

HOL/2/3/1

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Translation
of an
Inaugural Dissertation
De Synochō Castrensi

1.
The Disease which it is proposed should form the subject of the following pages, was the prevailing Malady in the British Army during the late War on the Peninsula, a war which, after an arduous struggle of six years, terminated at length with so much splendour to the Military reputation of our Country.

The importance of the subject will be properly appreciated, when it is remembered that, in this long protracted Contest, a far greater portion of our brave Soldiers sunk victims to the ravages of this fever, than fell a sacrifice to the Sword.

Although the Author of this Essay served with the Allied Forces from the close of the first Campaign till the final establishment of peace, and consequently enjoyed ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with this fatal Complaint, by the experience both of himself and of others, nevertheless, he begs to submit with diffidence the observations he is about to make.

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When we venture to obtrude our remarks on the public, those remarks must, it is obvious, be valuable in proportion to our professional intelligence, talent for observation, and our being, at the same time, unprejudiced by Theory. — Of these circumstances we ourselves cannot be competent judges.

On the other hand, we derive no advantage from the labours of other men, unless we can assure ourselves that the alleged result of their practice is really drawn from actual disease, ^(a) that the various methods of Cure related to us, were strictly persevered in, till the effects of the treatment became conclusive, ^(b) that long cases are ever written of patients who have not so much as laboured under the affection ascribed to them. And finally, ^(c) that any Gentleman ever details minute dissections of bodies that were never opened!

In this paper Hypotheses has been avoided, as much as it was possible

(a) We must be convinced,

(b) We ought not to suspect,

(c) we should not credit the allegation,

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possible in treating, of a matter so avowedly
embarrassed with difficulties.

Considering how slow our
advances must invariably be to truth
in speculative subjects, we must often
be contented to confide in the presump-
tuous directions of those, who really know
as little of the path as ourselves. The
Writer of these pages, however, assumes
no such dictatorial office. If any
thing, therefore, be here advanced which
differs from received opinions, he professes
to have no other view in doing so, than
to encourage a pause of previous reflec-
tion, before we blindly hurry along the
same track that has been already trod-
den by so many before us.

It remains to be added that
to point out what is original, what borrow-
ed, by an affected display of quotations,
is studiously avoided, ^{It would} be palpably absurd
in a little work professedly written to meet
the eye of an assembly of men, so justly
illustrious for their Genius and Learning.

Definition

Definition.

The symptoms of the following Disease will first be described under the usual heads, and afterwards, in the History, detailed in their natural succession.

The Pulse is frequent, full and soft. — Respiration somewhat affected. — Heat increased. — Anorexia. — Thirst. — Tongue furred. — Urine high coloured. — Constipation.

To these succeed a small, weak, and often irregular pulse; — Anxious and oppressed respiration; — Obtuse headache, vertigo, and delirium. — The heat nearly natural. — Prostration of strength. — Per-
-vigilium. — Nausea; — Vomiting; — little
thirst. — Cold sweats. — Urine depositing
a dark sediment. — Fetid liquid stools. —
Tongue and Teeth deeply furred. — Pe-
-techie. — Subultus tendinum. — Death.

History of the Disease.

We shall deceive ourselves if we expect to meet with either this or any other disease strictly confined, in every case,
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composed of some aromatic, an essential oil, opium, and Ether. The dose of the Camphor is then gradually to be increased. Should it produce Nausea, and Vomiting, notwithstanding the aromatics. it may be administered in the form of Enema.

Camphor has been given repeatedly in the Author's practice, at the close of this Fever, to the extent of two drachms every second hour, and apparently, with the happiest results. For, in some of those cases, neither Wine nor brandy could be procured in sufficient quantity, for it to be imagined that they produced the favourable change in the morbid symptoms. In some there were laborious respiration, singultus constant delirium fetid diarrhoea &c. and yet they recovered.

Opium is unquestionably more beneficial in moderating the susceptibility to impression, and allaying irritation, than in its operation as a Stimulant.

as, however, an auxiliary to Wine, there is scarcely any period of this stage, at which it may not be given with eminent advantage. — With this view it must of course be exhibited in small doses.

It is observed that Opium acts best when combined with diaphoretics, as the Vin. Antim. — For, when the Skin is hot and

dry, Opium generally produces irritation.

The Sinct. Hyosciami. nig. may be given in such cases, and the extremities fomented.

In the diarrhoea attending, this affection, opium may be introduced into the system by means of the starch glyster.

The extent to which the use of these stimulants may be pushed, is to be regulated by their effects. — When the pulse becomes fuller and stronger, the heat increased, the eyes more brilliant, the cheeks gently flushed, the quantity must not be augmented for a time. — Beyond this, it is manifest, ^{that} would be highly pernicious.

The Aromatics are an extensive class; and prove beneficial by —

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Stimulating the stomach, and thus leading to the retaining of more powerful remedies. — Amongst these the *Lemn.* *Cinamonium*, *Eugenia Caryophyllata*, *Capsicum Annum*, *Myrtus pimenta*, *Amorium Zingiber*, and the essential oils of the *Prunella Anisum*, and the *Mentha piperita* are the most eligible. —

The External means to be employed, are spunging the body with warm water and spirits, applying warm water to the epigastrium, Erispastics and Sinapisms. —

At the commencement of the Second Stage, when drowsy Stupor is coming on, and the heat and pulse are beginning to sink, the surface may be spunged with warm water alone; At a more advanced period, Ardent Spirits should be added, and the water diminished as the symptoms go on. —

Plasters, by the stimulus they exert, are peculiarly beneficial in relieving the

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the irritability of the stomach, and in raising the living powers. — They ought to be sooner recommended, more extensively employed, and longer persisted in than is commonly the case. — The Head, temples, epigastrium, Shoulders, insides of the thighs, and Tibia may be repeatedly blistered. — Sinapisms to the Soles of the feet are certainly useful, towards the close of the Disease.

Lastly — To Prevent the application of contagious matter to the body, the most watchful cleanliness is to be observed, in the persons, linen, bedding, and apartment of the Sick Soldier. — He must removed, at least twice in the twenty four hours, to a different room, or at all events, to different ^{parts} of the same ward, taking care to have the apartment, or place he last occupied, well fumigated.

This practice of removing the patient from room to room cannot be too seriously insisted on. — Without doubt there is scarcely any auxiliary

heavy mode of treatment more singularly successful.

When the graver symptoms have given way, and when the appetite for food is returning, and nothing now remains except debility, the steps to be taken are evident.

All the Stimulants are to be slowly withdrawn, except the wine, which must be long persisted in, though of course in gradually diminished quantities.

The food is to be slowly increased, by no means in proportion to the appetite. — Vegetables are still for awhile to be refrained from; and the utility of fermented liquors, at first, is very questionable.

The exercise of both the body and mind must be extremely gentle for a time. — Only moderate sleep is to be indulged in; and the Patient is not to be allowed to pass his time in bed. — Constipation must be obviated, and the various circumstances, pointed out in the Prophylaxis, attended to.

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At the same time, tonic medicines are to be recommended. These remedies seem to act not on the animal fibre, but on the living principle. They differ from stimulants in operating more slowly, and in leaving more permanent effects behind. Their immediate action is on the stomach, whence their influence is communicated perhaps through the medium of the nerves, to the rest of the system. Some of them, however, as the Metals, enter the circulation.

Tonics encrease the action of the heart, and restore the natural state of the muscular power, and of the secretions.

Tonics are distinguished as derived from the mineral, or from the vegetable kingdom. Of the metallic tonics Iron is deservedly considered the best. No preparation of this metal is probably so beneficial, as when in the condition in which mineral Chalybeate waters present it to us. In these
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it usually is dissolved by carbonic acid. —
In other forms, Iron generally produces
nausea, diarrhoea, and other unpleasant
symptoms; which commonly proceed
from its being employed in too large doses.

The Carbonas Ferri may be
given, from five to twenty grains at a
time. — The Tinct. Ferri Muriati, ten
to fifteen drops diluted. — The Sulphas
ferri in one to five grains, combined with
the extract of bark. — And these doses
may be repeated twice or thrice a day, ac-
cording to the facility with which they
remain on the stomach. —

There are several other pre-
parations of Iron, but they are of doubt-
ful efficacy. —

The Sulphas Zinci in minute
doses of one to three grains, has been thought
of advantage, when accompanied with
some of the bitters, as the extract of gentian.

The Sulphuric, and Nitric acids,
properly diluted, have considerable tonic
powers. —

Of

Of the vegetable tonics, the *Cinchona officinalis* fills the first of its numerous family. —

Since the discovery regarding the properties of extractive matter, neither the Decoction, nor the extract of the Peruvian bark, is to be relied on. — The powder, where it does not excite nausea, vomiting, or head-ach, is the best form in which it can be given; otherwise, it may be exhibited by glyster, combined with opium, and starch. —

It is proper to remark, that the active principle of Bark, whatever that principle may be, is rendered more soluble in water by the acids, by alkalis, and by Lime, and Magnesia. —

Where the Stomach readily retains the bark, it should be given in as large doses as can be taken. — The utility of this method is still more evident in Intermittent fever; in which the Author has met with the utmost success from giving one ounce of the powder

powder, for a dose, twice or thrice a day.

The bark of the *Salix fragilis* has been sometimes thought useful.

The *aristotochia Serpentaria*, *Croton* *Cleutheria*, *Cusparia febrifuga*, *Succotrina febrifuga* *Colombia*, *Quapna excelsa*, *Gentiana lutea*, *anthemis nobilis* are all possessed of considerable tonic qualities.

With these aromatics may be combined. These were already spoken of.

In the last place the following fact is stated, in order that the practice recommended in the preceding pages, may not be conceived to rest on individual assertion.

The mode of cure uniformly adopted in this fever, during the war on the Peninsula, almost solely consisted of venesection. — M^r. Anderson, the intelligent and amiable Surgeon of the 61st Regiment, myself, and another, who supported the ordinary practice, treated 366 Cases of this Disease, with

a view of comparing the result. . . I had been so arranged, that this man was admitted, alternately, in such a manner that each of us had one third of the whole. . . The Sick were indiscriminately received, and were attended as nearly as possible with the same care and accommodated with the same comforts. . . One third of the whole were Soldiers of the 61st Regiment, the remainder of my own. . . Neither Mr. Anderson nor I ever once employed the lancet. . . The last two, I fear cases, whilst out of the other third, thirty-five patients died. . .

The Hypothetical part of this Essay will, no doubt, appear objectionable to many, even at present, shortly hence, probably to all. . . In this it will but share the fate, which is common to every visionary opinion that pleases us for a time; but which struggles through its ephemeral existence of a day, and is forgotten. . .

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The practical part, however, at least what relates more immediately to the care and management of the Soldier, is deduced from experience, and founded on reason.

Those who served, in the late Peninsular War, under the distinguished Individual who presides over the Medical Department of the Army, will not have ~~for~~ forgotten, with what solicitude he taught us how vastly more important it is to prevent, than to cure Disease. They will ever remember Sir James M. Gregor with admiration and gratitude, for the ready protection and assistance his suavity of manners rendered doubly pleasing, and for the luminous information his eminent talents so well fit him to afford.

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