the breast or bowels to forbid its use. Whenever cold bathing is recommended, it is always to be understood that we give the preference to salt-water, where it can be obtained. Indeed in all cases of nervous debility, where the patient is able to bear the shock, sea-bathing is the best medicine with which we are yet acquainted.

Though it must be acknowledged that mercury frequently hurts the constitution, yet it is often blamed where it is not in fault.

fault. People who have had occasion to take mercury, are apt to impute all the aches and pains they feel afterwards, to this medicine lying in the body : I remember since the same prejudice prevailed with respect to bark, and believe them both to be equally unfounded. Some, indeed, are weak enough to imagine that the mercury lies in the bones, and never leaves them while the patient lives. This opinion the late Mr. John Hunter has taken some pains to refute : he says the mercury never enters the bones ; and no man ever had more opportunities of investigating that matter than himself.

That mercury must either kill or cure is another vulgar error which does considerable mischief. Men are afraid to take a medicine that may terminate their existence, and chuse rather to endure a lingering disease, than risk a sudden death. By this groundless prejudice many have been deterred from taking mercury when it was the only medicine that could be of any service to them. This prejudice, however, dies apace---most people now know that mercury, when properly administered, is both a safe and efficacious medicine.

Many

Many affect to decry the powers of mercury, while they are making fortunes by using it. This is a shameful practice and a dangerous one; mercury should never be concealed from the patient. This conduct, which even physicians too often affect, has sometimes serious consequences. I have known it more than once prove fatal. A medicine which, to be used with safety, requires a particular regimen, should never be concealed; and the practitioner who does so, whatever his motives may be, must excuse me for saying, that he sports with his patient's life.

Though some inconveniences may attend the administration of mercury, yet I know no medicine of equal value. It is useful in a great variety of disorders besides the lues venerea; and here every Tiro knows, that nothing can be done without it. From the infant of a week old to the veteran of fourscore, it may be given with safety and advantage; nor do I conceive how any man, at this day, could practise physic if he were deprived of its use.

C H A P. X.

OF IMPOTENCE, OCCASIONED BY THE
VENEREAL DISEASE, &c.

THERE is no idea more depressing to the human mind than that of not being able to propagate the species. I have known men actually criminate themselves rather than lie under the imputation of impotence, and some will even risk the peace of their families to prove that the fault is not on their side; yet numbers hazard the loss of virility for a moment's gratification with an object whom they neither love nor esteem.

Were the most avowed libertine to contemplate the victims of illicit love, as they are often seen by the Faculty, he would stand appalled at the view, and shrink from the transient enjoyment, which too often entails debility and loathsome disease on its votaries, and disqualifies

disqualifies them for ever from exercising the functions of manhood.

That impotence may proceed from debility there can be little doubt, and that this is often induced by excess of venery, few will be disposed to deny ; but, as far as my observation goes, debility is more frequently the effect of another vice incident to youth, which, while it is less natural, proves more destructive in its consequence than even excess of venery. Men seldom go far wrong while they follow nature, but every deviation from her laws is pregnant with danger.

That the generative powers may be injured by obstinate gleans, or what is called seminal weakness, is highly probable ; but I have known men who, for more than twenty years, had laboured under this malady, yet had large families of seemingly healthy children. This, however, holds out no encouragement to others ; what will not impair the generative faculties of one man, may totally destroy those of another, and even tend to cut short his life.

Not only the powers, but even the parts of generation, are frequently destroyed by the venereal disease. When this misfortune happens,

pens, they cannot be restored by medicine. In curing the venereal disorder mercury will do wonders, but it cannot restore a lost part : such loss, indeed, would seldom happen, if this medicine were properly applied in due time.

In most of the cases that have come under my eye, where the powers of procreation had been destroyed by disease, there had either been total neglect, or very improper treatment. Some years ago a sea-faring man called on me, on his return from a long voyage, to ask my opinion of his case. He had few symptoms of the venereal disease, and these were easily cured ; but his penis and scrotum formed only one mass, and had coalesced in such a manner as to appear to me to be inseparable. I advised him to consult Mr. Pott and some other able surgeons, which he did ; and their opinion was, that nothing could be done.

The story he told me was, that when he left England he had a running, for which he had taken some medicine, and had carried as much out with him as was thought necessary for his cure. What use he made of it I do not know ; but understood that during his

voyage to North America, he encountered much hard weather, and was exposed to great cold and fatigue ; that on his return to Europe, he landed in Spain, where he was advised to apply to a surgeon for some obstructions in the urinary passages. This surgeon, instead of having recourse to the use of bougies and other mild methods for removing the obstruction, laid open the urethra, and then left the fresh wound and scrotum to grow together.

The only comment I shall make upon this case is, to point out the danger of going to sea with the venereal disease uncured. Had this gentleman staid at home, or been so fortunate as to fall into skilful hands abroad, in all probability he would not have been deprived of his powers of procreation : what he did, however, is done every day, and, we have reason to fear, too often with similar consequences. Surgeons are often too free with the knife ; it should never be used but in cases of absolute necessity, and then only by skilful hands.

I have, indeed, known the penis very nearly destroyed by erosion ; but when the sores were kept thoroughly clean, and the mercury thrown in in sufficient quantities, the erosion
of

of the penis was stopped, and what remained, though sometimes not above an inch, became perfectly sound, and, for any thing I know, remained so during the patient's life.

Instances of impotence occur where the person never was afflicted with the venereal disease, and where it is very difficult to assign any cause for the decay of those parts destined for the propagation of the species. The late Mr. John Hunter mentions several cases where the testicles had gradually wasted away, without any apparent cause. This generally began in one of the testicles, and after that was destroyed, it seized the other, which melted away in the same manner, without affecting the health of the patient, or admitting of any relief from medicine.

The same author mentions the case of a very young gentleman, one of whose testicles wasted entirely away after a gonorrhæa, which was attended both with a swelled testicle and bubo. This evidently proceeded from the venereal affection.

The ingenious author, mentioned above, gives several examples of impotence from affections of the mind ; and it must be acknow-

ledged, that the mind has much to do in this business. Fear, shame, anxiety, dislike of the object, and many other affections of the mind, will take away the venereal appetite, and produce a temporary impotence. I was once consulted in a case of supposed impotence by a healthy-looking gentleman, who, to fulfil the dying request of his brother, married his widow. I had sufficient reason to believe that this gentleman's impotency, as he was pleased to call it, did not proceed from want of power, but want of love to the object.

Impotence, arising from natural defects, or the destruction of the parts by disease, seldom admits of any assistance from medicine. When it proceeds from debility, occasioned by excessive evacuations, the use of tonics, as the Peruvian bark and steel, are indicated, and they may be administered in various forms with advantage. The chalybeate waters, as those of Tunbridge, Pyrmont, &c. will likewise prove beneficial; but what we would chiefly recommend is the cold bath, especially bathing in salt water.

When the system is excessively irritable, and the constitution is wasted by involuntary emissions

emissions during the night, I would recommend opium ; from half a grain to a whole grain may be taken at bed time. If this has not the desired effect, the dose may be increased to a grain and a half, or two grains. Its use ought to be accompanied with tonics, and corroborating medicines.

For the cure of unnatural pollutions, I always recommend matrimony. This, with regular living, and the use of the cold bath, seldom proves unsuccessful. But when I recommend matrimony, I would advise every man to marry the woman he loves. When this is not the case, satiety and disgust will succeed, and the unhappy husband, in the vigour of life, may, by mistake, impute his want of ardour for the connubial enjoyments to impotency.

A SUMMARY VIEW

OF THE

MOST IMPORTANT DOCTRINES CONTAINED IN THE
PRECEDING PAGES.

I. FEW things would have a more direct tendency to render the venereal disease less frequent than a strictly moral education.

II. It would be of great importance, not only in the prevention of this, but of many other diseases, to impress the young mind with a due sense of the value of health.

III. Though a good constitution ought to be the first object in the education of youth, it is generally made the last, and is often totally disregarded.

IV. A young man should be taught to believe that all his prospects in life depend upon health, and that every view of happiness vanishes with the loss of this valuable treasure.

V. The importance of cleanliness ought likewise to be strongly impressed on the young mind. This, though not ranked among the cardinal virtues, is nearly allied to them.

VI. Nor ought less attention to be paid to sobriety. Men are most apt to go astray, when least able to conduct themselves, so as to avoid danger.

VII. A vegetable diet, an open body, and the free use of diluting liquors, will often carry off a gonorrhœa without the use of medicine.

VII.

VIII. Where the above regimen does not succeed, recourse may be had to astringent injections, taking care, during their use, to keep down the inflammatory symptoms by cooling purges and diluting diet.

IX. Obstructions of the urinary passages are generally relieved by the use of bougies. If properly made, they may be applied by any person of common understanding.

X. A bubo will generally be relieved by emollient fomentations, soft poultices, and bleeding with leeches.

XI. A swelled testicle requires nearly the same method of treatment, unless where the intention is to discuss both, in which case repellents ought to be used.

XII. A gleet usually yields to astringent injections, tonic medicines, and the cold bath. When these do not succeed, recourse must be had to stimulating injections, such as are recommended in the Appendix.

XIII. A chordee requires diluents, and the use of opium.

XIV. Warts and excrescences require the application of mild caustics and escharotics, as the powder of Savin, &c.

XV. The pox is generally introduced by means of a chancre, which, if properly treated, will seldom infect the system.

XVI. The only method to prevent a chancre from communicating the poison to the system, is the timely and proper use of mercury.

XVII. Chancres ought never to be hastily dried
up,

up, but rather kept open, till the poison is extinguished by mercury.

XVIII. The mouth should be made sore with mercury, and kept so for some time; but it never ought to be given in such quantities as to excite a violent salivation.

XIX. A chancre, concealed under the prepuce, is often productive of much mischief. When it cannot be kept clean, it ought to be laid open.

XX. A chancre, when laid open, will often heal in a few days without the use of mercury, though it would not before under its use.

XXI. The glans, if possible, should be uncovered every day, and the chancres washed with milk and water a little warm.

XXII. Exposure to cold, and improper regimen, under a mercurial course, tend greatly to retard the cure, and often endanger the patient's life.

XXIII. As the suppuration of buboes does not seem to accelerate the cure of the venereal disease, it is proper always to discuss them when it can be done.

XXIV. Venereal ulcers and blotches cannot be cured without mercury, which must be applied according to the urgency of the symptoms.

XXV. When venereal sores grow worse under the use of mercury*, it must be discontinued, and the patient

* A case at present under my care shews the propriety of this rule in the strongest point of light. A young gentleman, in a provincial city, had been seventeen weeks under a course of mercury

patient put on a course of bark and restorative diet.

XXVI. When the venereal virus fastens on the bones, and produces nodes, &c., it may still be removed by persisting, for a sufficient length of time, in the use of some active preparation of mercury.

XXVII. When the venereal disease affects the organs of sense, as the eyes, ears, &c., it cannot be removed without the use of mercury.

XXVIII. When children are born with symptoms of the venereal disease upon them, they may be cured by the proper application of mercury, both to the infant and nurse.

XXIX. Diseases which resemble the lues venerea, as the sivvins or sibbins, &c., may be cured by mercury applied in the same manner as for the lues.

XXX. Opium is of great service in appeasing many of the most urgent symptoms of lues venerea, as well as in making mercury sit more easily on the stomach.

cury for chancres on the glans and prepuce. He was reduced so low that his life was despaired of; and he was thought unable to bear a journey to town. He was, however, brought by short stages, and I was consulted. My advice was to leave off the use of mercury, to take a tea-spoonful of the compound tincture of Peruvian bark four times a day, to drink daily a wine-bottle of the Lisbon diet-drink, to take nourishing diet, and to drink a few glasses of generous wine every day. The consequence is, that in less than six weeks his appetite, health, and spirits are restored, and his sores, which have only been kept clean, are nearly all healed.

XXXI. When the nurse gives the disease to an infant, or the infant to the nurse, both may be cured by the proper application of mercury.

XXXII. Persons about to be married, ought to be very circumspect with regard to their situation, otherwise they may transmit this baneful disease to their progeny.

XXXIII. Women labouring under the venereal disease, are very liable to have abortions, to prevent which mercury is the proper medicine.

XXXIV. In constitutions deeply affected with the scurvy, mercury ought to be administered with the greatest caution. Where that is not attended to, some very untoward symptoms may ensue.

XXXV. In scrofulous habits the lues always proves obstinate, and requires more mercury than in constitutions free from that taint.

XXXVI. Mercury may be given for any length of time without curing the lues, if it is not given in such a way as thoroughly to saturate the system.

XXXVII. Complaints succeeding to the venereal disease are not always owing to that malady, but to the means used to expel it.

XXXVIII. That mercury lies in the bones, is denied by Mr. John Hunter, and is, I believe, a vulgar error.

XXXIX. That mercury hurts the stomach and bowels, when improperly used, is, I am afraid, often too true.

XL. When impotency is the effect of the lues venerea, it is generally owing, either to the ignorance of the practitioner, or the irregularity of the patient,

XLI. The greatest circumspection is necessary in the choice of a wet-nurse in and near great towns.

XLII. A woman may have her health ruined by giving suck to an infant born of dissipated parents.

XLIII. The fibbens, as well as the lues, may be communicated by the mother or nurse.

XII. The first of these is the fact that the
theater is a place of public entertainment,
of the highest order of the human mind,
and the most perfect of its kind. The
choice of a woman is a matter of great
importance. A woman may be a great
thing to see, but it is not a thing to
see. The woman, as well as the man,
is a creature of the human mind.

A P P E N D I X.

THE different forms and preparations of medicine, referred to in the preceding pages, are here brought together, so as to appear in a narrower point of view. Several others, not mentioned, are also added, that the patient may have an opportunity of selecting such as he thinks best suited to his case. Some prescriptions, inserted in the body of the book, are again brought forward here, either that they may appear at more length, or be inserted under the respective heads to which they belong, as Injections, Decoctions, &c.

Physicians still persisting in the practice of writing their prescriptions in Latin, affords a strong proof of the difficulty with which old customs are left off. Those who write books in plain English, still give their prescriptions in an unknown tongue; as if a scrap of Latin could operate like a talisman, or have the power of a charm. This conduct is not only ridiculous, it is dangerous. The persons employed in making up medical prescriptions are, generally speaking, very idle, and very ignorant. By this I do not mean to throw any reflection on apothecaries. I see no reason why an apothecary may not be as learned a man as a physician; but I know this, that a man
may

may go to his shop a hundred times before he finds him there. The apothecary generally acts as a physician, and leaves the shop to the care of his boy.

Did patients know who compose the draughts they swallow, they would take them with fear and trembling. I seldom give a medicine without seeing it made up, and never to a venereal patient; because I know that here the cure depends solely on the quality of the medicine, and not on the patient's imagination. Were physicians, in general, to follow this plan, their art would prove more beneficial to mankind. The doctor would not be the tool of the apothecary, nor the patient the dupe of both. While the apothecary can recommend the physician, the infamous trade of cramming patients with drugs will be carried on, to the disgrace of medicine, and the destruction of mankind.

INJECTIONS FOR THE CURE OF GONORRHŒA.

I. Take of vitriolated zinc, commonly called white vitriol, half a dram: dissolve it in a pint of water.

In the early stage of a gonorrhœa, we know of no better injection than this. If used sufficiently often, not less than five or six times a day, it will generally remove the disease very speedily. It is not, however, so proper in the more advanced periods of the complaint.

plaint. A slight degree of pain ought to follow its use; but if it produces much, it should be diluted with water. Five or six drops of Goulard's extract, added to a tea-cupful of this solution, renders it more sedative, and consequently a better medicine, where there is great irritation, or the parts are inflamed.

II. Take sugar of lead, half a dram: dissolve in half a pint of water.

III. Take extract of lead, thirty drops: mix with half a pint of water.

When there is great pain and irritation, it is sometimes necessary to use opiate injections.

IV. Dissolve a dram of purified opium in half a pint of water; or, add to the same quantity of water half an ounce of the tincture of opium.

When the discharge appears to be continued from relaxation, or flaccidity of the vessels, the following injection will be found useful:

V. Take balsam of capivi, half an ounce: rub with the yolk of an egg, and, by degrees, add half a pint of rose-water.

A stimulant injection for discharges of long continuance, and gleans:

VI. Take muriated mercury, commonly called corrosive sublimate, one grain: dissolve in half a pint of rose-water.

The powers of this medicine may be heightened or diminished, by lessening or increasing the quantity of water in which it is dissolved: but the above proportion is as strong as most patients are able to bear.

VII.

VII. Take of acetated copper, or verdigrease, two drams : dissolve in volatile alkali, one ounce.

This is an excellent form of injection ; but some care is requisite in the application of it. From twelve to twenty drops may be added to half a pint of water.

Where internal astringents are required, the following will be found useful :

VIII. Tincture of Catechu, or compound tincture of the Peruvian bark : of either of these, a tea-spoonful or two may be taken in a glass of wine, three or four times a day. Should the patient prefer pills, I know of none better than those made of equal parts of prepared iron and extract of bark, with a sufficient quantity of oil of carrui. One may be taken three or four times a day.

When it is necessary to keep the body open and cool, which is always the case in a virulent gonorrhœa, especially during the use of injections, I would recommend the electuary mentioned in the Domestic Medicine. But what I chiefly use now, with that intention, is the following powder :

IX. Take powdered gum arabic, and cream of tartar, each an ounce and a half ; jalap, in powder, two drams : mix them, and give a tea-spoonful in any liquid, as often as is found necessary to keep the body gently open. To save trouble, I generally now cause these powders to be made into an electuary with common syrup, and desire the patient to take a tea-spoonful as often as he finds it necessary.

When

When the pain and irritation in passing water is very great, the patient will find relief from drinking plentifully of linseed tea. It may be infused with liquorice-root, and drank a little warm.

A very common and troublesome symptom of the gonorrhœa is a chordee. This the following pill commonly relieves, probably by taking off the general tendency to spasm:

X. Take powdered opium, one grain; powdered antimony, four grains; crumbs of bread, as much as will make them into a pill: to be taken at bed-time.

MEDICINES USED IN THE CURE OF THE LUES VENEREA.

Mercury, the only specific * hitherto discovered for the cure of this disease, is administered both externally and internally. The former, which is by far the safest and the best, when it can be administered with conveniency, consists in the application of the

* We every day hear that the lues venerea has been cured by medicines that did not contain a single grain of mercury. There is reason, however, to suspect, that these cures are, like those of the bite of a mad dog, only performed where the infection had never been communicated. Among the medicines puffed off, at present, for curing the lues venerea, is Velno's Vegetable Syrup: I have seen sufficient proofs of the inefficacy of this medicine to be able to declare, that it will not cure the lues venerea.

specific in form of ointment to some part of the surface of the body ; or in form of vapour to the whole of it at once. For internal use a variety of preparations have been devised, of which some of the most approved shall be here inserted.

XI. Of the strong mercurial ointment, from half a dram to a dram may be rubbed every evening on the inner side of the leg or thigh for half an hour, or till it is absorbed. The friction must be continued till the mouth becomes sore, and even for some time after the symptoms of the disorder have disappeared. The part into which the mercury is rubbed, should be washed with soap and water, and carefully dried, each time, before the friction is commenced.

XII. Where elegance is an object, an ointment without colour may be made, by rubbing two drams of the white precipitate, or of calomel, with an ounce of hog's lard, and using it as the former.

A physician of Naples is said to have cured five thousand patients by rubbing half a dram of ointment into the soles of their feet at bed-time, made of hog's lard and corrosive sublimate, an ounce of the former to a dram of the latter. I have likewise used this ointment with success.

When mercury is taken internally, it is usually given in form of pill. The best way seems to be, to take the whole quantity, for the day, at bed-time ; it then passes along with the food, and seems to disturb the bowels less than when taken at different times through the day.

The

The common mercurial pill of both the London and Edinburgh dispensaries are made of the crude mercury, or quicksilver, comminuted, or rubbed up with various ingredients, as conserve of roses, &c. and given from three to four or five ordinary sized pills in the course of a day. Some practitioners prefer these pills to every other preparation of mercury; but what I more frequently use, are pills made of one or other of the following preparations of mercury, and corrected with opium as circumstances may require.

XIII. Take of calomel, properly prepared, one dram; conserve of hips, or roses, a sufficient quantity: make into forty pills. Two or three may be taken at bed-time. Should they gripe, ten grains of opium may be added to the mass when prepared.

XIV. Take of mild muriated mercury, one dram; aromatic confection, or confection of opium, a sufficient quantity to form a mass of proper consistence for pills: to be corrected and divided as above, and taken in the same manner. There is not any preparation of mercury, that I have tried, seems to possess more active antivenereal powers, or to disturb the constitution less than this.

XV. Take of calcined mercury, half a dram; powdered opium, ten grains; extract of liquorice, a sufficient quantity: divide into twenty-four pills. Take one at bed-time. Few constitutions will bear more than two. This was the favourite preparation of the late celebrated John Hunter.

The following composition, which is well known by the name of Plummer's Pill, is reckoned peculiarly useful in venereal affections of the skin, as well as cutaneous complaints arising from other causes.

XVI. Take of calomel, and the golden sulphur of antimony, each one dram; extract of liquorice, enough to form a mass for pills: divide into forty-eight pills. Two may be taken at night, and one next morning, increasing the dose according to circumstances.

When the more active preparations of mercury are deemed necessary, the corrosive sublimate may be used in the following manner:

XVII. Take of muriated mercury, or corrosive sublimate, ten grains: dissolve in a pint of proof spirits. Of this solution, two or three table-spoonfuls may be taken daily. It ought never to be given on an empty stomach.

Some administer the sublimate in form of pill; but as it is apt to hurt the bowels, when taken in this way, I always give it in solution.

As decoctions of various kinds have been supposed to assist in the cure of lues venerea, or, at least, to prevent the mercury from hurting the stomach and bowels, some of the most approved forms are subjoined:

XVIII. Take of sarsaparilla, bruised, three ounces; infuse by the fire, in two quarts of water, for twelve hours; then gently boil away to about one half: a
little

little sliced liquorice-root may be added, just before the boiling is finished.

This simple decoction seems to act chiefly by affording a mild nourishment. Even in that point of view it is of great use during a mercurial course. The whole quantity here mentioned may be used in the course of twenty-four hours, and it should be prepared fresh daily.

The decoction of guaiacum may be made as follows :

XIX. Take of guaiacum raspings, six ounces; shavings of saffrafras, four ounces : boil in six quarts of water to four, adding, towards the end, an ounce of sliced liquorice-root.

Two pints of this decoction may be used daily. By some, guaiacum is supposed to assist greatly in the cure of lues venerea. The superior effects of mercury, however, have, in a great measure, caused it to be laid aside. In some peculiar constitutions, indeed, it seems to assist the powers of mercury.

The decoction of mezereon may be made as follows :

XX. Take bark of mezereon-root, one ounce: boil it in three quarts of water to two, adding, towards the end, a little liquorice.

This is a warm stimulating medicine, of which from a pint to a quart may be taken daily.

For making the Lisbon diet-drink there are many forms ; the most common is as under :

XXI. Take of sarsaparilla,

White

White and red faunders, each three ounces ;

Liquorice and mezercon-root, of each half an ounce ;

Wood of rhodium, and saffrafras, each one ounce ;

Crude antimony *, two ounces :

Mix and infuse the whole in four quarts of boiling water, for twenty-four hours ; then boil to half the quantity, and strain. Of this, from a pint to a quart may be used daily.

When the mouth is much affected, and very painful, from a violent salivation, the following wash may be used with advantage :

XXII. Take of borax, one ounce : dissolve it in a pint of boiling water, and add two ounces of honey.

The mouth may be frequently washed with this a little warm.

To remove those warts which sometimes remain after gonorrhœa, I have generally found one of the following succeed :

XXIII. Take of corrosive sublimate, and crude sal armoniac, each half an ounce : dissolve in four ounces of water.

The warts to be occasionally touched with this.

XXIV. Take of powdered favin, two drams ; red precipitate, and corrosive sublimate, of each one dram.

* The antimony ought to be made into what is called a Nodule, or tied in a bag, otherwise the decoction will be of a disagreeable colour, and look dirty.

A little of this powder may be applied frequently to the warts.

To dress venereal sores, some of the following may be used :

XXV. Take of basilicon ointment, two ounces ; red precipitate, two drams : mix them.

XXVI. Take of basilicon ointment, two ounces ; powdered verdigrease, one scruple : mix them.

XXVII. Ointment of nitrated mercury, commonly called *unguentum citrinum*, mixed with three or four times its weight of hog's lard, generally answers this purpose very well.

OF PREVENTIVES.

It has been already observed, that the safest preventive, and the most to be depended on, is a solution of soap properly used.

Spirits are preferred by some, and all kinds of spirits answer equally well.

The following forms have been thought useful as preventive lotions :

XXVIII. Take of corrosive sublimate, one dram : mix gradually, by rubbing in a mortar, with two pints of fresh-made lime-water. Let it subside, and pour off the clear liquor for use. Keep it in a bottle carefully stopped,

XXIX.

XXIX. Fresh-prepared lime-water.

XXX. A few drops of caustic alkali, or soap lies, mixed with common water.

This should always be applied to the tongue before it is used, to determine its strength, which is known by its removing the moisture, without occasioning pain. This form is the most convenient, as a quantity, sufficient to serve for a considerable time, may be carried in the pocket, and used occasionally.

F I N I S.



2/3/52

