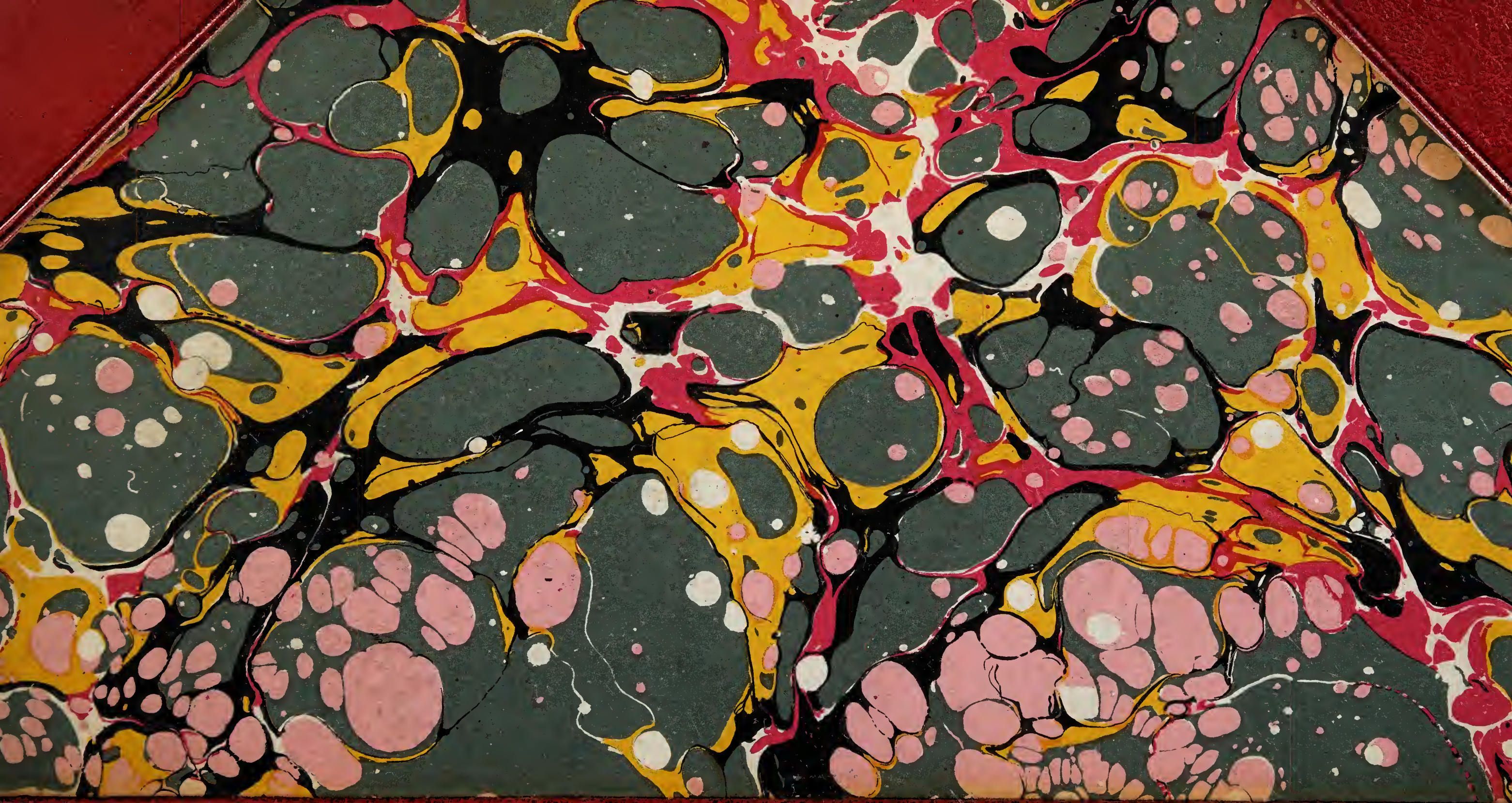

A

LETTER

FROM

The Celebrated Dr. TISSOT,

TO

Dr. ZIMMERMAN,

ON THE

MORBUS NIGER;

Melena Hæmorrhagica Sauvages

INCLUDING

Some apposite CASES equally curious and interesting.

The Whole illustrated with

An Account of the Morbid Appearances of the dissected Bodies.

Translated from the French

BY JOHN BURKE, M. D.

LONDON:

Printed for G. KEARSLY, No. 46, in FLEET-STREET.

M.DCC.LXXVI.

PREFACE.

IT is agreed on all hands that no means are ſo conducive to the advancement of medical knowledge, as minute and diſpaſſionate details of morbid caſes. Hereby we reap the ſame advantages with the laborious practitioner in point of experience, without running an equal riſque of reputation: thus, we enter into conſultation with him, and on the one hand avail ourſelves of that opinion, to which reaſon and ſucceſs give their ſanction; whilſt on the other we may rectify the errors which he ingenuouſly acknowledges, or the event arraigns him with. The ever reſpectable Hippocrates, well aware of the great importance of this

mode

mode of proceeding exerted the moſt indefatigable endeavours, to collect accounts of the principal caſes that occurred; and theſe we have handed down to us with his diſtinguiſhed accuracy. The other luminaries of phyſic have followed his ſteps. To the happineſs of our countrymen and the credit of our phyſicians, we may obſerve that this laudable ſcheme has more attention paid to it here than elſewhere: witneſs the medical collections of the learned ſocieties eſtabliſhed here, and in Scotland. To this ſpirit of obſervation it is in a great meaſure that we owe the indiſputable aſcendency we maintain over our neighbours: it is notorious that whilſt on the other ſide the Engliſh channel the patient is learnedly paſſed through their various ſtages of theoretical preparation for medicine, he is ſimply and radically cured, here. And it may not ſeem impertinent on this occaſion to take notice of a little ſarcaſm which I have heard drop in public from a profeſſor of anatomy of diſtinguiſhed abilities in Paris. *Les Anglois*, ſays he, *ont de grands médecins, mais ils ſont un peu charlatans*. England can boaſt of excellent

cellent phyſicians, but they are ſomewhat empirical.——In the courſe of the ſame lecture he judiciouſly obſerved, *que la vraye médecine n'eſt qu'une charlatanerie raiſonnée*; true phyſic is but empiriciſm regulated by reaſon. I ſhould then have bowed to him for the indirect compliment he before payed my countrymen, though ſelf-ſufficiently thrown out with a view to reflect on them; for this is equivalent to a conceſſion that the Engliſh phyſicians are the only true phyſicians.

If the reflections I have been juſt now making ſhould coincide with the general opinion, the preſent letter of the celebrated Dr. Tiſſot will have a juſt claim to general attention. The obſervations it contains ſeemed of ſo intereſting a nature to an eminent phyſician here, that he expreſſed a deſire of having them communicated to the public by a tranſlation. This deſire is now complied with, and it is hoped that their approbation will concur with his to make the tranſlator ſatisfied with his undertaking. The ſubject matter of the firſt obſervations being very little known, muſt be acceptable to every one who has a laudable zeal for

im-

improvement in his profeſſion. Were a man never to be expoſed to the mortification of treating an unknown diſorder ill, yet it is highly derogatory to the character of a phyſician to be ignorant of any thing that regards the art he profeſſes. Should the reader have the joint motives of curioſity and improvement to ſatisfy in taking the following caſes in hand, I flatter myſelf he will not be diſappointed.

A LETTER

A

LETTER, &c.

I Hope my beſt of friends will condeſcend to accept theſe two obſervations which I have had occaſion to make on the Morbus Niger; they muſt be worthy the notice of one ſo zealous for the good of mankind as he is, and I look upon them to be calculated to throw ſome light on the nature and cure of this diſeaſe, two points which we have not hitherto attained a ſatisfactory knowledge of.

My primitive deſign was to have treated the ſubject more at large by annexing thereto other caſes, and by laying down the obſerva-

tions,

tions, the precepts, the opinions, the doubts, in a word, the errors, which have been advanced on this dreadful diſorder: but diſtracted as I am by the number of ſick who intruſt themſelves to my care, I am neceſſitated to wave this deſign for the preſent, and ſhall content myſelf with tranſmitting to you, in the ſtile of a man who writes to his friend, a clear and faithful account of the two caſes which fell under my inſpection.

Firſt Caſe.

A man of ſixty, who was ſubject to an aſthma ſince he reached the age of forty, had, by a ſedentary life and a cloſe application to religious ſtudies, impaired a habit of body naturally very vigorous and healthy. For three ſucceſſive years he was ſeized about ſpring with an ague, for which I treated him ſucceſsfully. His recovery from the laſt attack was attended with an unuſual ſort of vigour, which I looked upon with a ſuſpicious eye. The following ſummer however, the warm weather, with an intermiſſion of his reading, im-

improved the ſtate of his health pretty much for ſome months. He was not troubled with his aſthma, and he had no complaint, but ſome colic pains now and then, for which he did not think it worth while to take medicines, as they gave him little uneaſineſs. Towards the latter end of this year, his pains encreaſed about the umbilical region, the ſternum and in his back: they became exceeding troubleſome after his meals, howſoever exact he might have been in the choice of his diet, and produced ſuch extreme weakneſs, that he dreaded he ſhould not ſurvive it. He found ſome relief by kneeling down and leaning, with his body inclined, upon the ſeat of his chair. The unhappy ſufferer, miſtaking the nature of his complaint and looking upon it to be flatulent, took large quantities of coffee and ſpirit of cherries, both to eaſe his pain and raiſe his ſpirits; and regulating his diet upon equally falſe grounds, added the uſe of warm drinks. When his pains remitted, he was feeble, faint, and dejected, his ſtools were liquid, his urine crude, but the other appearances were ſuch as a ſtate of health preſents.

In the month of March I was ſuddenly called to his relief one day after dinner; I found him in the attitude I mentioned before, pale and weak; he had thrown up about eight ounces of reddiſh black blood, after having been ſeized with the moſt violent pains, ſevere anguiſh and a deliquium; the pain and anxiety had now quitted him. I ſoon diſcovered that ſome blood-veſſels having been a long time overdiſtended with the contained fluid, had at length burſt and produced an internal hemorrhage. It was obvious what opinion to form upon ſuch ſymptoms. Hippocrates holds them to be mortal. I ventured however to entertain ſome hopes from the patient's ſtrength and the ſoftneſs and evenneſs of his pulſe: he had no feveriſh ſymptom; and I had known ſimilar diſtempers which did not end ſo deſperately.

The ſucceſs which attended the practice of other phyſicians in caſes of this nature, and a due conſideration of the diſeaſe, directed me to diſſolve and evacuate the extravaſated blood leſt it ſhould degenerate to a putrid ſtate; to

pre-

prevent any future effuſion; and to keep up the patient's ſtrength.

To ſatisfy theſe intentions, I ordered him firſt, to be put to bed, and to be kept there quiet and lightly covered; that his diet ſhould be the Cremor Hordei, which is the Ptiſana Colata of Hippocrates: he was better pleaſed with the taſte of that made of oats; I deſired that he ſhould drink frequently and a little at a time, of a poſſet made with almonds and light broths or milk, and laſtly that he ſhould take an emollient glyſter twice a day.

Ordering in the mean while that one of warm water ſhould be injected, he voided very little fæces after it, but a good deal of black clammy blood, partly liquid, partly in lumps of the ſize of an egg and very difficult to ſeparate from the bottom of the chamberpot. Theſe are evidently the characteriſtic marks of the Atra bilis of the ancients, and the Morbus Niger of Hippocrates. The glyſter adminiſtered in the afternoon was followed by ſuch another ſtool. During the four enſuing days he was free both from Nauſea and pain; he ſlept ſome hours at night; his ſtools were ſtill

black,

black, and his urine ſlightly tinged; and he was recovering his ſtrength; it is true that he did not deviate from my orders in any one particular.

His amendment giving me to underſtand that the blood-veſſels which were the ſource of the hemorrhage were cloſed again, I preſcribed a decoction of tamarinds in order to evacuate what yet remained in the Primæ Viæ. This brought away ſeven ſtools, ſome of which, and particularly the laſt was not ſo black as uſual, and, by the mixture of yellow it contained, promiſed a change of matters for the better.

The next day having taken a glyſter he voided fæces of a good condition, and afterwards I indulged him with a little bread and ſkirrets.

On the ninth day he undoubtedly ate a little too much, and growing uneaſy for about an hour, he fell into a deliquium and vomited a little blood of a good colour; upon which I forbad him his bread and ſkirrets. Since that time his ſtools preſent a good appearance, he feels neither pain nor uneaſineſs, obſerves an

exact

exact regimen, and lives upon vegetable food by choice. In fine he enjoys as good a ſtate of health, as an old man poſſibly can, harraſſed as he has been with a ſevere complication of diſeaſes, continual pains, vexation, and to crown all, with a copious flux of blood and a rigorous diet. This naturally weakened him; if however his ſtomach ſhould loath other victuals, I ſhall adviſe him to live upon milk alone.

This diſorder then as I told you before was an internal hemorrhage and the black matter was degenerated blood; I ſuppoſe you are of the ſame opinion: but the ſubject admits of further enquiries.

For inſtance, it may perhaps be aſked whether this is the *Atra bilis*. Though it is with reluctance I depart from the opinions of our common Chief, yet the force of truth will not permit me to hold the affirmative of this queſtion: my avocations do not allow me to ſet forth my reaſons at preſent, and to conſider whether this ſame *Atra bilis* is, or is not, a creature of imagination.

It

It may be aſked, in the next place, what the nature of the affection, previous to the hemorrhage, was. I anſwer, an overcharging of the blood-veſſels which encompaſs the ſtomach and inteſtines. Thence proceeded a compreſſion on the nerves and pain; the reception of food, as it enlarges the volume of theſe membranous viſcera, encreaſes the compreſſion too; then the pains redouble; and abate as ſoon as there is a diſcharge of blood. This opinion is agreeable to the obſervation which Kæmphius made and communicated to the public upon diſſecting a man who died of a like diſtemper, he diſcovered the gaſtric arteries ſtuffed with black blood. The ſtomach, being diſordered in its function, occaſioned the crude and liquid condition of the ſtools. In a word, the intermiſſions and the other ſymptoms of this diſeaſe will not eſcape the attention of any one, who is well aware, how many cauſes are capable of varying the impetus of the blood in its veſſels, and the ſenſibility of the nerves. But beſides, the remote cauſe of this malady may be enquired into: and I believe we may lay down five. The relaxation of the

veſſels,

veſſels, brought on both by the intermittents (which produce that effect, whatever may be ſaid to the contrary) and by the emollient regimen, which is appropriated to the cure of them: the want of the exerciſe neceſſary to promote the circulation in the veſſels of the ſtomach and inteſtines: the conſtrained attitude he ſat in during his intenſe application to ſtudy; the coffee, ſpirit of cherries, and warm drinks he had recourſe to: and laſtly the improper uſe of vomits of which he made too frequent trials for ſeveral years.

Are there no more powerful medicines than thoſe which I preſcribed? Undoubtedly there are, and they are cried up even by men of reputation. But my dear friend, as your ſagacity, learning and phyſical experience make you a competent judge of the matter, I ſhall lay before you the reaſons which induce me to think that they would be either fruitleſs or dangerous on the preſent occaſion. Bleeding, which is the firſt thing that occurs to conſideration in caſes of an hemorrhage, is unſerviceable, not to add prejudicial; this I am convinced of by the concurring arguments of

reaſon, the authority of capital authors, and my own obſervations. Here I was furniſhed with too many reaſons to refrain from it; the patient, tormented for a long time with an aſthma (a diſorder ſo apt to degenerate into a hydrops pectoris) was at that time very feeble, free from any feveriſh ſymptoms, and emaciated by the weakneſs of the digeſtive powers, and by a faint and lingering convaleſcence. How much ſoever vomits may be recommended upon falſe principles of theory by reſpectable writers, could I reaſonably preſcribe them, without claſhing with the moſt unexceptionable rules of practice? This remedy cauſes hemorrhages ſometimes, when the blood-veſſels are in the ſoundeſt ſtate, and of courſe it would be no leſs than mortal, when they are already burſt in any part.

Should I not have made uſe of purgatives, conformably to my intention of evacuating? Even the mildeſt of that claſs, might have brought on a return of the vomiting, by their action on a ſtomach ſo irritable and apt to nauſeate. I paſs over the others in ſilence; they may be looked upon as poiſon: they all

ſtimu-

ſtimulate the parts, and my purpoſe was to keep them in a ſtate of tranquility; too precipitate an evacuation would have done ſome great damage. Let us obſerve what paſſes in external wounds: do we not ſee them bleed afreſh, if the little obſtructing clods are too roughly removed from the orifices of the veſſels? the ſame thing will naturally happen to internal wounds. On the other hand, the glyſters anſwer every good end that could be expected from the purgatives; they temper, they excite, without irritating, a gentle periſtaltic motion, which counteracts that of vomiting; and it is this, that renders them ſo effectual in ſimilar caſes.

It might perhaps have been wiſhed that I had preſcribed drinks of a more reſolvent or of a more acid quality. But unluckily while I look over the medicines ranked in the former of theſe two claſſes, I cannot meet with any, void of a dangerous acrimony; beſides, as the diameter of the inteſtines is ſufficiently wide for the free paſſage of the larger clots of blood, it is to be apprehended that a dilution of this corrupted ſubſtance would favour its abſorption into the vaſcular ſyſtem, and would

therefore be attended with alarming conſequences.

Meſſrs. Navier and Bonté, to whom we are indebted for good obſervations on the Morbus Niger, ſet a great value on the acid ſpirits, and among the reſt on the Aqua Rabellæ (dulcified Spirit of Vitriol) to which I ſhould prefer the pure ſpirit of vitriol here; theſe acids are undoubtedly poſſeſſed of an antiputrid quality in an eminent degree; they mitigate heat and feveriſh ſymptoms; but my patient was free from both; I therefore could have but very diſtant apprehenſions of a putrid diatheſis, and I looked upon the almond drinks to be ſufficient to anſwer the indication of preventing it, not pretending at the ſame time but that more powerful medicines might have been made uſe of.

I did not venture to allow my patient any kind of meat; this ſort of food is too apt to favour an hemorrhage and putrefaction, and to generate feveriſh ſymptoms. The preference is undoubtedly to be given to that nouriſhment, which the experience of ſo many ages proves to be of a temperate, ſweetening,

nu-

nutritive and cooling quality, I mean the Ptiſanna Percolata of the Immortal Hippocrates.

If we conſider the weakneſs of this patient, it ſeemed naturally conſequent to preſcribe the medicines, improperly called cordials. But their action would infallibly have brought on the flux of blood from the inteſtines again, whence this ſame weakneſs proceeded; and inſtead of ſubduing the diſeaſe by this method, I ſhould have diſpatched the patient by the effect of theſe volatil, ſpirituous, and ſuch like ſubſtances.

Do not imagine that I flatter myſelf with certain hopes of having radically cured my patient. This is ſo much the leſs to be expected, becauſe art cannot, upon the weak and exhauſted habit of this old man, ground any proſpect of reſtoring him to his native vigour. But I have perhaps dwelt too long upon this obſervation; my patient did not however ſink under his diſeaſe. The iſſue of the following caſe was not ſo ſucceſsful.

Second

Second Caſe.

An ingenious tradeſman, of honeſt parentage, aged thirty, and married for ſeveral years paſt to a young wife of an excellent conſtitution, happened to aſk my advice about two years ago, for pains in his ſtomach, ſo ſevere that they deprived him of all his ſtrength at the time of the paroxyſm. My firſt treatment of this complaint proved unſucceſsful. This led me to ſuſpect that it ſprung from a more grievous cauſe than that which determined me to adopt this method of cure; and hereupon, I put him to a milk diet, and added thereto the aſſiſtance of ſome medicine, which has totally eſcaped my memory, as theſe previous particulars were not ſet down in any of my day-books. Some weeks after, I met him and received his thanks for the recovery of his health. Since that time I did not hear of him, till I was informed of the return of his pains. Being ſent for the 23d of March at eleven o'clock, I found him extremely weak, hardly able to ſpeak, and to prevent his faint-

ing

ing totally, he was conſtantly obliged to ſmell to vinegar; his aſpect was cadaverous, his pulſe hardly ſenſible, and ſo quick that the pulſations could ſcarce be reckoned, he was free from any other pain except an importunate teneſmus, occaſioned by the efforts of nature. To give you a further account of the diſorder, in the beginning of laſt Summer, a phyſician conjecturing that he had got obſtructions of the liver, the ſpleen, or pancreas, preſcribed him ſome mdicines, which procuring no relief, were ſucceeded by the uſe of the waters of Lucca; which this doctor ordered him to drink, and to bathe in. He certainly was not of the ſame opinion with our celebrated friend Haller, nor with Kæmphius, who proves that in this ſort of affection, ſteel and mineral waters are contraindicated; and you know that the waters of Lucca are impregnated with iron; however the patient returned from thence better, and continued ſo for a fortnight but no longer. Yet how deluſive a recovery was this! for then his diſorder grew worſe from day to day. He was attacked during the whole winter with

pains

pains in the loins and ſtomach, and a vomiting of limpid water; no food could paſs with him, and he was reduced to the neceſſity of living for ſeveral weeks upon broth and a certain kind of paſtry called lecrelets. In the night of the 21ſt inſtant, this unhappy patient being ſolicited to go to ſtool by intolerable pains, fell into a deliquium, and when he was put into his bed again, his weakneſs encreaſed to an extraordinary pitch. The phyſician was ſent for in the morning; who, attending to the ſtrength of the ſick (for that is the firſt indication to be followed in order to the preſervation of life) ordered him a cordial draught, compoſed of Aq. Meliſſ. Tinctur. Caſtor: and the Syr. Cort. Citrei. to be often repeated; his faintneſs encreaſed ſtill, and he rendered fæces of a black colour. Towards night he was ordered another mixture with tamarinds, extract of rhubarb, and Sal acetoſæ to be taken by ſpoonfuls: of this he had hardly ſwallowed any, when he was ſeized with a vomiting of fæces, and an unremitting ſucceſſion of ſyncopes; the purging potion was omitted, his

ſtate

ſtate grew more and more deſperate; and about noon he expired.

His brothers, with whom the good of all ſick people, and particularly, their ſiſter, (who was afflicted with a pain in her ſtomach) juſtly overbalanced the vulgar prejudice, deſired to have the body opened, in order to diſcover the cauſe of ſo dreadful a diſorder. I was called to aſſiſt at the diſſection with the other phyſician, and here follows the reſult thereof.

The whole body and particularly the Spina dorſi appeared ſo emaciated, that it ſufficiently denoted a Tabes Dorſalis; and this conjecture is confirmed by the relief he perceived after a long abſence from home. This perhaps was the only cauſe of his amendment during his ſtay at the waters of Lucca. There was no adheſion, no defect in the thorax, except the paleneſs and inanition of the heart, the lungs and blood-veſſels; on opening the abdomen we diſcovered the muſcles bare and quite deſtitute of fat, as well as the ſtomach, which was in its natural ſtate and ſituation. The inteſtines which were overſpread with red and black ſpots, and filled with wind, reſembled thoſe

of one that had died of a gangrene in that part, with the difference of the ſmell, and the obliteration of the veſſels; in the ſame manner were the veſſels of the ſtomach ſo effaced, that the ſtricteſt ſearch to obſerve any, was fruitleſs. The ſpleen and the liver offered to our view no other defect than a lighter colour than the natural, and a diminution of their volume The gall-bladder was contracted and only filled with air; the Ductus Choledochus, the pancreas and the kidneys preſented no appearance of obſtructions: ſo that all the viſcera, to whoſe charge the miſchief was placed, were in a ſound ſtate, and only the ſtomach and inteſtines were found to be in fault. As ſoon as they were opened, we perceived a quantity of black blood to ſtream from the whole tube; that of the ſtomach, being diluted by the drink, was not ſo deep coloured, but from thence to the anus it grew more and more black and viſcous, particularly in the large guts, where it was equal to pitch in colour and conſiſtence. That contained in the parts overrun with red ſpots, was fluid; elſewhere it was entirely black, and after it

was

was cleared out of the inteſtines, they reſumed their natural colour.

Now let us enquire what is the cauſe of the patient's death. An hemorrhage whence proceeded a faintneſs, ſyncopes, and an inanition of the veſſels, which circulated little or no blood during ſeveral months paſt.

The vaſcular ſyſtem of the ſtomach and inteſtines being overdiſtended gave riſe to this hemorrhage, let it be, if you will, a chronical inflammation; however, no one has given a better deſcription of this exceſſive plenitude, than Monſieur Kæmpf.

Could this fatal iſſue of the diſorder be foreſeen? Let us liſten to the reſpectable Hippocrates, his aphoriſm runs thus. "Thoſe "painful commotions, which part from the "loins, and proceed to the orifice of the ſto-"mach, and which are attended with aqueous "vomitings, end in a vomiting of a black "matter."

But previous to the hemorrhage was there no poſſibility of performing a cure? Kæmpf recommends a vegetable and ſparing diet, and gives the preference to vegetables of a mild

and ſomewhat ſaponaceous quality, particularly to whey, taken in ſmall and often repeated doſes with extractum ſambuci; in this particular I agree with him, but cannot after mature conſideration conceive that any good can be effected by the other medicines he allies with theſe juſt mentioned, which are all of a ſharp irritating nature. As for the method to be followed after the hemorrhage has declared itſelf, I have treated that point in my reflections on the foregoing obſervation.

Suppoſing we could go ſo far as to get the better of the hemorrhage, the patient ſhould, in order to prevent the return of it, be debarred the uſe of every thing that is capable of occaſioning a plethora, encreaſing the motion of the fluids, rendering them acrimonious, and ſtimulating the inteſtines; and we ſhould preſcribe, among the ſtrengtheners ſuch as do not exaſperate the ſolids. For it is to be expected that, if we do not reſtore the relaxed tonus of thoſe veſſels weakened by a continual diſtention of a long ſtanding, the firſt diſturbance that ſhall happen in them, will burſt them again. The agreeable Redi, in his entertaining

ing letters, which have an ample claim to the reader's applauſe by the bare merit of their elegant ſtile, ſays with very much juſtice that nature is frequently ſelf-ſufficient, and that ſhe in time enables the blood-veſſels to recover their ſtrength by the aſſiſtance of a light temperate diet. But when the relaxation of the fibres is of an old date and owing to ſome grievous cauſe, here it is adviſeable that art ſhould ſtep in to the aſſiſtance of nature. And in this caſe as in many others it is, that the enſuing ſucceſs has declared in favour of the proper treatment.

Should we aſk the diſciples of Stahl what the diſorder of this unhappy ſufferer was, they would not fail to diſtinguiſh it with the title of an hemorrhoidal colic, and upon this ground they would maintain that the piles would be ſerviceable to him. It muſt be allowed that an evacuation by this outlet would procure ſome relief, conſidering the infinite number of inoſculations by which the vaſcular ſyſtem is united; for it is but reaſonable to ſuppoſe that there was not a general deſtruction of the veſſels, but that only a few ſuffered, through which the blood extravaſated. And had it

been

been the hemorrhoidal branches alone that ſupplied this diſcharge, it is warranted by a number of obſervations that the ſame benefit would have been attained: but does it thence follow that the piles ought to be brought on? I think not. The piles but ſeldom forward the cure of diſeaſes, and then the ſervice they may be of, is attended with troubleſome conſequences. You ſee how many inconveniences the monthly flux, as natural a diſcharge as it is, renders women incident to; then the piles intail the ſame diſorders upon men. Several obſervations confirm this aſſertion; Santorini, Richter, Guntz, Heiſter, Tralles, who are all of them firſt-rate writers, have ſubſcribed to it; and Monſieur de Haen has lately ſet it in the cleareſt light with his known erudition and ſagacity.

I ſhall add, that it is dangerous to provoke the piles in the diſorder which is the ſubject of our diſcuſſion. For, who can anſwer that the ſtimulating medicines, which muſt neceſſarily be preſcribed to promote this diſcharge, and yet are contra-indicated in the primitive affection, will rather exert their action on the hemorrhoidal than on the iliac

veſſels.

veſſels. It is then to be apprehended that this courſe would add fuel to fire and diſpatch the patient. What I here advance is confirmed by ſome excellent obſervations of Doctor de Haen, on the different effects produced by the piles, according to the reſpective veſſels which ſupply the diſcharge. I muſt own at the ſame time that I do not look upon it to be of any great conſequence, whichſoever of the ſmall branches proves the ſource of the flux: it is of much more ſerious moment to be aware that, ſuppoſing our patient ſhould recover by this alternative, his diſorder will inceſſantly return as ſoon as the portion of blood that has been loſt ſhall be reproduced. In this particular it may properly be compared to the colic pains that forerun the appearance of the Catamenia; nothing but the evacuation can give a reprieve from it, and it will continually revert if no other remedy is employed. It would be therefore idle to ground the hopes of a radical cure upon this diſcharge, for it will only procure a palliative, doubtful and treacherous amendment: we ſhould then be ſtrictly on our guard againſt bringing it on, unleſs the uſe of the emollient

glyſters

glyſters (which are ſo eſſential to our purpoſe) may be looked upon as productive of this effect. Do not imagine in the mean time that I take the colic, with which this man was afflicted, to be an hemorrhoidal colic; I only maintain that though that were the caſe, all poſſible means ſhould be exerted to prevent the appearance of the piles, becauſe, as Heiſter ſays with much juſtice, their caſual obſtruction (to which I ſhall add the too great quantity thereof) eaſily gives birth to an infinite number of accidents ſubſequent to the troubleſome ills which they ſuſpend.

From our obſervations may be drawn many inferences of great import in practice: I ſhall only mention one. Thoſe ſevere, inveterate pains of the ſtomach, the loins and the inteſtines, are a matter of more weighty conſideration than they are uſually thought to be; and the bitter, aromatic and ſpirituous medicines, which are oppoſed to them, are unſafe and even deſtructive, while the claſs of coolers on the other hand ſupplies us with good ſtomachics. How many have been daily diſpatched by the pernicious cuſtom of pre-

ſcribing

ſcribing carminatives to remedy pretended flatulent complaints!*

I have now fulfilled my engagement with reſpect to the Morbus Niger: but I am juſt

 now

* Simſon, in the laſt of his four excellent diſſertations intitled *de re medicâ*, gives us an inſtance of this diſorder, uſhered in by ſymptoms, ſomewhat different from theſe already laid before us, and otherwiſe treated. I therefore take the freedom to preſent the judicious reader with a comparative view of it. This learned author, enlarging on the uſes of the mucous coat that lines all the cavities of the human body, takes more particular notice of that which defends the Cardia, or upper orifice of the ſtomach, and the ill conſequences ariſing from the privation of it. The things moſt powerfully productive of this bad effect he takes to be ſpirituous liquors, warm drinks, particularly of a ſaponaceous quality, and ſuch other ſubſtances as are capable of diſſolving this ſlime with which nature ſheathed the fibres of the Cardia, and ſo expoſing them to the action of all kinds of ſtimuli. Hence a cardialgia, if not taken timely notice of, becomes the treacherous forerunner of more dangerous ills. This he reaſons on very ſoundly, and illuſtrates with the only example he ever met with, wherein the moſt deſperate ſtages of the diſeaſe fell under his own inſpection.

" George Lowe, a labouring man of fifty, conſulted me about a diſtemper he was afflicted with, which he repreſented as an unuſual ſort of tightneſs and a continual ſenſe of fullneſs in the left hypochondriac region, attended with a moſt acute pain in the pit of the ſtomach and the op-

now informed of the death of a patient who had experienced torturing pains in his ſtomach:

---

oppoſite part of the back; beſides many wandering pains, ſometimes about his ſhoulder-blades and ſometimes in his ſides. Laſtly, he complained of being ſubject to ſuch exceſſive quantities of wind in his ſtomach, that he was afraid of burſting, and therefore often ſought relief by belching; but his endeavours were generally fruitleſs. Having proceeded thus far in his account, the poor wretch, as if ſeized with a fit of madneſs, threw himſelf proſtrate on the bed, and ſuddenly heaping all the bed-cloths under his hypochondria, leaned againſt them with all his might; ſhortly after, unable to bear this ſituation, he roſe, ſat by the fire, and begged to have warm cloaths applied to his ſides. This requeſt was complied with, but to no purpoſe: until he at length forced up ſome wind, after being almoſt tired to death with ſtraining; and recovered himſelf a little. Then burſting into tears (as was cuſtomary with him) and bewailing his lot in a moſt pitiful manner, he implored the Divinity to rid him of a life become ſo calamitous; nor would he give the leaſt attention to the entreaties of his friends or the phyſician, but caſt his eyes on the ground and ſo remained inflexible and inconſolable. As often as I go to ſee him I find him in this deſponding condition, and this is not to be admired at, for the unhappy ſufferer can ſcarce ever taſte either liquids or ſolids without experiencing theſe ſevere attacks. I now deſired to know, firſt, if he could clearly point out to me the commencement of his diſorder? he replied, that it began at a diſtant period and gradually increaſed to that pitch. But he could not ſatisfy me as to what

mach: after laying before you the ſtate of his caſe, I ſhall next proceed to give you an ac-

what originally gave riſe to this grievous complaint, unleſs it proceeded from his having been formerly overcharged with an enormous burden; a misfortune which, tho' it befell him long ſince, had yet made ſo laſting an impreſſion upon him, that it was ſtill freſh in his memory. I next aſked him, what taſte his belches had? he told me that they were not all alike, but generally ſpeaking were ſo acid and ſharp that they abſolutely lacerated his throat. (But whether this ſenſe of laceration was impreſſed by the extreme ſharpneſs of his belches, or whether the organs of deglutition were really ſo affected of old, we ſhall ſoon diſcover.) He had no reſpite from his torture except while his ſtomach was empty. Beſides he was always a little better, when he had a looſeneſs; and when he varied his diet, though any one ſort of food was ſcarce tolerable to him above three days. To this the patient's account I ſhall annex a detail of the future ſucceſſive changes of his diſtemper. Not long after he was ſeized with a vomiting of blood, which was moſtly concrete, conſiſted of a good deal of ſerum and reſembled fragments of a liver: this dreadful ſymptom was ſucceeded by repeated deliquia. A little after he was chilled all over with cold. A diſmal murmuring noiſe, ſuch as often precedes death, iſſued at his throat, and thence crept along to his inteſtines. Here all hopes were given over. However, after a ſpoonful of warm wine was poured into his mouth, he opened his eyes, began to ſpeak and turned away from the wine; which we afterwards ordered him, mixed with an equal quantity of forge water and a little Bol Armenick. Thus being

count of what we learned from the diſſection of the body.

The

---

being retrieved, he got a little better for ſome few weeks; when he had a relapſe of his former obſtinate complaints, and renouncing all aſſiſtance he dragged on a life of ſufferings almoſt a year longer. At length I was informed that he voided great quantities of black, hard, parched matter by ſtool, and expired the day after.

Now I was happy to avail myſelf of an occaſion of inveſtigating the nature of a diſorder hitherto unexampled and obtained leave to diſſect the body. This done I diſcovered the inteſtines all along, as well as the ſtomach, ſtuffed with coagulated blood. Hard by the Cardia there appeared unnatural, rough, ſchirrhous tuberoſities; and about a nail's breadth below the Cardia, towards the right and on the outſide, where it is contiguous to the liver, a remarkable tumour as big as a fiſt, of a hard and equal conſiſtence and yellowiſh colour: it took its riſe from the external tunic of the ſtomach grown ulcerated, and moleſted the adjacent fibres of the liver ſo, that it inflamed and rendered it purulent, and yet had no adherence therewith. I could diſcover no rupture of the veſſels any where, and therefore ſuppoſe it lay in the interſtices of theſe ſchirrhous tuberoſities, for I traced the courſe of the blood ſo far. Nothing elſe was found amiſs in the whole abdomen."

Thus far Dr. Simſon. He afterwards, with much juſtice conjectures this diſeaſe to be the genuine *Melancholia flatuoſa et ὑποχονδριακη* of the Antients. As to the nature of this ſuppoſed Atra bilis, he agrees in opinion with our author.

The Tranſlator.

The third Obſervation.

A poor man, aged thirty, had returned to his native country after ſerving five years in the Engliſh army; when he was preſſed into the Pruſſian ſervice, by villains who raviſhed his little property from him: here he ſpent nine years in vexation and miſery. He at length found means to deſert at the battle of Collins, and returning home he endeavoured to work in a printing-office for his livelihood; but this occupation requiring more ſtrength than he was maſter of, he betook himſelf to the mending of the high ways, and this work he was frequently obliged, though with reluctance, to diſcontinue, by the ſeverity of the pain in his ſtomach.

At laſt his ſufferings grew ſo unremitting and ſo acute, that they confined him to his bed, and he conſulted me at the end of Autumn. On carefully examining the ſymptoms of his diſtemper, I diſcovered nothing amiſs with the operations of the animal œconomy, excepting his ſleep, which was hindered by the pain, and the action of the in-

teſtines,

teſtines, which was ſo torpid that he was continually conſtipated. He had no nauſea, except when his ſtomach was overcharged; but in that circumſcribed ſpace between the Cartilago Enſiformis and the navel, he was inceſſantly afflicted with an acute and frequently a racking pain, which increaſed after his meals.

On deliberating with the greateſt attention I was capable of, upon the cauſes of this ſo violent a diſtemper, I could only conjecture the exiſtence of a calculus obſtructed in its paſſage to the inteſtines, or a ſchirrhus. I even thought I diſcovered that the liver was affected, by feeling the hypochondriac region where the inferior lobe was found harder to the touch than it is naturally; and this ſuſpicion was corroborated by the circumſtance of his being coſtive; but ſince this lobe did not exceed its ordinary volume, I could not pronounce upon the matter peremptorily. The painful part admitted of a ſlight touch, but if preſſed upon a little, it was immediately neceſſary to diſcontinue the compreſſion, ſo much was the pain exaſperated thereby; from

hence

hence I concluded that the pancreas itſelf was injured.

The patient had laboured under no previous diſorder; but the hardſhips of war and the laſting melancholy, which he endured, were very ſufficient to produce a ſchirrhus. As for a ſtone, if there was any reaſon that favoured the opinion of it, there were infinitely more that ſtood up to overthrow this opinion. I therefore directed my views to the reſolution of the ſchirrhus, provided it was not a confirmed one, and this courſe I adopted the rather, becauſe the medicines that I had an eye to, were undoubtedly efficacious in the caſe of a calculus, if this ſhould chance to exiſt. But in this advanced period of the ſeaſon I was concerned to find myſelf limited in my choice of the medicines which this deſperate diſtemper required. I ordered him to keep to a light diet, and the uſe of ſuch ſaponaceous remedies as the ſeaſon afforded; to foment the part affected as gently as poſſible, and to take two or three glyſters a day. The patient, far from being relieved by this method, got an univerſal loathing: artificial mineral waters were preſcribed to no purpoſe, and I

had

had no better luck in the application of ſedatives. Upon this I renounced medicine, and adviſed him to live only upon milk, a little water and honey; and with this regimen he did not even get an abatement of his pain, his diſorder kept to its former degree of ſeverity: I however procured him ſome hours reſt by the means of opium, which he had now been taking every night ſince the middle of January, and which I allowed him every morning too for many weeks before his death. It was a duty enjoined by charity, and humanity, to grant this unhappy ſufferer the only relief which providence pointed out for the alleviation of his intolerable pain.

I was well aware that opium was never the leſs oppoſite to every ſtep towards a cure; it deſtroyed the powers of the ſtomach, ſo far as to have brought on a general loathing; it favoured his conſtipation; it oppoſed the reſolution of the ſchirrhus, and the action of the other remedies, infine, it impaired the patient's ſtrength: but after all hopes of recovery were given over, was I not warranted to employ the only remedy capable of allay-

ing

ing a pain, which if continual would prove insupportable.

In the month of February another physician ordered him to be blooded. He was undoubtedly in the right, in such a state of atony, restlessness, emaciation, torture, and inanition as this poor wretch was reduced to, to rob him over and above that of the humidum radicale, if he aimed at the best method of shortening his calamitous days. But that he could have other views than this, is to me incomprehensible: Ædipus himself would be perplexed to account for it. There appeared no signs of a jaundice: during the latter weeks of the patient's life, his complaints arose to a continual kind of howling which made me more than once suspect an internal cancer, what the vulgar call a gnawing serpent. He fetched his breath with ease and regularity to the last moment: at length after a slight respite and a short delirium without suffocation, without any other disorder in his pulse than its gradual extincton, he expired on the first of April at five in the morning.

The surgeon his assistant and I could scarce believe our eyes, when we saw that the body

of this man, who was ſix feet tall and proportionally luſty and well ſet, only weighed fifty pounds. His ſkin was hard and livid, the muſcles of the abdomen were ſmall, parched, and blackiſh; and the omentum was rather like a kind of thin parchment. The inteſtines were hideous to look at; the external membrane of the duodenum, the pylorus and the adjacent part of the ſtomach were tinged with a yellow colour. This latter viſcus was empty, and had no defect, but it lay pretty deep towards its left ſide and concealed under the liver; which was grown to a prodigious bulk indeed, ſituated as well as the ſpleen higher than the third rib, and had no preternatural adherence any where; its ſurface was, as it were, ſtudded with tuberoſities, and felt as hard as ſtone, except about the paſſage of the vena portæ: it made as much reſiſtance to the diſſecting knife, as a cartilage or a bone in its infant ſtate; and in cutting, the motion of the inſtrument was interrupted by an incredible number of ſmall ſtones. We diſcovered no blood in it; in colour it reſembled new cheeſe; but at the middle and concave part it had degenerated from the natural

ſtate

ſtate leſs than elſewhere. We weighed a piece of it, which we judged to be heavier than an equal volume of marble: the inferior lobe, which was the hardeſt and the moſt bulky, compreſſed all the adjacent parts. The veſica fellea was ſmall, of a cylindrical form; and contained no ſolid body, only a little fluid and extremely black bile. The ſpleen being a little bigger than it naturally is, was full of black fluid blood that flowed out through the ſlighteſt inciſion; this argues an anaſtomoſis of the vaſcular ſyſtem ſufficient for the diſcharge of many blood-veſſels by a ſingle one, or elſe an extravaſation into the membrana celluloſa which connects and ſupports theſe veſſels. However that be, let it be remarked that the ſpleen was ſo deſtitute of any degree of firmneſs that it became quite flabby after the blood was evacuated.

This is ſufficient to diſcover the cauſe of this man's extreme ſufferings. What phyſician can be ignorant that the liver in a ſchirrhous ſtate imparts the moſt acute pains to the ſtomach? But whether I was wrong in conjecturing that the pancreas bore a part in the miſchief, we were able to judge after having

removed the ſtomach. Then we perceived this viſcus three times larger than the natural ſize, harder than the liver, and more ſtony, of the ſame colour and the ſame exceſſive weight with it. There is no doubt but that the ſtomach, thus ſituated between two petrified viſcera, muſt have endured a moſt extraordinary compreſſion, and come in for a ſhare in all the evils that are attributed to them. I even diſcovered the characteriſtic marks of the cancer which I had an apprehenſion of, in the middle and inferior part of the pancreas, for there it was livid and thickſet with tumours proceeding from an expanſion of the membrana adipoſa. We perceived no preternatural adheſion all over the abdomen; and the period of interring the body approaching, prevented our examining the other cavities, but to ſay the truth the inſpection of them was of no great ſignificance, for what we had already ſeen ſufficiently demonſtrated the reality and confirmed ſtate of the diſeaſe, and of courſe the fruitleſs application of medicine. It is unneceſſary for me to dwell any longer on this ſubject; and on the precautions, the obſervations that will occur to every phyſician of your ſagacity on

ſimilar

ſimilar occaſions. I ſhall therefore next take notice of another caſe that came in my way the ſame week, the matter is not deſpicable, tho' at the ſame time it is not of as weighty conſideration as the foregoing.

A child four years old, whom I had juſt recovered from a maraſmus by the aſſiſtance of the bark and the extract of buckbean, voided in the morning after a ſlight itching, a young tænia, all of an even thickneſs, which did not exceed that of a coarſe white thread, about twenty-five inches in length, and rolled about in three or four circles. It reſembled thoſe which Monſieur Linnæus diſcovered in the ſprings in Sweden, and them that a friend of mine obſerved in a fountain in Switzerland. The celebrated Haller, who is a ſtranger to nothing that regards natural hiſtory, takes notice that this inſect is often to be met with in water; but I do not know any body that has obſerved that ever a child voided one of this kind. I have however been ſince informed by a reſpectable lady, that her daughter had voided ſome of the ſame form until ſhe came to be ten years old, but that for fifteen years paſt ſhe had perceived nothing that approached

to

to the tænia. As I was in a hurry to ſet out on a journey, at the time that I was ſhewn this inſect, I did not think of deſiring to have it preſerved for me in milk. This omiſſion gives me concern; I might at my return have made ſome experiments to aſcertain whether it was capable of motion, of attaining to maturity in milk, and of multiplying as the polypus does.

I ſhall only take notice how abſurd and incompatible with obſervation it is to give this ſort of worms the appellation of ſolitary, whereas they are found in company with other worms. And here we have a recent proof of the anthelmintic quality of the bark; which gives us to underſtand that the weakneſs of the digeſtive powers being the cauſe of the generation of worms, the medicines fitteſt to remove them are alſo thoſe beſt adapted to remove this weakneſs.

I ſhall be attentive to know if in future the child ſhould have tænias; I have ſeen ſeveral people cured of this worm by ſurgeon Naufer's medicine, which his widow now vends; and they were a ſecond time attacked with it ſome years after. It is then a falſe aſſertion that

when

when once the tænia is expelled, the ſame perſon is never again afflicted with it. I have already engaged your attention with the narrative of what I learned from the diſſection of a body; and I ſhall now acquaint you with the benefit I obtained by an inciſion on the living.

An unmarried woman of thirty, of a ſtrong conſtitution, and irreproachable character, was ſeized with a violent head-ach, two years and four months ago; this complaint had ſenſibly weakened her already, at the expiration of ſome weeks, when ſhe came to have my advice. She ſuffered day and night without intermiſſion, and was utterly unable to enjoy a moment's ſleep. The ſpot from whence the pain ſhot, was at the interior poſterior angle of the right parietal bone, and might be covered with a ſmall coin; but the ſenſation ſpread all over the forehead, and it came on ſometimes with ſuch fury, that the patient cried out at one time that ſhe was torn to pieces, at another, that ſhe was burned; in a word, her condition was truly deplorable. As ſhe lived in the country, I had not frequent occaſions of ſeeing her; but her mother or ſtep-

father

father gave me a faithful account of every thing that paſſed. I ſucceſſively made a trial of every help that medicine could ſuggeſt to me, as the patient and thoſe about her were as tractable as I could wiſh: ſhe got ſome little relief by cupping, but ſtill more by bliſters applied to the head, which were kept running for a long time: no ſort of bleeding was of ſervice to her, not even that of the temporal artery, which I ordered her after the example of the celebrated Geſner, who I remember informs us in his letters that he cured a like diſtemper by this method; neither the ſemicupium, nor cold bathing, nor pumping, nor opium, nor the ſeton, on which Ruiſch beſtows ſo many encomiums, nothing, in a word, that I could deviſe, was able to remove this obſtinate pain.

During the whole courſe of this diſeaſe, the catamenia flowed at their regular periods, and the patient's ordinary ſtate of health was no otherwiſe diſturbed than by her pain and continual want of ſleep. But at length overwhelmed with fifteen months watching and affliction ſhe was obliged to keep her bed, and her conſtitution began to decline; ſhe was

ſuc-

ſucceſſively ſeized with a nauſea and colic pains; ſhe voided worms, partly of the nature of the tænia, and partly of an uncommon ſpecies but ſimilar to ſome which ſhe had rendered before in her younger years; and to crown all, ſhe got intermitting palpitations of the heart, anxieties, together with an univerſal ſoreneſs all over the ſurface of her body.

Having deſired her to drop taking medicine during the winter, I could deviſe no other probable means at the return of ſpring of releaſing her from this deſperate condition, than to make a long and deep inciſion on the affected part, by which the muſcular and cutaneous nerves as well as fibres being divided might be rendered incapable of communicating the pain. Convinced that what gave riſe to it did not extend beyond the bone, I made no doubt but that it would ſucceed; and altho' I had harboured any apprehenſion of that point, I would nevertheleſs have tried this expedient rather than continue in the mortifying aſſurance that nothing would get the better of this ſtubborn complaint. I muſt own that the pain might have proceeded from an aſperity on the cranium moleſting the muſ-

cles and the pericranium, and that in this caſe the intended inciſion would not have proved very ſerviceable, but it would at leaſt have brought the true ſource of the pain to light, and ſo given room to the employing ſome other method of cure, perhaps trepanning if judged neceſſary. The patient very reſolutely ſubmitted to endure the pain of the operation, in hopes of getting ſome relief thereby: and in conſequence on the twelfth of April the ſurgeon made a crucial inciſion two inches long down to the pericranium; I procured ſo plentiful a ſuppuration that in three days time the pericranium was expoſed to view, and I pricked it ſeveral times over, without the woman's having any ſenſe of pain, whether I gave her notice of what I was doing or not: I repeated the ſame experiments the ſeventh day with the ſame reſult and to the great aſtoniſhment of the ſurgeon, who very repeatedly aſſured himſelf of the reality of this inſenſibility. Are we not warranted to conclude from thence that the pericranium is inſenſible?

But

But we ſhall lay aſide this obſervation with all the uſe that may be made of it. The wound was healed up the fifth of May. The patient, contrary to her expectations got rid of her pain from the moment the inciſion was made, and has had no return of it ſince; the heavineſs in her head is inſenſibly gone off, and ſhe has now no complaint but a weakneſs, a loathing, her palpitation and a ſort of dead pain in the trunk and towards the extremities; ſhe begins to recover her reſt tho' ſlowly; in fine I flatter myſelf that all theſe relics, the fruits of her watching and ill habit of body will yield to the reſolution and youth of my patient.

I have already ſubdued the nauſea by the aſſiſtance of hypecacuanha; and I ſhall employ rhubarb united with cuckow-pint in order to reſolve and evacuate the fæces; moreover this medicine will give a tonus to the viſcera, and will revive the periſtaltic motion of the inteſtines and the activity of the gaſtric juices. I am in hopes that chalybeates and the bark will compleat the cure, provided however that the organiſation of all the exter-

nal muſcles of the head is not totally deſtroyed; as I apprehend that may be the caſe, conſidering the conſtancy and inveteracy of the diſeaſe, which might poſſibly have imparted its effects to the environs of the part primarily affected: tho' this misfortune, which God avert, ſhould happen, it would not argue that the primitive pain was not removed by the inciſion; it would only evince the untimely application, and not the inutility of this expedient.*

Should you now aſk me what could have been the cauſe of this extraordinary affection, I reply that the patient was only conſcious of a remote one, which was the cuſtom of carrying enormous burdens on her head; let me add

* This puts me in mind of Surgeon Poiton's intereſting obſervations on the wounds of the head. He mentions two inſtances he met with of the moſt alarming ſymptoms being occaſioned by blows received on the head; towards the removal of which all imaginable means proved ineffectual, till the affected part was ſcarified down to the cranium, and ſuffered to bleed plentifully. In theſe caſes he obſerved that a compreſſion on the part renewed the pain; and on this account he looks upon the diſorder to be an inflammation of the pericranium.

The Tranſlator.

add a more proximate cauſe; the ſtimulus of an acrid humour obſtinately ſettled on the nerves and perhaps particularly on this very ſenſible branch of a hard nerve which occupies the affected ſpot.

From all this we may draw ſome inference. Phyſicians are now-a-days grown too timorous: they have prepoſterouſly abandoned the more efficacious methods to limit themſelves to medicines of inferior energy. Sufficient attention is not paid to this obſervation of Hippocrates, to wit, that the knife cures what medicines cannot cure. But this intrepid practice that did not heſitate at large doſes and powerful medicines; formerly the favourite practice of the Arabians, and phyſicians of all other countries; ſo ſucceſsfully adhered to by Sennertus, Etmuller, Stahl and Hoffman, is unfortunately buried in oblivion; nor are the vigorous exertions of the Geſners, the Tortis, and the Hallers, with ſome other moderns, able to revive it.

FINIS.