



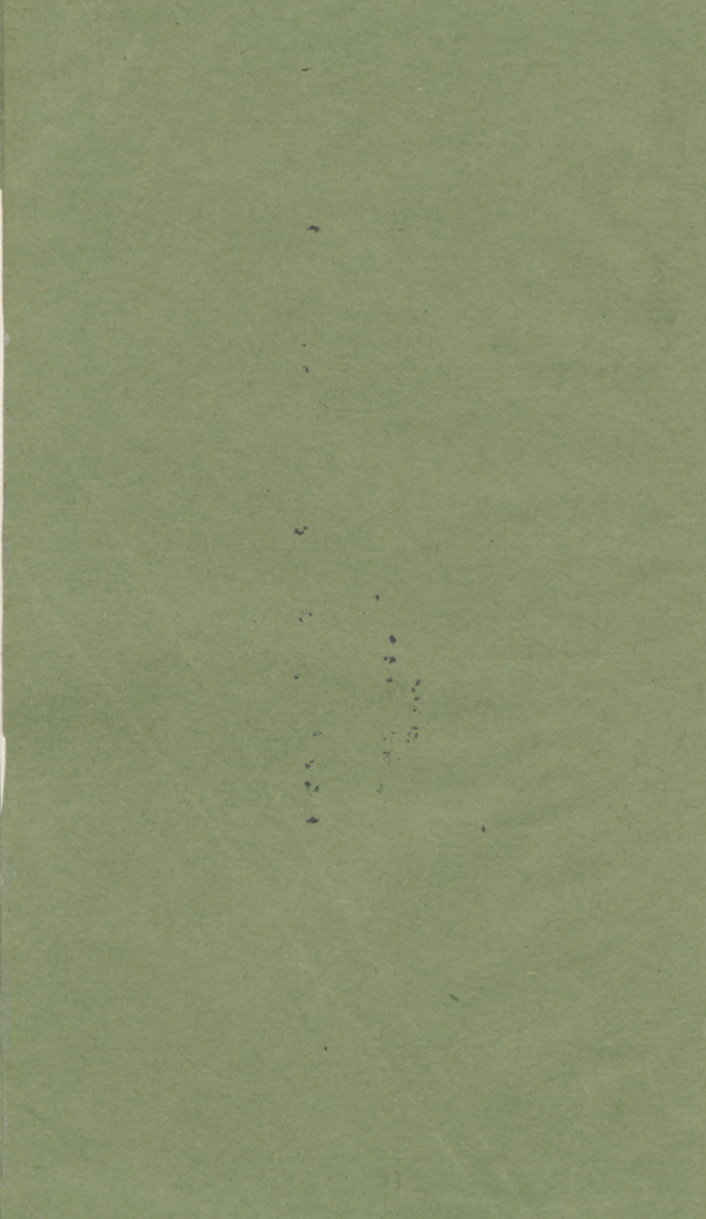
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THE  
VIRTUES

OF  
COMMON WATER:

OR,  
THE ADVANTAGES THEREOF,

IN  
PREVENTING AND CURING MANY DISTEMPERS.  
GATHERED

*From the writings of several eminent Physicians, and also from  
more than forty years experience.*

By JOHN SMITH, C. M.

To which is added,  
SOME RULES FOR PRESERVING HEALTH BY DIET.

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*That's the best physic, which doth cure our ills  
Without the charge of 'pothecaries bills.*

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THE TENTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

COMMUNICATED BY  
Mr RALPH THORESBY, F. R. S. and Others.

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THE  
VIRTUES  
OF  
COMMON WATER.

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**F**OR the benefit of mankind in general, I have taken pains to give the world an account of what I have found written in the works of the most eminent physicians, concerning the good that mankind may receive from the use of Common Water; and of the informations I have had concerning the benefits thereof from others by word of mouth; and of what I have discovered by my own experience, from frequent trials, during a time that hath intervned from that of thirty to seventy-four years of age: which is sufficient to confirm the stupendious effects thereof; especially in the many particulars that shall be mentioned as my own discovery with respect to this excellent remedy, which will perform cures with very little trouble, and without any charge, and is also to be had wherever there are any habitations, which can hardly be said of any other: So that in some sense water may be truly stiled, *an universa remedy*, since the diseases it either prevents or cures may have this remedy applied to all persons, and in all places where men inhabit.

The first commendation of Common Water I shall mention, is that of Dr Manwaring, in his *Method and means of enjoying health*; wherein he saith, that water is a wholesome drink, or rather the most wholesome—being appointed for man in his best state; which doth strongly argue

*Excellency  
of Water.*

that drink to be the most suitable for human nature—answering all the intentions of common drinks; for it cools, moistens, and quencheth thirsts; 'tis clear, thin, and fit to convey the nourishment through the smallest vessels of the body—and it is a drink that is a rule to itself, and requires little caution in the use of it, since none will be tempted to drink of it more than needs: And that, in the primitive ages of the world, water-drinkers, he says, were the longest lived by some hundreds of years—not so often sick and complaining as we are.

Dr Keill, treating of the stomach, in his *Abridgment of the anatomy of human bodies*, saith, that *Digestion to help.* water seems the fittest to promote the digestion of food; all spirituous liquors having a property by which they hurt, rather than help digestion; the sad effects of which they are sensible of, he saith, who by a long use thereof have lost their appetites, hardly ever to be restored without drinking water, which seldom faileth of procuring a good appetite and a strong digestion. With which Dr. Baynard agrees, affirming, “That water liquifies and concocts our food better than any fermented liquor whatever.” *Hist. of cold bathing*, p. 440.

Dr. Prat, in his *treatise of mineral waters*, shews it to be his judgment, that, if people would *Diseases to prevent.* custom themselves to drink water, they would be more free from many diseases; such as tremblings, palsies, apoplexies, giddiness, pains in the head, gout, stone, dropsy, rheumatism, piles, and such like: which diseases are most common among them that drink strong drinks, and which water generally would prevent. Moreover, he saith, that water plentifully drank, strengthens the stomach, causeth an appetite, preserves the sight, maketh the senses lively, and cleanseth all the passages of the body, especially those of the kidneys and bladder.

'Tis also said by Dr. Duncan, in his *treatise of hot li-*



*gours*, that, when men contented themselves with water, they had more health and strength; and that at this day those who drink nothing but water are more healthy, and live longer, than those who drink strong liquors, which raise the heat of the stomach to excess, whereas water keeps it in a due temper. And he adds in another part of the book, that by hot liquor the blood is inflamed; and such whose blood is inflamed, live not so long as those who are of a cooler temper; a hot blood being commonly the cause of fluxes, rheums, ill digestion, pains in the limbs, head-ach, dimness of sight, and especially of hysteric vapours. He also imputes the cause of ulcers to a hot blood, and declares, that if men kept their blood cool and sweet, by a moderate and cooling diet, they would never be troubled with ulcers, or other breakings-out. Which coolness of the blood will be well attained to by drinking a large draught of water in the morning, which also will carry off the bilious and salt recrements by urine. And, if water is drank also after dinner, it will cool a hot stomach, and prevent the rising of those fermentations which cause wind and belching after meat. So that if persons who are liable to these disorders will leave off strong liquors and a hot diet, and drink water, they will procure better health to themselves than they had before.

*Health to  
procure by  
Water.*

Sir John Floyer also, in his *treatise of cold baths*; p. 109, edit. 5, affirms, that water-drinkers are temperate in their actions, prudent and ingenious; they live safe from those diseases which affect the head, such as apoplexies, palsies, pain, blindness, deafness, gout, convulsions, trembling, madness: And the drinking of water cures the hiccough, sætor of the mouth, and of the whole body; it resists putrefaction, and cools burning heats and thirsts, and after dinner it helps digestion.—And if the virtues of cold water were seriously considered, all persons would value it as a great medicine, in preventing the stone, asthma, and

*Some of the  
good pro-  
perties of  
Water.*

hysterick fits; and to the use of this, children ought to be bred up from their cradles. And, in page 434, he saith, That as water is in chief the universal drink of the world—so it is the best, and most salubrious. And, in page 434. That he hath known where a regular drinking of spring-water hath done considerable cures by washing off the acrid, scorbutic salts from the blood, and strengthening the coats and fibres of the stomach and bowels, and hath brought on a good appetite, and a strong digestion. And I add, that it will infallibly do it in all curable cases.

Having read over an old book written by Sir Thomas Elliot, intituled, *The castle of health*, he there declared from his own experience, that in the county of Cornwall, tho' it was a very cold quarter, the poorer sort, which in his time did never, or but very seldom, drink any other drinks but water, were strong of body, and lived to a very great age. To which relation that of Sir Henry Blunt's is very agreeable, who affirmed, in his book of travels into the Levant, (where under the Turkish government the use of wine was forbid, and where the common drink is water) that he then had a better stomach to his food, and digested it more kindly than he ever did before or since.

And in the *treatise of the vanity of philosophy*, written by Dr. Gideon Harvey, it is affirmed, that it is not heat that causeth a good digestion, but a proper ferment, or liquor provided by nature, to dissolve the food into a substance like unto pap made with fine flour; which dissolvent, he saith, is much depraved by hot spirituous liquors; and therefore he commends water above all other drinks to promote digestion.

Water-drinking is also said by Dr. Allen to be good to prevent two deplorable distempers, the gout and the hydochondriac melancholy: For, says he, the gout is ge-

nerally caused by too great drinking of fermented liquors, and is never said to have assaulted any drinker of water; and he saith also, that melancholy hypochondriac is kept off longest by drinking water instead of strong drink. To which let me add, that I once knew a gouty gentleman, who, to avoid his drinking companions in London, retired to New Brentford, where I then lived; in which town, by a very temperate diet of one meal a day, and drinking only water, he lived two whole years free from pain: But being visited by one who came that way, and invited to drink but one bottle of Claret between them, he fell next day into a terrible fit of the gout, which held above a month after; of which being recovered, he by the same course continued well till I left the place, which was about a year and an half after.

*Gout and  
Hypochon-  
driac Me-  
lancholy.*

The good properties of water are further manifested in preventing the breeding of gravel in the kidneys; for Zechias, in *Consult. 17. Gravel.* as quoted by Salmon, affirms, that nothing so much abates the heat of the kidneys, and frees them from those recrements which cause pain in the back, one great sign of gravel, as water does; but he adviseth to drink it warm. By the use of which, he saith, the unnatural heat in time will be so extinguished, that no more of that matter causing gravel will be produced in the body. Which assertion by experience I have found to be true; for observing much gravel to be voided by me, also abundance of matter floating in the urine like bran; with a great number of recrements like cuttings of hair, some above an inch long, which substances were found in all the water that I made in above twelve months; for which I could get no remedy: I was advised to drink water, which in about half a year did entirely free me from those symptoms, which some out of ignorance imputed to witchcraft; so that from that time to this I never have been troubled with it.

Water also is commended as efficacious to prevent the breeding of the stone in the bladder; *Stone in the Bladder.* for it hath been observed, that in some who have been cut for the stone, that new stones have been engendered, so that some young persons have been cut several times. Now, to prevent this, the drinking water hath been advised with success; for by this that intemperate heat in the body was abated, which did occasion the distemper. Some have advised to drink it warm, and others cold, particularly Van Heyden, a physician of Ghent in Flanders, in his book intitled, *Help for the rich and poor*; which, he saith, in p. 40, is sufficiently insinuated by Piso and Alexander, who assure us, that the taking a draught of cold water in the morning hath done so much good, that several, after the voiding of a stone, never had any more stones grew in them.

Which experiment may give light to the discovery of a way to cure the stone without cutting: *Stone to dissolve.* For if the growing of new stones can be prevented by drinking water, let it be hot or cold, it may prevent a stone from growing bigger when begun; and if the adding matter to increase a stone new begun, can be prevented, nature in time may waste that which is begun, especially if some drops of sweet spirit of nitre be added to all the water drank, which will powerfully help to cool, and is known to be an admirable mover or provoker of urine, and will waste a stone, and make it crumble like fuller's earth, if applied to a stone taken from the body. Or the water may be sweetened with honey, which is now much in use among the gentry, as I am informed by an ingenious apothecary; who told me, that, among them at present, pump-water and honey are in great repute to give ease in gravel: And there is so near an affinity between gravel and the stone, that what is proper for one, will doubtless be suitable for the other, and will prevent the growth of both.

Water is also stiled in Senertus' works, *The balsam of children*, the drinking of it by the mother being one of those things whereby children will be strengthened in the womb, and will prevent those injuries that are done them by womens drinking strong liquors; which *Beneficial in child-bearing.* Samson's mother was not allowed to do, for she was commanded not to drink wine or strong drink, Judg. xiii. 4. But I will not say, if all women should do this, their children shall be as strong as Samson was; yet this I will say, if they would do this, they would find their children more free from distempers and frowardness, and so much more easy to nurse and bring up, and be less liable to an immature death; the want of which abstinence from strong drinks, is the cause why so many rich people find it hard to bring up children, in comparison to what is done by the poor: For these last are born of mothers who not only are prevented from being gluttons by their want of dainties, which are deceitful meat, Prov. xxiii. 3. but they seldom taste wine or strong drink; whereas the rich not only feed high, but also drink strong drinks, which in most constitutions do overheat and corrupt the humours of the body, and that blood by which their children are nourished during their pregnancy: which injury to unborn infants would be prevented, if the mother would be temperate in diet, and drink water, especially at meals, by which the blood of the mother would be kept cool and clean; which must needs communicate a healthful substance to the child within her, and prevent all those distempers which infants bring with them into the world.

And here it may be proper to add, what by divers experiments it hath been found to be true, that the drinking water by nurses, while they give suck to children, will wonderfully increase milk in those that want it, as every one will find; who can be persuaded to make use thereof. I have advised many to use it, who have found that, by drinking a large draught of water at bed- *Increases milk in women.*

time, they have been supplied with milk sufficient for that night, when before they wanted it, and could not be supplied by any other means: And besides, they who have found their children restless, by reason of too much heat in their milk, do find them much more quiet after their milk is cooled by water-drinking.

By drinking water also the want of food for a time may be suffered without starving: For I have been informed by a credible friend, who was an officer at sea, that being sent down to Stafford to see some men conveyed on shipboard, that had been pressed by act of Parliament for the sea-service; he found in the prison where they were kept a lusty fellow, who had declared he would starve himself rather than go to sea; and, taking particular notice thereof, he found upon due enquiry, that for twenty days he had refused to eat any manner of food, only he drank each day about three pints or two quarts of water, hoping thereby to get himself discharged: But when he found his pretensions to be in vain, and that in or about two days they should all march for London, he condescended to eat some food, beginning with a little; and in the march he was observed to travel as well as the best man. I find also an account in Dr. Car's letters, of a certain crack-brained person, who at Leyden, when the doctor resided in that university, pretended he could fast as long as Christ did; and it was found he held out the time of forty days without eating any food, only he drank water and smoked tobacco. And I once had a sad complaint from a poor old woman of the greatness of her want, affirming, that oftentimes she had not eaten any food for two or three days; upon which I asked her, if she did not then suffer much uneasiness in her stomach? she said she did; but found a way at last to assuage her hunger by drinking water, which satisfied her appetite.

Water is also of great use to strengthen weak chil-

*dren*: For we are informed by Dr. Joseph Brown, in his *treatise of cures performed by cold baths*, that the Welsh women do preserve their children from the rickets, by washing them night and morning in cold water, till they are three quarters of a year old, p. 79. And

'tis said by Sir John Floyer, in his *treatise on cold baths*, that a lady in Scotland, who had lost several children thro' weakness, did, by the advice of a Highland beggar woman, preserve those she had afterwards, by washing them daily in cold water. And I myself advised a neighbour, whose child began to be ricketty, to treat the child in the same manner; but she, instead of washing, dipped it over head and ears every morning, it being then in the summer-time: The event of which was, the child became strong, and had a good countenance, tho' before it was very pale and wan: Which shews how great the power of water is, when used outwardly, to invigorate the spirits, and strengthen nature.

It is also a known custom, to prevent the swellings that follow bruises in the faces of children, by immediately applying thereunto a linen cloth four or six times double, dipped in cold water, and new dipped as it begins to grow warm; for the cold repels or prevents the flowing of humours to the part, which otherwise would cause great swelling, and after turn blackish: And if upon neglecting to do so, a swelling should succeed, it may be dissolved by fomenting night and morning, for an hour at a time, with water as hot as can be endured; for that will give vent to the humours to transpire through the skin, or dissolve them, so as to make them capable of returning back.

Moreover, by means of water all sickness at the stomach may be cured, which is done thus: Take four quarts of water, make it as hot over the fire as you can drink it; of which water let a quart be taken down at several

*Strengthens  
weak child-  
dren.*

*Swellings  
from brui-  
ses.*

*All sickness  
at the stom-  
ach to cure.*

draughts; then wrap a rag round a small piece of stick, till it is about the bigness of a man's thumb; tie it fast with some thread; and with this, by endeavouring gently to put it a little way down your throat, provoke yourself to vomit up again most of the water: Then drink another quart, and vomit up that, and repeat the same the third and fourth time, if once or twice is not sufficient. You may also provoke vomiting by tickling your throat with your finger, or the feather-end of a goose quill; but the cloth round a skewer maketh one vomit with more ease, which is done with no trouble when the stomach is full. And by this way of vomiting, which will be all performed in an hour's time, that viscid and ropy phlegm in the stomach, which causeth the sickness, will be cast up, so that the party in that time will be free from all that inward disturbance, if you use the remedy at first; but, if the sickness hath continued for a time, it will require the same course once or twice more, which may be done in three or four hours, one after another, without any other inconvenience, besides that of being a little sore in the breast the next day, which will soon go off by the force of nature. Which remedy, by forty years experience, I look upon to be infallible in all sickness at the stomach, from what cause soever, and for all pains in the belly which seem to be above the navel; for these are all in the stomach, as by long experience I have found: Which pains are generally counted the cholic; but it is not so; for true cholics are always below the navel, in the gut colon. And by this means I have eased very great pains caused by eating mussels that were poisonous; and it is also a certain cure for all surfeits or disorders that follow after much eating. So that the lives of multitudes might be saved by this means, who, for want of expelling what offends, often die in misery: For, by thus cleansing the stomach at the first, the root of diseases proceeding from surfeiting, or unwholesome food, or any viscid humours from a bad digestion, are prevented; the stomach being the place in which all distempers at first begin. No man was more subject to sickness than myself before thirty



years of age; but since I found out the way of vomiting with water, which is now above forty years, I never have been sick for two days together: For, when I find myself ill to any great degree, I betake myself to this way of vomiting, which in an hour's time restores me to ease, and perfectly removes my illness. And the same benefit all my family find in it, as do others also whom I can persuade to try the experiment; which is such, that no physician whatever can advise a better to the king himself, should he fall sick. For, in the first place, it is not a nauseous remedy, it does not make the patient sick, as the best of all other vomits do; and then it is a vomit which is at our own command, since we can leave off when we please: And it infallibly works a cure to all sick stomachs, from whatever cause.

Some few indeed pretend they are not able to vomit by this means: Now, if they cannot vomit, let them take a pint of water when they find themselves ill from eating, and do so every three or four hours, eating no more till they are hungry; and they will find the water digest and carry off what was offensive. The ingenious Dr. Cheyne, in his *Treatise of the gout*, affirms, that warm water drank freely in a morning fasting, and at meals, (and I say cold water is as good) hath a sovereign remedy for restoring lost appetites, and strengthening weak digestions, when other more pompous medicines have failed. And he adviseth gouty persons, after excess either in meat or drink, to swill down as much fair water, as their stomach will bear, before they go to bed, whereby they will reap these advantages, either the contents of the stomach will be thrown up, or both meat and drink will be much diluted, and the labour and expence of spirits in digestion much saved, p. 44. ed. 4: And indeed I have found by long experience, that nothing causeth so good a digestion as fair water; but this requires time to free us from the uneasiness that an ill digestion causeth, whereas vomiting is an immediate remedy, and frees a man from it upon the spot.

We are told by Sir John Floyer, in his *Treatise of bath and mineral springs*, that vomiting with *Other benefits of vomiting with water.* water is very useful in the gout, sciatica, wind, shortness of breath, hypochondriac melancholy, and falling-sickness; which distempers are generally derived from evil matter contained in the stomach, as is likewise giddiness in the head, and apoplexies, with which myself once seemed to be threatened: For, after eating a plentiful dinner, I was seized with giddiness, and the sight of my eyes became so depraved, that things seemed double, which was accompanied with a strange consternation of spirit; and having read, that apoplexies generally seize after eating, I immediately called for water, and, not daring to stay till it was warmed, I drank it cold, and by the help of my finger provoked vomiting: Upon which I did immediately overcome the evils I was threatened with, the symptoms before-mentioned being the same as did precede the fit of an apoplexy in another person, as himself afterwards told me, who died of it the third fit, about a year after.

As for people who are troubled with shortness of breath, it is certain from experience, that *Shortness of breath.* vomiting with warm water three or four times, will afford certain relief. And the same may be prevented by drinking nothing but water afterwards, either cold or warmed with a toast: For, upon doing this, the difficulty of breathing will apparently abate; which water, if you please, may be boiled with honey. And I knew one, who by this means, as he was advised by me, lived comfortably in this city two or three winters, but, having undertaken business which did occasion drinking strong drinks, was the next winter carried off by the distemper: Wine, ale, or brandy, being as bad as poison to people troubled with shortness of breath. So that nothing but water ought to be drank in that distemper.

Some people are taken with violent vomiting, and the

excess thereof in some hath been so great as to endanger their lives, yea, cause death: In which case water will be very helpful; for, if a pint of it warmed be drank after every vomit, it will prevent that violent straining, wherein lieth the danger of all vomiting, because to strain violently, when but little will come up, endangers the breaking of some inward vessel. And, besides this, the offending matter will be sooner loosened from the internal part of the stomach, and cast out, upon which the vomiting will sooner cease: For after this manner the famous Sydenham, a most honest writer, did overcome the cholera morbus, or vomiting and looseness, so common in his time, and was found by the weekly bill to kill more than now die of convulsions; for his way was to boil a chicken in four gallons of water, which made a broth not much differing from water, of which he ordered large draughts to be given, and some of it to be taken by clyster, till the whole quantity was spent, if the vomiting did not stop before; which did so take off the sharpness of the matter offending, and wash it out, that the party in a little time became well. And the same was the practice of Sigismundus Grassius, who commends pure water in a vomiting or looseness to be drank in large quantities; for thereby, he saith, the corrosive and sharp humours will be so weakened, that they will no more offend: And he saith, it may be drank cold if the patient be strong, otherwise let it be warmed.

*Vomiting  
to cure.*

And in common fluxes without vomiting, a quart or more of warm water drank, will so weaken the sharpness whereby the distemper is caused, that it will soon be overcome, and the gripings eased. And in the bloody flux, which is the most dangerous of all fluxes, the ingenious Cornelius Celsus adviseth a large drinking of cold water as the best of remedies: But then no other substance must be taken till the disease is cured. And Lubitanus, another great physician, affirms, *Cent. 1. Obser. 46.* that he knew one, who, being in the summer time afflicted with the bloody

*Fluxes.*

flux, drank a large quantity of cold water, and thereby recovered. This large quantity of water, in these fluxes, doth so correct the sharpness of the humour offending, that it can have no power to cause pain, or corrode the vessels, and cause bloody digestions or stools.

Water also is a drink that conduceth above all things to cure consumptive people; for the digestion being weakened, is the cause of producing a hot fretting nourishment, which is injurious to the tender substance of the lungs, and which constringes and stops up the lymphatic vessels thro' which the nourishment is to pass to all the parts, so that by degrees the body for want of due supplies consumes: Which obstructions, and that acrimony which causeth them, will be opened and sweetened by the plentiful use of water, if taken before the lungs become ulcerous. Which cure of consumptions by water is recommended in the writings of Dr. Couch, who, in his *Praxis Catholica*, tells us, that he knew a man cured very soon of a consumption by drinking pure water. And it is said by another, that some have been cured of consumptions by drinking no other drink but water, avoiding all malt liquors, and sharp wines: For wine or any other strong liquor is pernicious in this distemper, whose original is affirmed by Dr. Coward to be always in the stomach, from some intemperance in meat or drink.

Some there are who are much troubled with flushing heat in the face, and others with a heat in the back; in both which cases, water used as common drink is the best remedy, with a spare cooling diet: And it is also excellent for such as have red blotches in their face, which proceed from a hot fretting blood, which by water-drinking, and a moderate diet, will be kept under: For as Dr. Duncan, before quoted, doth affirm, those who keep their blood cool and clean, are never troubled with breakings-out, like many others, who may be known to be drink-

ers of hot drinks, and to use a hot full diet, by their faces being full of blotches.

Water is also commended by the learned for the cholic; large drinking of water hath been found to be an excellent remedy. And it is said by *Cholic.* Fortis, that when he practised at Venice, he often gave cold water in the cholic, with good success. With whom an English physician, Dr. Wainwright, in his *Mechanical account of the six non-naturals*, concurs; for he saith, that water-drinkers are never troubled with the cholic, and that many thereby have been cured, when all other remedies failed: But in this case a quart at least is required.

And, in the Small Pox, water hath also been proved to be an excellent drink. Salmon, in his *Synopsis Medicinæ*, saith, that in this distemper *Small Pox.* per you may safely give the sick fair water, of which, says he, they may drink liberally to quench thirst; the want of which plenty of drink, hath been the death of many a patient. Which opinion of his was right, as by experience I have found in two of my own children, when sick of this distemper; to whom, after I had given a gentle vomit of emetic tartar, I gave no other drink but water, and they both recovered safely, and were not in the least light-headed, as two others before were in the same distemper, when treated otherwise. And I remember that one Dr. Betts, being consulted in a case where the eruption did not come out kindly, ordered two quarts of cold water to be drunk as soon as could be, upon which they came out according to expectation, and the party did well.

It is also certain, that, in what we call burning fevers, water is found to be a safe and effectual remedy. It is said by Dr. Primrose, in his *Burning Popular Errors*, that many great physicians *fevers.* have commended the drinking cold water in diseases, and they attribute to it the chief place in fevers,

where the sick must drink largely; for thus taken it will quench all heat, p. 374 And Galen is said, by an English author, to reprove Crasistratus for denying cold water in burning fevers; and says, that this is a remedy for any fever, provided it be drank in great abundance. With which opinion I find Dr. Oliver to agree, who, in his *Essay on Fevers*, says, that in fevers we must drink oftner than thirst calls for it, and such draughts as are plentiful; and the drink he prescribes is either cold water or barley-water. Dr. Wainwright affirms also, that water is proper in fevers, and that the ancients gave as much of it as the patient could drink. And by another it is said, that if you give the patient nothing but water for three days, that in the third day the fever will be cured generally; but, if it is not, give for food a little barley-broth, and the fever will not exceed the seventh day. And by another we are informed, how one in a fever, that was past hope, being forbidden to drink water, which he greatly desired, did find means, in the absence of his nurse, to get a large potfull, which he drank off, and lay down again, being well cooled; after which he fell into a sweat, and so was cured. Dr. Cook of Warwick, in his book of *Observations on English bodies*, prescribes for the cure of fevers, first a vomit, and afterwards as much cold water as the patient can drink; and he saith, that, if he sweat upon it, the sweat must be continued as long as can be. And it is said by another, that it is an excellent remedy in fevers to drink a quart of hot water, and sweat upon it, being covered warm. Dr. Quinton, in his book of *Observations*, writes, that to one in a malignant fever, whose pulse was so low it could scarcely be felt, there were three quarts of water given, at several draughts, to make him vomit; but it did not operate that way, yet the event was this: It refreshed him much, raised his pulse, brought him into a breathing sweat, and passed off by urine; which lowness of the pulse I have often found to be raised in other cases, by drinking water plentifully. And I know a woman, who, tho' she in a fever had the advice of two doctors, yet became distracted: I bid the nurse give her a pint of cold

water, which she drank up, and in three or four minutes came to her right senses; and desiring to drink more, she recovered. And I have observed, that when in fevers the patient can relish no other drink, yet water is always drunk with pleasure, as it also will always be after the eating of sweet things, that spoil the relish of other drinks; which is one excellence peculiar to water, and shews it to be most agreeable to the nature of mankind, tho' now so much slighted. And, besides this, it is a drink that will not turn sour in the stomach, as all fermented drinks will do, to the increase of distempers already begun there, by acidity or sourness.

And as for the gout, which Dr Harris saith, in his *Anti Empiric*, is gotten either by high feeding or dinking much wine, or other strong drink; *Gout.* it may be cured, as that author affirms, by a very spare diet, and drinking water: According to what is said also by Sir Theodore Mayhern, who, in his *Medicinal Counsels*, adviseth to leave off all strong drinks in this disease, and drink only water. And Van Heyden saith also, in his *Treatise of help for the rich and poor*, that there is not any greater remedy for the gout than drinking water, not only by young, but old men; many of whom, he saith, have drank cold water for many weeks, which hath succeeded so well, though they were far gone in years, that they found great ease thereby, without that offence to the stomach, or hindrance of digestion, which some did not seem to fear. And he also commends the large drinking of water in the sciatica or hip-gout, he having often cured that distemper, by this means, in less time than could reasonably be expected. And the same I have found to be effectual in a pain in the shoulder, which had continued very bad for three months: For, being taken with a fever, I drank in one day about four quarts of water; which tho' it did not make me sweat, because I lay not in my bed, yet it cured me so that I slept well that night; and, in the morning when I rose, the pain in my shoulder was not felt, neither did it ever return. And the same success I have had

in the pains of other parts; whereby, I judge, that, in all pains whatever, the drinking of water is proper, as well as in the gout: And accordingly I find cold water advised to be drank largely for the cure of the head-ach from hard drinking; that pain proceeding from the same cause the gout does, namely, from heat, as all pains do, that are not from bruises.

It is said also by Dr. Wainwright, that in the itch, scurvy, leprosy, and all hot inflammatory *Inflammatory distempers & wind.* distempers, such as pleurifies, rheumatisms, and St. Anthony's fire, water is a proper remedy; but he adviseth to drink it hot in some cases, as doubtless it ought to be done in pleurifies. He also saith, that water is proper in head-achs, catarrhs, vapours, falling sickness, dulness of sight, melancholy, shortness of breath, scurvy in the mouth, and windiness in the stomach: And for this wind in the stomach, I, by long experience, have found it the best remedy, who in the former part of my life, through a disorderly diet, and drinking strong drink like others, was never free from windy belchings, and sometimes very sickish qualms after meals; from which at length I was delivered, by drinking only water at meals; so that for above forty years I have been seldom troubled: And, if I find myself troubled, a pint or more of cold water, in less than half an hour will set me free, by drinking of it.

And that water is the best remedy for the mischiefs that come by hard drinking, experience *Hard drinking.* teacheth; there being nothing that so effectually frees from these nauseating and reaching qualms the next morning, as the drinking a pint or more of fair water; which effectually allays the inflammation of the bowels, occasioned by strong or hot drink, which spoils the strength of the stomach, and of all other parts; nothing being a greater enemy to the vigour of the nerves and sinews, since by much drinking, men make themselves unable to stand or go;



which effect would never follow, if liquors that abound with spirits were strengthening; nor would the fibres of the stomach be so weakened after drinking strong drinks, as to make men sick; which sickness will soonest be recovered by the drinking cold water, this being also the best remedy, if taken largely, for that heat of urine often occasioned by hard drinking.

In colds, water is the best of all drinks to prevent floods of rheum from the nose and mouth, as my long experience testifies, and therefore will prevent coughs; for a cough will seldom succeed a cold, if water is used from the first as common drink: And if, through neglect, a cough should become troublesome, the use of water, avoiding all wine and strong drink, will contribute much to the cure. Some order the water to be drank warm, but others say, that the drinking it cold vastly excels the using it hot in a cough. It is said by Van Heydon, that some may think it strange to advise water in such diseases, which most account to proceed from crudity or indigestion; but he says, that, in any disease where the case is dangerous, the use of water is the only friend to nature; cold being a preventer rather than a cause of crudity; since by all experience it is proved to be a promoter of good digestion. And at this time I know a woman, seventy-eight years of age, who for ten years past hath had a great cough, and spit much tough phlegm, that this present winter 1722, hath been persuaded to leave off both strong and small fermented liquor, and drink only water at meals, and sometimes a dish or two of tea; and hath found herself much less subject to cough than before, and scarce coughs at all in bed, tho' subject before to cough very much in the night: She also drinks at bed-time half a pint of cold water, and the same quantity first in the morning, and finds more comfort by it at so great an age, than wine hath at any time afforded. Moreover, *Heart burn.* drinking of water is a certain cure for the heart-burning; as some affirm.

*Colds and  
bad digestion.*

*Heart burn.*

It is generally the opinion of most physicians, that wine and strong drinks are not proper for children; and that the smaller and cooler their drink is, the better it will be with them; and that nothing conduceth more to the health of children than drinking water, which will prevent the foundation of those diseases that are caused in many by strong drink, and shew themselves in their more advanced age, wherein many also suffer much by the mother's ill custom of making them gluttons, by constantly cramming their stomachs with food, many being thereby destroyed among the children of the rich, before they come to the years of maturity; when the children of poor country people, who fare hard, stand their ground till full grown: For fewer children die in the country than in great cities, where luxury in diet doth more abound; which is one reason why so few house-keepers in London were born in it, the great supply of inhabitants being from the country, children being brought up more hardy there than in London, where great numbers are killed by over-eating or pleasing their palates. Which mischief would be in a great measure prevented by their being accustomed to eat less, and drink water; this by experience being found to make young children free from that forwardness, which is commonly caused by a sharp, and hot, or feverish blood, which engendereth wind, and causeth pain and gripes: for there is no pain but is the consequence of heat, or inward as well as outward inflammations.

To what hath been said may be added this consideration, that when the best physicians are baffled by some distempers, they advise their patients to use the water of some mineral spring, tacitly acknowledging thereby, that all their prescriptions may be excelled by water. They pretend indeed to ascribe its effects to some minerals with which the waters are tinged: But Dr. Baynard, in p. 438, of Sir John Floyer's *Gold bathing*, tells of a certain person who used to fre-

quent Tunbridge, by which he found much benefit; but, being hindered from going thither one season, drank the same quantity of water taken from the pump of a spring in his own yard, which did him as much service: whereupon he wrote thus upon his pump:

*Steel is a cheat;  
'Tis Water does the feat.*

And, indeed, if we consider how many diseases and pains proceed from a sizy, thick blood, which cannot pass as it ought to do through the finest pipes that convey the blood to the parts, pure water, without minerals, drank to the quantity of a quart or three pints in a morning, will attenuate or thin the blood sufficiently: Nothing, as Boerhaave affirms, being a greater diluter of thick blood, than warm water drank in great quantity. Which to thin the blood may be best, tho' to strengthen the stomach it is best drank cold, having the same effect inwardly, in some cases, as cold bathing hath outwardly; its use this way being also great. For

Water I have found, by long experience, to be of excellent use in burns and scalds; for in all burns and scalds, that are slight, if the part is plunged immediately into cold water, the colder the better, the pain will instantly be taken off; and it will fetch out the fire, if continued so long as will be required to do it by any other remedy. And if the burn be so considerable, that other remedies must be applied, none of which will take off the smart of themselves in less than two or three hours; yet if you apply cold water presently, after other applications are made to the part, the pain will immediately cease, till the remedy becomes effectual: So that the ease water will give in such cases, makes it of good use. Which remedy, as it hath not been discovered till now, appears to transcend all other remedies in this case; because, in a moment, the greatest smart will be eased, if the water is cold, and will be felt no more, if the part afflicted be

kept immersed in it till the fire is extinguished, either by the water, or the medicine applied. Besides, it is a remedy every-where ready at hand, which cannot be said of any other; which generally requires so much time to get it ready, that much pain will be endured, if blisters do not arise, which do much increase the trouble. If the part burnt, or scalded, cannot be dipped in water, you may apply water to it, with double linen cloths dipped therein, and new dipped as they grow warm; by which means I have cured burns and scalds in the face without blistering, when applied immediately before blisters did arise.

I once knew a large ulcer in the foot, made by the running of melted brass into the shoe, that was kept in hand by a surgeon nine weeks, without any probability of healing, because of the great inflammation that attended it; but the party, being a lover of angling, was persuaded to go with some others to Hackney-river: Some of them went bare-legged into the water, to come at a certain hole where much fish was sometimes found. The sport was so good, that the lame man having pulled off his stockings and plaisters, went in also, where he staid above two hours, and coming out again, the ulcer, which appeared very red and angry when he went in, looked pale; he put on his dressings, and came home, and in less than a fortnight his ulcers healed up; which doubtless was occasioned by the abating of the inflammation by the coldness of the water. And I have had an account also from an acquaintance, that was a surgeon to a merchant ship, that their gunner, at a time when the captain treated some friends on board, going to charge a gun that just before had been fired off, the cartridge he was ramming down took fire, whereby he was blown into the water, and had some of his fingers torn off, and it was about an hour before a boat could be got to take him up: But they found that the coldness of the water had almost stopt the bleeding, and the cure was effected so speedily, that other surgeons wondered at it; which he

imputed to the water, which kept back the humours, by its coldness, from flowing to the part at the first: So that there was no impediment, from inflammation, to hinder healing; for the chief impediment to healing, is inflammation in wounds or ulcers. Moreover, to bathe with cold water, is affirmed by Dr. Lower to be a sovereign remedy for any hot swelling, if continued a due time at the first beginning; and it is affirmed also to be a good cure for the cramp. *Hot swellings.*

And as for strains and sprains in the joints, cold water affords the best and most speedy remedy, as Van Heydon affirms; who saith, that, by bathing in cold water, all harm so received may by this remedy be cured more safely and more speedily than by any other, without loss of time, cost or trouble; for no more is to be done, as I have often found, than, as soon as can be, to put the part into a vessel of cold water for about two hours, which will prevent all swelling and pain, by repelling or keeping back the humours that otherwise would flow to the part. And if it should be the shoulder, or any other part, which is so hurt, that cannot well be immersed in water after this manner; water may be applied, by dipping towels folded up into it, and laying them to the part, as is done, in effect, to the wrenched joints of horses, about which, if you wind oftentimes a thick rope made of hay, and then cast upon it divers times a pail of cold water, the wrench will be cured; which experiment is now commonly practised by those concerned about horses. *Sprains and hot swellings.* *Sprains in horses.*

Bathing in cold water hath also been found to be a good remedy to strengthen weakness in the joints, as Sir John Floyer, in his treatise of *Cold Bathing*, hath shewed; and which by experience I found to be true on a certain woman, who complained of great weakness and pain in *Weakness of the joints.*

her ancles: I advised her to dip the part in cold water every morning for a quarter of an hour, and do the same at night; and in about twenty days she became as strong in that part as she was in the other. And Sir John tells us of a boy who could not stand, his limbs were so weak, that, by bathing in cold water, perfectly recovered his strength in a little time.

Great pain in the head hath been also cured by this means; for we are told by Van Heydon, *Pain in the head.* that Sir Toby Matthews had for twenty years been troubled with great pain in one side of his head, and a great defluxion of rheum from his nose: but he at last was cured, by applying cold water to the part every day for about a quarter of an hour: Upon reading of which, I tried the experiment upon myself, who for a long time had been troubled with the running of much clear water from my nose, with great spitting of thin rheum; for I let a water-cock run upon the mould of my head every morning, by which, in about six weeks time, I was eased of my trouble. And since that, I had a credible information of a certain servant maid, who was afflicted greatly with a rheumatism, and an intolerable pain in the head, who being put into St. Thomas's Hospital, her nurse was ordered by the doctor to apply to her head towels four times double, dipt in cold water, changing them as they became warm, which she was to continue doing four or five hours; in which time she was freed from that pain in the head, and was afterwards cured of the rheumatism by other means.

The want of sleep in fevers, may be cured likewise by the application of cold water: For to a *Want of sleep in fevers.* near relation in a fever, who could not sleep for three days and three nights, I ordered a towel to be several times folded up, then to be dipped in water, and a little wrung out, and so laid upon her forehead, and to be new dipped as it grew hot; which in about two hours

time so cooled her head, that she fell into a sleep, and continued in it five hours: And I ordered the same to be done the next night, with the same success. Dr. Cockburn, in his treatise of *Sea-diseases*, orders, for the want of sleep in fevers, to dip a towel four times doubled in oxycrat, which is six parts water and one part vinegar, to be bound about the head and temples; which, he saith, will cause sleep with wonderful success. But cold water only will have the same effect, as I often have proved.

And that the use of cold water, in swooning, is of great effect, common experience teacheth: For, if a dish or cup of cold water is thrown *Swoonings.* strongly upon the face, the person in an instant will recover, tho' for a time he seemeth dead, and perhaps might not have recovered in some cases, if cold water had not been so applied; such faintings being sometimes deadly, which proceed from poisonous vapours ascending up to the brain from a foul stomach: For such effects there are, as I have found by experience, who in my young days did swoon away twice; at both which times I was sensible of a collection of wind in my stomach, from whence I plainly felt a fume or vapour ascend to the head, that in an instant deprived me of all sense: But being both times in the company of a person who had seen the thing tried, he dashed some cold water against my face, which I remember made me start, as if I had been suddenly awaked. And I am apt to think, that some die in such a fit, when none are near to help them; and especially when so taken in their sleep, which I believe none need fear, who live temperately, or that eat no suppers; none who have refrained from suppers, having been ever found to die in their sleep.

Dangerous bleedings at the nose have also been cured with cold water largely drank, syringing cold water up their nostrils, and applying towels *Bleedings at the nose.* round their necks dipt in cold water, changing them as they grow warm; for it is said

by a good writer, that this will so cool the heat of the blood, and by the coldness of the water syringed up the nose, so contract the mouths of the veins which bleed, that it will put a stop to the bleeding. Such bleedings have also been stopt by dashing cold water often in the face, as a French writer hath affirmed, whose name was Flammand; and the same also is asserted by Cook, in his *Marrow of Surgery*.

Cold water is an absolute cure for all small cuts, in the fingers, or other parts; for if you close the *Small cuts.* cut up with the thumb of your other hand, keeping it so closed for a quarter or half an hour, this will infallibly stop the bleeding: After which, if you double up a linen-rag five or six times, dip it in cold water, and apply it to the part, binding it on; this, by preventing inflammation and a flux of humours, will give nature time soon to heal it without any other application, as is seen in the common practice of surgeons when they let a man blood; for all the application they make to the vein so cut, is a pledget of linen dipped in cold water, and bound on with a fillet: For all wounds, without loss of substance, will heal of themselves, if inflammation be prevented, and the lips of the wound are kept close together.

We are also informed by Van Heydon, that in his time some were of an opinion, that a person bit *Bitings of a mad dog.* by a mad dog might be preserved from that symptom, called, the fear of water, which generally follows, and proves so mortal, by applying cold water to the place bitten: And this, he says, they conceive to be no unlikely thing, if there is any credit to be given to what Cornelius Celsus writes, who saith, that the only remedy in this case is, to throw the party who hath the fear of water upon him, into a pond or river, and, when plunged over head and ears, to keep him in the water till filled with it, whether he will or no; and by this means both his thirst and dread of water will be cured. For, if this immersion be of use when



the person is so far gone, why should it not be of greater force in preserving from it, if speedily applied, and repeated? Now, tho' this is mentioned by him as a probable opinion, yet experience in our days shews, that the plunging the patient into the salt water, either of the river of Thames about Gravesend, or in the salt springs in Cheshire, is the best means to prevent any evil succeeding the bite of a mad dog; they must indeed be dipped so often, as to be almost drowned before the danger is over: But it is a question whether the saltness of the water contributes any thing to this cure, since Boerhaave, the present professor at Leyden, affirms, that when men bitten by a mad dog are arrived to the fear of water, called an hydrophobia, they may be cured by blinding the patient's eyes, and throwing of him into a pond of water often, till he seems not to be afraid of it, or but very little, and then force him to drink large quantities.

And we are told by Dr. Edward Browne, that a person troubled with the falling-sickness, by happening to fall into a cold spring, (I suppose it was in the time of his fit) was freed from his distemper all his life after: And he saith, there is no need of preparing the body for it in this, as in some other cases. But the patient, when plunged into a cold bath, ought to continue in the bath each time about three or four minutes; for, in plunging over head and ears at his first entrance into a cold bath, the brain will be so sensibly affected, as to be relieved from the distemper, which is a kind of convulsion proceeding from an inflammation, or some other cause; but we want more experiments to confirm this notion: which notion may be worth noticing, that the thing may be tried in others, to see if it will succeed as it did in this person. For it is said by the ingenious Dr. Pitcairn, a Scotsman, sometime professor at Leyden, that there is no such thing as the art of curing, but only the practice; remedies were found out by chance, p. 264, of his works. For when remedies thus happen to be discovered, and prove often to be effectual, the remembering that reme-

dy, to apply it in a like case of practice, brings reputation to the prescriber; but, if it fails, some other experiment must be tried, which, were physic an art, need not be done, because the rules of art are certain, and men depend upon them as such.

It is also said by the same Dr. Browne, that madness and melancholy, with all their retinue, *Madness & melancholy.* may find better effects from the use of bathing in cold water, than from other violent methods, with which people so afflicted are now treated; for, says he, that which will make a drunken man sober in a minute, will certainly go a great way towards the cure of a madman in a month. Now it is most certain, to my own knowledge, that, if a drunken man be plunged over head and ears in cold water, he will come out of it perfectly sober: And some I have known, that in such cases have been recovered by barely washing their heads in cold water. Which fore mentioned opinion of Dr. Browne is confirmed by the practice of Dr. Blair, who, in a letter to Dr. Baynard, declares, that he cured a man raving mad, who being bound in a cart, stript off his clothes, and blindfolded, that the surprize might be the greater; he on a sudden had a great fall of water let down upon him from the height of twenty foot, under which he continued so long as his strength would permit: And, after his return home, he fell into a sleep, and slept twenty-nine hours, and awaked in as quiet a state of mind as ever, and so had continued to the time of writing that letter, which was twelve months. Distraction also in fevers, of which there are divers instances in the history of *Cold Baths*, has been cured by being plunged in cold water. See p. 226.

Which relation seems to make that a more probable truth, which was related in a letter from Sir John Floyer, to Dr. Browne, and printed by that doctor; that in Normandy they immerse fools, or dip them in cold water to cure them: A hot brain being the cause, perhaps, of several disorders in the understanding, and is in great part

found to be true in the ridiculous behaviour of some drunken men, which, when their heads are become cool, abhor what they before did or said. Now, if such dipping would cure fools among us, great numbers might be made more happy than they are by being so dipped, before they have beggared themselves by imprudence.

Dr. Browne, in his discourse of *Cold Baths*, affirms, that to bathe in cold water hath been found to be the quickest, safest, and pleafantest *King's-evil* cure for the king-evil; and he tells us, in p. 85, of a Yorkshire gentleman, who was grievously afflicted with this distemper, having great ulcers in the glands of his neck, which were so much inflamed, as to bring him very low; but, being advised by Dr. Baynard to bathe in the cold bath, he in a month's time was perfectly cured, his ulcers being healed up, contrary to the opinion of the most learned physicians.

We also find mention, in the description of the Scottish Islands, of an odd remedy commonly made use of there for the cure of the Jaundice; which is this: They strip the party naked, lay him upon the ground on his belly, and pour unawares upon his back a pail of cold water. And also pains in the joints, as Dr. Curtis tells us, will be cured, by holding the part under the stream of a pump or cock; and fomenting with cold water, is commended as good to assuage hot swellings. And I know a person who had often been subject to blood-shot or inflamed eyes, who afterwards, upon the beginning of the same distemper, took, by advice, a ball of linen rags, dipped them in cold water, and applied them to the part, cooling them by new-dipping as oft as they grew hot: Which application was continued three hours, in which time the humour was so repelled, as to be troublesome no more; for the party, to my knowledge, hath had no sign of that distemper since, tho' the same had been very trouble-

*Jaundice,  
swelling,  
inflamed  
eyes, and  
pains in  
the joints.*

Some many times before: And the same others have tried with the like success.

It is also advised by Dr. Gideon Harvey to wash the eyes well twice a day in cold water, as the best remedy to prevent defluxions on them, and preserve the eye-sight, which it greatly comforts. And this I have found true for many years, my eyes being often apt to be dim and stiff, so that I could scarce open my eye-lids; which, upon washing for a minute with fair water, hath been felt no more for a good while after. Besides which benefit to the eyes, authors say, it is also good to preserve the memory, if the whole forehead be washed twice a day; and it is also a certain cure for itching in the eyes. And indeed, washing with water will free mankind from a troublesome itching in any other part of the body, let it be never so private; as Cook, in his *Observations on English bodies*, doth expressly declare from experience. And Wedelius affirms, that violent itching in a man's cod was so cured by him; and, if the other sex would make use of it, a single life would be less uneasy than it seems to be to some.

Some people are troubled with a callosity, or hardness of the bottom of their feet, which is so troublesome, as to be a hindrance to their easy walking; for which a cure is prescribed by Dr. Cook, that is, to soak them well in warm water, till the hardness is softened, and then scrape it off with the edge of a knife: And if the feet burn with any unnatural heat, and are tender, it was advised by Mr. Rumsfey, in his *Organon Salutis*, to bathe them daily in cold water. Others affirm, that to bathe tender feet often in hot water will cool them, by giving vent to that which is offensive; and it is useful in a cough.

The plentiful drinking of water is commended in the scurvy, whether hot or cold, by Dr. Pitcairn, to dissolve

the scorbutic salts, and carry them out by urine; but this is a distemper that Dr. Cheyne affirms is difficult to cure, that nothing but a total abstinence from flesh, fish, and strong liquor, will overcome the scurvy, p. 127. whether they are acids or alkalies. But tho' weakness and faintness commonly attends on this distemper, yet myself, who have been formerly extremely troubled with the scurvy, which often made me faint and weak, and my pulse so low as scarcely to be felt, found at last that the pulse would infallibly rise upon drinking a pint or more of cold water, and in a little time I should again become brisk and strong: for I have often observed, that, upon a disorder of the stomach, the strength of the bodily members soon would fail, and as easily be recovered when the disorder of the stomach was removed; which requires temperance and cooling diet, when distempered, especially in drink.

To what hath been already said, I will add an account, taken from a credible person, of a man in the parish of Shoreditch, who was desperately ill of an asthma, or shortness of breath, and deep consumption, for which he had tried many remedies to no purpose. At length he was advised by a physician, being poor, to drink no drink but water, and eat no other food but water-gruel, without salt or sugar; which course of diet he continued for three months, finding himself at first to be somewhat better, and at the three months end he was perfectly cured; but, for security's sake, he continued in that diet a month longer, and grew fat and strong upon it. But his diet he had no mind to till he was thoroughly hungry, and then he did eat it with pleasure; in which perhaps consisted the best part of his cure, it being an advantage to health never to eat till hunger calls for food.

And I remember a young woman, a burnisher of silver, who had a desperate cough, for which she had taken many things of an apothecary to no purpose; at length the journeyman told her, his master said, he could do no more:

Scurvy.

Asthma &amp; consumption.

Cough cured.

But, said the fellow, I would advise you every morning to wash behind your ears, and upon your temples, and on the mould of your head, with cold water: which she told me she did, and was perfectly cured of her cough by that means. And for a hoarseness that comes upon a cold, the dipping of a handkerchief five times double in very hot water, and holding it to the mouth and nose, new dipping it as it becomes cold, is commended by Dr. Alexander Read as a good remedy.

There are divers other cases wherein the use of water hath done much good. An ancient practitioner in physic told me, that in many difficulties of making water, he had advised the party to put his yard into water as hot as he could endure it, which in a minute did cause him to make water; and that women have had the same benefit by sitting over hot water. And he often had advised them who were costive, and went to stool with great difficulty, to sit over a pot with hot water in it; which soon was attended with an easy dejection or stool, the body drawing up the vapour, which provoked expulsion of the excrements without much straining.

And it hath been observed, that froward children have been made much more quiet, by washing their lower parts every morning with water, to wash off the salts of their urine, which usually stick in the pores of the skin, and are fretful and uneasy; and nothing cures their soreness about those parts like it. Nor is there any thing more effectual to cure men who are gauled by riding, than to wash themselves well when they go to bed with cold water; and washing the bare breast every morning with cold water, will make those hardy who before were apt at every turn to take cold. To which I will add what Sir Theodore Mayhern affirms in his *Medicinal Counsels*, that in most diseases

of the head, there is nothing better than to bathe it with cold water. Which, in a desperate pain of the ear upon taking cold, I have found to be true; for the pain did vanish upon applying to it about 30 minutes a towel doubled up often, and wet often in cold water; and tho' it returned again, yet ease was soon obtained the same way, and the cure perfected in four times doing: Which cure of a pain gotten with cold, by a cold application, will not seem so strange, when we consider, that, in the northern countries, mortifications from cold are nowise to be cured but by applying cold snow; as travellers into Denmark and Sweden do affirm.

*Pains in  
the ear.*

In short, water, when rightly made use of, appears, from the accounts before-mentioned, very effectual to prevent and cure many diseases; but more especially the inward use thereof: For to use the words of the ingenious Dr. Curtis, in his *Essay for the preservation and recovery of Health*; the habitual use of water for common drink, preserves the native ferment of the stomach in due order, keeps the blood temperate, and helps to spin out the thread of life to the longest extent of nature; it makes the rest at night more quiet and refreshing, the reason and understanding more clear, the passions less disorderly; and, in case of eating too much, a large draught of cold water vastly exceeds any other cordial to cause digestion: water being not so cold and lifeless, he saith, as many imagine. Besides which commendation of it by this doctor, it is certainly a drink that will not ferment in the stomach, nor turn sour, as wine and strong malt-drinks will, to the hindering of a good digestion, which all acidity in the stomach certainly doth, when it abounds there; and is best corrected by weakening or making it less sour, by drinking good store of water, as the experience of above forty years practice hath assured myself, and many others. For tho' water is accounted a contemptible drink, yet by beginning to make use of it about thirty years of age, before which I was

*Curtis's opi-  
nion of wa-  
ter.*

often out of order, and continuing the use of it ever since, drinking very little wine or strong drink, I have attained to the age of seventy-four years, when thousands in the meantime, who delighted only in drinking strong beer, wine, and brandy, have not lived half so long: which makes good that saying in the Scriptures, that *Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging, and he who is deceived thereby is not wise*, Prov. xx. 1. since it noway contributes to long life; for it is certain, that thousands in the world live as long who drink no strong drink, as any drinkers of it do. Some indeed, from an extraordinary strength of nature, have been hard drinkers, and yet die old; but for one who does this, perhaps an hundred are destroyed by it before they come to half the time of life: and generally we shall find, that very strong and healthy constitutions, at the long-run, are ruined by riot and excess, there being no certain safety in any way of living, but that of temperance and moderation. Nature in some may, a long time, withstand the abuses offered to it, but at last it will yield to its enemies; and those who live the longest in an intemperate course, might, from the strength of their constitution, have lived much longer, had they ate less, and used themselves to drink more water; which drink, as it is most friendly, and longest will preserve the life of a strong constitution, so it is absolutely necessary for those that are weak and sickly, and are naturally subject to the gout, the stone, shortness of breath, wind, ill digestion, and such like.

But the chief use of water, in preserving of health, is by using of it as a vomit, as before was shewn, which is an infallible and the most speedy remedy that was ever found out for any stomach sickness, or pain there; for to vomit with warm water, will effectually remove it in one hour, and be a means to prevent great fits of sickness, and preserve the lives of many thousands to old age, by cleansing the stomach from that tough, slimy, or corrupt matter that offends, and is the cause of all mortal diseases,

*Useful in Vomiting.*



especially of an apoplexy, which, tho' counted a disease of the head, yet hath its original from a foul stomach, which nothing doth so effectually cleanse as vomits; according to Dr Curtis, who saith, that vomiting with warm water, or carduus-tea, is very beneficial to bring up that which fluctuates in the stomach, and that tough, ropy phlegm, which sticks fast to the wrinkles and folds of that bowel, and which purges do often pass over, and cannot remove. Which way of vomiting with warm water, is ten times more easy and pleasant than that which is effected by the use of nauseous tea made of carduus, which physicians sometimes advise; and it is also such as can do no harm by violence, as other vomits made from antimony sometimes do, for want of drinking after each vomit a pint or more of water-gruel, or warm water, when you vomit with water.

And here it may not be amiss to relate what I some years ago discovered, in order to mens freeing themselves from sickness that may happen after eating; for being invited to dine at a certain table, where there were several good dishes of meat, I was over-persuaded to eat more than I should, and in a little time after dinner found myself began to be sick. I went out, and in a private place attempted to vomit, by tickling my throat with my finger, but could not vomit as I designed; only by this means I raised up two or three mouthfuls of thick, tough phlegm, upon which I found myself better, and my sick qualm went off. I took the hint it gave me, and have done the same several times since, and find that the getting up the phlegm, which, like yest upon beer, works up to the mouth of the stomach, a man may free himself from some kinds of sickness after eating. And I remember it is an advice given by one Vaughan, in a book long since printed, intituled, *Directions for Health*, for men who feed high, to put their finger in their throat when they rise in the morning, to make themselves puke, or void the phlegm which can be raised, as an excellent way to preserve health; and it is said also to be an absolute preservative from the gout, by a good writer.

I will conclude with this note, that, in such distemper where water drinking will be available for a cure, the same must not be drank sparingly, but plentifully; as (for instance) to ease the gripings in a looseness or flux: for, if but a pint of water should be drank, ease would hardly succeed; but, drinking in about an hours time a quart or three pints, the sharpness and evil quality of the humour offending, will be so far diluted or weakened, that immediate ease will follow. If the season be too cold to drink cold water, you may warm it a little upon the fire, or put a hot toast of bread into every pint. And the same is true in fevers, or in pains from gravel or the cholic: A small quantity will not be effectual in these cases; for in the cholic a quart is necessary, which ought to be carefully noted; and, in a fever, a little water will rather increase the burning, which large draughts, often drank, will soon take off. Rest, fasting, and drinking much water, after a vomit or two, is a course that never yet hath failed to cure fevers, by clearing the stomach of that sordid filthiness which causeth the distemper: for a happy issue will certainly follow such a course, if the fever is simple, and not complicated with such other distempers which will resist all remedies: For in many cases nothing can prevent mortality, as is evident by the death of the best physicians themselves, and by the death of many who consulted with them for a cure, since many die under the hands of the most able doctors, as well as quacks.

I will add to what hath been said, one experiment more, that is very material: And that is, being very hypochondriacal, and of a melancholy temper, I have often been strangely dejected in mind when under grief for some misfortunes, which sometimes have been so great, as to threaten danger to life; in which fits of grief I always found the parts within my breast very uneasy, and sometimes continued long: But now I have found a good remedy; for, upon drinking a pint or more of cold water,

I find ease in two or three minutes, so that no grief seems to afflict. Which experience I discover for the sake of others in the same circumstances, being certain, that the stomach sympathizeth with the mind, and this becomes the cause of that uneasy sensation perceived there, for which, cold water I have found to be the best remedy in myself, and I believe others may find the same benefit, who will make use thereof upon the like occasion. And it gives also relief to people under frights, which sometimes have been very fatal, even unto death.

There is also another experiment that I have often seen of good effect; and that is, that if persons, subject to what is called vapours, or that *Vapours*, are afflicted with fits, commonly called *the fits of the mother*, will but drink water when they find their fits approach, it will immediately yield relief. There is in this case a mealy julep, prescribed by Dr. Bates, which is, to take a spoonful of fine wheat-flour, an ounce of fine sugar, and a pint of water, brew them together, and drink it off: This is pleasanter than water alone; but water of itself will be as effectual, or rather better, as hath been often proved upon persons in those fits.

Some perhaps may desire to know how to distinguish good from bad water. And the way to do this is, by the taste and scent; for being *How to distinguish* purely fresh, not salt, nor sweetish, nor ill-scented, it is good, provided it be pure and *Water*. clear: Of which kind is the common water used in London, when well settled, or in fair weather. As for those who are curious, and will be at the charge, they may procure the best water for drink by distillation, either in an alembick, or in a cold still used in drawing any cold water from herbs; for no earthly or mettalic substance, nor any kind of salt will rise in distillation: So that the water so distilled will be pure, and admirable to drink when cold, and will keep as long from stinking as any of the cold distilled water in the apothecaries

shops; according to what Dr. Quincy hath affirmed about it in his *Dispensatory*.

Those who have not the conveniency of distillation, may boil it a little as they do for tea; for then, when kept a while after it is cold, it will become more fine, by suffering any mixture contained in it to settle to the bottom of the vessel, and that will render it still more pure: In short, all water that will make a good lather with soap, is wholesome to drink without boiling, but none else.

Since the collecting together the fore-mentioned accounts, I have met with a book written by *Pains in the Dr. Boerhaave, the present professor of phy-*  
*Stomach.* sic at Leyden in Holland, who affirms, that drinking water, made very warm, is a good remedy to pacify griping pains in the stomach; and that it is proper to bathe wounds in the face with it, when they come to be just healed, so that the place be kept continually wet, which I conceive is best done by applying often linen cloths wet, and binding them on till they begin to be dry, for this will prevent scars: And he saith, that warm water is better to attenuate or thin the blood than cold.

There is published lately a book of experiments made with water, by Dr. Hancock, a divine, called *Fevers.* *Febrifugum Magnum*; wherein he saith, that drinking a pint or a quart of cold water in bed will raise a copious sweat, and cure all burning fevers, which at once taking hath done the business: It will raise a sweat without much more covering than ordinary. And he further affirms, that the same taken at the beginning of the cold fit of an ague, and sweating upon it, at two or three times taking, will cure that distemper. A large quantity of hot water, I know, hath been advised to take off the cold fit of agues, but the party was not ordered to sweat. Which discovery of the reverend doctor about fevers, is confirmed by the follow-

ing accounts, which I received from a worthy gentleman, Mr. Ralph Thoresby, F. R. S.\* to whom they were transmitted by Mr. Lucas, a pious and learned gentleman of Leeds in Yorkshire, who says, that

‘ One Captain Rosier fell into a violent fever, which as soon as he perceived, he said he must have some cold water. The gentlewoman, at whose house he lodged, not thinking that proper, boiled the water (unknown to him) and put some spirits therein, and sent it up cold; but he smelt it before it came to his head, and refused to drink it, saying, he knew what he did, for he had several times tried it. Afterwards, some clear water being brought, he drank it, sweat profusely, and was well the next day.

‘ Another captain of a ship also took the same method, when he, or any of his men, fell into a fever; which had the desired success.’

Mr. Lucas adds, in another letter to the same gentleman, ‘ That his own wife fell very ill of a fever; she drank water, sweat very much, and thereby recovered.’

All which instances corroborate the new way of curing fevers, so lately discovered in this city by Dr. Hancock; who also saith, he has had long experience of curing common colds with cold water; and this is done by drinking a large draught of water at going to bed, another in the night, and another in the morning: which, he saith, will soon thicken and sweeten, and digest that thin sharp rheum that provokes coughing to no purpose; for the rheum, when thin, is hard to be brought up; but, when thickened, it will come up easily, and the cough will soon go off. Which agrees with what I before affirmed from my own long experience. D 3

\* Author of *Ducatus Leedienfis*, or Topography of Leeds, which the present learned Bishop of London, in his preface to the new edition of Camden's *Britannia*, Riles, *An useful and accurate Treatise*.

He also affirms from his own experience, that using sometimes to take a walk of eight or ten miles in a morning, he found that water gave twice as good breath for that purpose as wine or ale; and, if it would do this for a man who had no asthma, he doubts not but it would do the same in a person troubled with one. And he also affirms water to be the best remedy for a surfeit; to the truth of which I can testify by long experience.

He also affirms, that drinking cold water hath been found good in rheumatisms, and that to one so afflicted he had advised to drink it as he lay in his bed, and it took off the fit; but if hot water attenuates the blood most, as Boerhaave affirms it is then best to drink of it warm daily to a good quantity: For, as Pitcairn observes, it is then the best dissolver of all kinds of salts in the body, which it will carry off in the urine, if drank plentifully; for by urine salts are evacuated, as is evident by the taste.

And it is his opinion, from the long experience he hath had of the effect of water in keeping the stomach in order, and making it tight and strong to perform its operations, and digest all humours, that it will cure the gout in the stomach; and perhaps it may do it better than wine, which I have known to fail. And I do not wonder that the same liquor, which is the principal cause of the gout in other parts, should not be a help in that part, but rather kill, as it often is found to do, tho' the strongest wine is drank.

In short, he affirms, and that with great reason, that sweating in fevers, by drinking cold water, is more natural than to do it with hot sudorifics, which often do harm in the beginning of fevers, except good store of cooling moistening liquors are drank with them, they being more apt to inflame than cool and quench

heat in the body; and for that reason sweating hath not been often advised by physicians, because they were ignorant of this way of sweating to cure fevers, by drinking cold water.

Which cure, he said, did succeed in one who was his relation, at the fifth day after his falling sick; to whom he gave a dose of water after he was in bed, and he sweated profusely for twenty-four hours, and thereby was cured. Half a pint, he saith, is enough for a grown child; a pint to a man or woman, tho' if they drink a quart, it will be better. And in scarlet fevers, small pox, or measles, tho' the water will not cause sweat, yet it will so quell and keep under the fever, that the eruptions will come out more kindly; which is a confirmation of what before was said about Dr. Bett's prescribing two quarts of water, when the small pox did not come out kindly; the water afforded matter to fill them up, according to what the author observes of a certain person, in the history of *Cold Bathing*, p. 347. that he could give an hundred instances where people of all ages have been lost, by being denied drink in the small pox, — for it hinders the filling of the pustules.

And Dr. Hancock sets down an account of the author of the *Free-thinker*, concerning a woman, who in the last great plague fell ill of that *Plague*. distemper, who got her husband to fetch her a pitcher of water from Lambs-conduit; she drank plentifully of it, but did not avoid the cold, and so did not sweat, however she was cured. And he gives us another relation of an Englishman, formerly resident at Morocco, that fell ill of the plague at that place, and, getting water to drink, fell into a violent sweat, and recovered: From whence the doctor concludes, that water is good in the plague; agreeable to what is related in Sir John Floyer's book of *Cold Baths*, wherein it is said, that but two died of the plague who lived over the water upon London bridge, p. 223, the coolness of the air being supposed to contribute to their health who inhabited on the water in

that manner, their blood being cooler than others: It is said also, the watermen escaped better than others.

I will here add to what the doctor hath said before, concerning the cure of fevers, that if the fever be accompanied in the beginning with any great illness at the stomach, nauseating or vomiting, it will be the surest and safest practice to clear the stomach first, by vomiting with warm water, as before directed; for I cannot believe it possible for the stomach to be cleared from foul humours by sweating. It may do, if no great sense of disorder is perceived there; but it will certainly be safest to cleanse the stomach first, which is the place where all diseases have their original; for then sweating with cold water afterwards may turn to good account. Indeed I have not made any trial of it since the doctor's book was published, but I have a very good opinion of his accounts therein given concerning the benefit of water, having had so much experience thereof in my own practice for above forty years; for so long it is since I first began to collect those accounts, and make those experiments, which are herein made public for the benefit of all. I will only add, that in a book, intituled, *Organum Salutis*, p. 50. written by Judge Rumsley, he saith, he never found any thing more useful for the health of man, than to drink first in the morning half a pint of cold water; and this will contribute much to the cure of blood-shot eyes.

Since the last edition of this work, there hath been published *An Essay of Health and long Life*,  
 Pag. 42, by Dr. Cheyne, wherein this truth is assert-  
 43, 44, ed too, 'That water was the primitive, ori-  
 ' ginal beverage—(and happy had it been  
 ' for the race of mankind, if other mixt and artificial  
 ' liquors had never been invented) and that water alone  
 ' is sufficient and effectual for all the purposes of human  
 ' wants in drink. Strong liquors were never designed  
 ' for common use, tho' now we see the better sort scarce  
 ' ever dilute their food with any other liquor: And



' thereby we see their blood becomes inflamed into gout,  
 ' stone, rheumatisms, raging fevers, and pleurifies; and  
 ' their passions enraged into quarrels, murders, and  
 ' blasphemies; their juices dried up; and their solids  
 ' scorched and shriveled.' This author, p. 46. exclaims  
 against strong drinks, as the root of one half of all the  
 human miseries; but finds they are unwilling to leave  
 them off, pretending the danger of all sudden changes.  
 But he alledgeth, ' That he hath known good and con-  
 ' stant effects from leaving off suddenly great quantities  
 ' of wine, and flesh-meats too, by those accustomed to  
 ' both; and never observed any ill consequences from it  
 ' in any case whatsoever; but that broken constitutions  
 ' have thereby lived longer, and grown better, by so  
 ' doing.'

Some few, and but very few, have pretended, that by  
 leaving off wine and strong drink, and using only water,  
 they found their bodies weakened: But this perhaps may  
 proceed only from the same fancy which made the lady  
 believe her doctor could not cure her, because he did  
 not keep a coach. There may be some constitutions that  
 water doth not agree with, even as cheese will not agree  
 with some: Nay, I once met with an ancient woman,  
 who affirmed, she could not, and never did eat bread.  
 And there are so few in comparison to them who have  
 found benefit by the use of water, to those who have  
 not, that no wise man will refrain on their account, till,  
 upon trial, he really finds it will not agree with him.

One of the most ingenious watch-makers in London,  
 very lately, from a long continued flux, was very much  
 weakened, and entirely lost his appetite, so far that he  
 could eat no food whatsoever: He had the advice of  
 an able physician, his intimate acquaintance, who could  
 not give him any relief: He, upon reading my book,  
 came to ask me, whether I thought he might venture to  
 drink water? I thereupon prevailed with him to drink  
 half a pint of cold water going to bed, and half a pint  
 in the morning: He, tho' an immoderate drinker of

wine before, was so far from being injured by it, that in a fortnight he began to eat, and in about a month recovered as good a state of health and countenance as he had before.

It hath been objected by some few, that drinking of water maketh them costive: which well considered, is an argument that it strengthens the bowels; for all fluxes proceed from weak bowels, and are an enemy to the strength of the bodily members, no persons being in health, as Dr Baynard affirms, but those who evacuate figured excrements, which weak bowels never do; so that firm excrements tend most to strength, provided there be an evacuation once in a day, which is enough for them who through temperance live wisely, and do not destroy themselves by gluttony.

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SOME  
RULES  
FOR  
Preserving Health by DIET,  
*Collected from Physical Authors.*

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**I**N a little treatise, intituled, *Kitchen-physic*, written by Dr. Cook, the author declares, he can hardly be told of any disease which he cannot relieve or cure by a proper diet, p. 39. *Diet will cure diseases.* And in the same book we find his opinion to be this, that all tender sickly people, and all aged and decrepid persons, ought to eat often, and but a little at a time, because weak and wasted bodies are to be restored by little and little; and by moist and liquid food also, rather than by solid, because moist and liquid diet does nourish soonest, and digest easiest.

Those, he saith, that eat much, and get little strength by eating, shew, that they have used themselves to too full a diet; and the more you cram such bodies, the less they thrive by it, but rather grow worse and worse: Because by much feeding you do but add to the bad humours wherewith the body is already filled, which should rather be wasted by purging, and using a spare diet. *Feeding much, bad for weak people.*

And a spare diet he describes to be this, that we never eat at once till the appetite is fully satisfied, *A spare diet, what.* and never to eat till we have an appetite; and men never have a true appetite till they can eat any ordinary food: And he adviseth to keep constantly to a plain diet; for those, he says, enjoy most health, and live longest, that avoid curiosity and variety of meats and drinks, which only serve to entice to gluttony, and so work our ruin.

Another saith, that the less food the sick person eats, the sooner he will recover; for it is a true saying, *Sick, to recover soonest.* *the more you fill foul bodies, the more you hurt them.* The stomach being the place where diseases have their origin, when that part therefore is weak, and out of order, and cannot make a good digestion, if much is eaten, raw and crude humours must needs be bred, and bad humours cannot produce good blood.

All men find by experience, that, in the morning before they have eaten, they are light and pleasantly easy in their bodies; but, after *The evil of full meals.* they have indulged their appetites with plenty of food, they find themselves heavy and dull, and often sleepy: which sufficiently shews, that those full meals are prejudicial to the welfare of the body; for a moderate meal would have continued the ease and lightfomeness they before found in themselves, and would have refreshed any faintness that emptiness might occasion. And he certainly, who useth the most simple meats and drinks, avoideth the snare of provoking his appetite beyond the necessities of nature; whereas variety enticeth to a fresh desire of every dainty, till at last the stomach is gorged, and made incapable of performing a good digestion; and this produceth those crudities which are the cause of all diseases, and of so many sudden deaths.

It is generally observed, that the most unhealthy are

found among those who feed high upon the most delicious dainties, and drink nothing but the strongest and most spirituous liquors; whereas others who want this delicate fare, are seldom sick, except they have such un-  
*The evil of high feeding.*  
 satiable appetites as to eat too much; which a man may do of the plainest diet, whose *belly is his god*, as an apostle expresses it. Phil. iii. 19. But tho' men may glut themselves with coarse food, yet coarse food, and long life are very consistent, as appears by John Bill, mentioned in the history of *Cold Baths*, p. 408. whose food was bread, cheese, and butter; and drink, whey, butter-milk, or water; and yet he lived 133 years, and was a strong, strait, upright man. And the food of John Bailes, whose age amounted to 128, was for the most part brown bread and cheese; and his drink, water, or small beer and milk, *Cold Bath*, p. 416. He had buried the whole town of Northampton twenty times over, except three or four, and said, *Strong drink killed them all.*

Dr. Pratt adviseth to sup sparingly; for to sup sparingly, he saith, is most healthful, because of the experience of an infinite number of persons who have received the greatest benefit from light suppers. For the stomach being not overburdened, the sleep is more pleasant; and from sparing suppers the breeding of those humours it prevented, which cause defluxions, rheumatisms, gouts, dropsies, giddiness, and corruption in the mouth from the scurvy: And from light suppers a freedom from sickness and reaching in the morning is obtained, and concoction is made perfect, which prevents obstructions.  
*Small suppers best.*

Another saith, it is well known, that many indispositions are cured by fasting, or a very spare diet; for what is taken into the stomach being no more than can be well digested, the chylous juice, so rightly prepared, is conveyed into the lacteal vessels, and from thence into the blood;  
*Fasting, its benefit.*

so that, nature being duly supplied with well-concocted nourishment, the corrupted blood will free itself from that corruption in time, by throwing it out, through the pores of the skin, in perspiration, and supply itself with the purer juices; and, in this way, consumptions and scurvies, and other chronical distempers, will be overcome. Which way of curing diseases by fasting, swine do naturally betake themselves to, who, when sick, will eat nothing till they recover, as they always do after they injure themselves by over-eating; in which over-eating they are imitated by all who delight in gluttony, tho' not in using the same means of recovery, by fasting; so that hogs are wiser in that particular than such people.

That men in health may prevent diseases, it was advised, that one meal should not be eaten, till  
*A rule in eating.* the other, which was eaten before, was passed off clean out of the stomach; which never is done till the appetite of hunger is found to call for another supply: By means of which constant observation, the food will be converted to good chyle, and from good chyle, which is a milk-like substance, good blood will be bred, and from good blood generous spirits will be produced, on which a healthy constitution will ensue; but, on the contrary, when too great a quantity of food is taken for pleasure only, which the stomach cannot well digest, the chyle will be raw and corrupt, which will foul the blood, and render the body disordered and unhealthy.

Others say, that abstinence and sobriety free from most  
*Benefits of sobriety.* diseases, especially catarrhs, coughs, wheezings, giddiness, pain in the head and stomach, sudden death, lethargies, gout and sciatica, an ill digestion being the cause of all these; it also prevents pains in the spleen, stone, and gravel, and a dry itch; it makes the body vigorous and nimble, maintains the five senses in a good state, preserveth the memory, quickens the wit; and quencherh all undue lust in mankind; and, in short, all misers, who eat and drink but little, do live long.

Two meals a day is said to be sufficient for all persons after fifty years of age, and all weak people; and the omitting of suppers does always conduce much to the health of the weak and aged: siace, if no supper be eaten, the stomach will soon free itself from all tough, slimy humours wherewith it is slabbered over on the inside, and thereby the appetite will be renewed, and digestion made more strong. Moreover, all that are troubled with sweating in the night, any ill taste in their mouths, belching and troublesome dreams, must avoid suppers; for in sleep the fibres of the stomach relax, and are not able to contract themselves so strongly, as when awake, to embrace the food, and by tituration reduce it into a pap fit to pass into the intestines, out of which the nourishment is sent to other parts.

*Rule for  
diet after  
fifty.*

It was said by Dr. Curtis, that tho' those who use a spare diet cannot well bear long labour; yet such people, when their exercise is suitable to their strength, do live longer than those of a robust constitution, that think large feeding adds strength; especially such as, being strong, use no exercise proportionable to it, to consume the superfluities which a full feeding doth occasion: So that the only way for those to live long, who have much wealth, and need not labour for a livelihood, is to live temperately; and this temperance doth consist in not letting the common custom of meals invite you to eat, except your appetite concur with those times. We must not indulge the cravings of a depraved appetite, as those do who eat to please their fancy, and not the necessities of nature; and, when we do eat, we must not think that the more plentifully we eat, we shall be the more strengthened; for it will not prove so: A little well digested will make the body stronger than the being glutted with superfluity, most of which will be turned into a corrupt juice, and must be cast out by physic, or else sickness will ensue. The easiest physic is that which the Germans call the *Hunger-cure*, if continued a due time.

It is the opinion of learned men, that the early distemper of the bodies of children, called the *rickets*, proceeds from the faults of their mothers, in making them gluttons from their cradles, gorging them with food till they lothe it, out of a mistaken opinion, that this is the way to make them thrive and grow strong: which excess is not only the cause of this disease, but of the immature death of many; and in others it lays the foundation of many distempers, which afflict those afterwards who live to years of maturity. And as they gorge them with food, so they vainly think to cherish them with strong drink, than which nothing can be more pernicious to the health of children, whose diet should be little and often, and their drink cooling. As it also should be when men arrive at the time of becoming children again in old age, that is, in an helpless state, which should be prevented as much as can be, by a cooling, moistening diet, in opposition to the hot, dry, and withered state of age; for it is heat and dryness that are the cause of most old mens miseries, especially the wasting of the substance that fills the parts with moisture, and keeps the body plump and smooth; they who stile wine the old man's milk, being greatly mistaken, for milk cools and wine heats.

It was the opinion of Dr. Pitt, who was formerly physician to St. Bartholomew's hospital, that *fasting, rest, and drinking water, would cure most diseases.* And there seemeth to be a great deal of reason in what he asserts: for fasting will give time to the stomach to unload itself of the cause of distempers, the cause of all diseases being begun in that bowel only: to which cleansing, the drinking of water plentifully will much contribute; which also will keep the action of the stomach upon the hinges, by filling of it when empty, at which time there will be need of rest, for thereby the body will be less fit for business: Tho' the mere drinking of water, which affords nourishment sufficient for the growth and support



of all vegetables, will, in some measure, supply the want of food; as hath been shewn in the example of two, who were supported a long time by nothing else. In short, the best way for a sick man to recover, is to eat little or no food till he finds an appetite, according to that saying,

*Spare diet will the most diseases cure,  
If a due time the same you can endure.*

And fasting from food may be continued long enough to be a remedy for many diseases, with the assistance of common water; by the drinking of which warm, in a due quantity, without a total fasting, two persons, I am informed, were recovered out of consumptions, with which they were extremely weakened, and that in about six weeks time; as another by drinking milk and whey, equal parts, made blood hot, without using any other diet, which is thought to be far more effectual than asses milk, whose virtue consists in being thinner than other milk.

But, besides a spare diet, cool dry air is also very helpful to preserve men in health, who are not sick; for it mixes with the blood, and without it the motion of the blood and spirits *Air, its benefit.* can never be preserved; as appears by diving vessels, in which men cannot live when the air therein is made hot by their own body and breath: And is proved also by an experiment of Dr. Croone's, who stifled a chicken till it seemed quite dead; and yet, by blowing cool air into the lungs with a small pair of bellows, it revived. Hence it appears, that the common custom of managing sick people is very pernicious, and so far from helping them to recover, that it is sufficient to make a healthy person sick: For were a person, who was not sick, confined for three or four weeks in a room made hot like a stove, and kept in his bed, with the curtains drawn, and all the windows close shut, and the room made unpleasant with the nauseous fumes of physic and a

close-stool, which will almost make a healthy man sick when he enters into it; we can never think that this is the way to recover one that really is sick, and wants the fresh air and reviving scents to cherish his blood; a fresh, open, sweet air being one principal means to strengthen the body, make a good appetite and digestion, and render the spirits brisk and lively: which advantage should be allowed to all but childbed women, and those who are afflicted with the small pox: for the fresh air can be prejudicial to no other, whose bodies are clothed warm, either in bed, or sitting in a chair in their chamber.

Some years since, a neighbour became very feverish, and his wife persuaded him to go to bed; and *A fever suddenly cured.* hearing of it soon after, I gave him a visit, where I found the windows close shut, the curtains of the bed drawn, and the room very hot, for it was in July: He was burning hot, and complained for want of breath. I drew open the curtains, covered him warm, and then opened the windows, and the wind blew into the room; upon which he soon told me, his shortness of breath had left him. I persuaded him to drink water, which he found did much refresh him; and, after I had taken my leave of him, he called for more water: and, while he had the cup in his hand, an apothecary came in, whom his wife had sent for, who, finding him about to drink the water, told him, if he did it, he was a dead man; but, instead of forbearing, he drank it up in his presence: upon which the other took his leave, and told him, he would say no more to him. However, before night, the person got up, went abroad, and was cured of his fever. Which is one instance, among many others that might be given, of the benefit of fresh air to a person who is kept warm in his bed; for thereby his body was cooled inwardly, and his breathing made more free, by the air which was drawn into his lungs to refresh and comfort the blood as it passed through them.

I shall only add, that by keeping the blood cool as well

as clean, is to be understood, not only moderation in diet, but to feed most on cooling food made of wheat, barley, oat-meal, rice, and ripe apples, as also on milk, which, joined with oat-meal, is the chief food of those lusty and strong men, the Highlanders of Scotland, who abound in children, as Dr. Cheyne tells us in his *Treatise of the Gout*, p. 108. edit. 4. which demonstrates milk and oat-meal to be a most strengthening food, and such as keeps the blood in due order; so that therewith men may subsist, tho' they abstain from beef, pork and venison, and all other meats hard to digest, and drink water as the highlanders do: Of the efficacy of which cooling milk-diet the said Dr. Cheyne gives a notable instance in a doctor that lived at Croyden, p. 103. who had long been afflicted with the falling-evil; for, by slow observation, he found the lighter his meals were, the lighter were his fits. At last he also cast off all liquids but water, and found his fits weaker, and the intervals longer; and finding his disease mend, as its sewel was withdrawn, he took to vegetable food, and water only, which put an entire period to his fits without any relapse: But finding that food windy to him, he took to milk, of which he drank a pint for a breakfast, a quart at dinner, and a pint for supper, without fish, flesh, bread, or any strong or spirituous liquor, or any drink but water, with which he lived afterwards for fourteen years, without the least interruption in his health, strength or vigour, but died afterwards of a pleurisy. Which is a confirmation of what Dr. Cook did affirm, of the possibility of curing diseases by a diet only, that is temperate and cooling; of which milk is a part, as are also the roots and seeds of vegetables, such as potatoes, turnips, wheat, rice, barley, oat-meal, and full ripe fruit.

*A cool and  
low diet.*

In short, temperance or a spare diet, void of dainties, never was injurious to the strongest constitution; and, without it, such as are weak and sickly cannot long subsist; for the more such persons eat and drink, the more weak and disordered they will still find themselves to be:

so that if the strong despise temperance, yet the comfort of weak, sickly and pining people, does depend entirely upon their constantly observing it; which, when they are accustomed to it, will be easy to do: So that they will deny all intemperate desires with as great pleasure, as they before delighted in what is falsely stiled good eating and drinking; for nothing of that is good, which is injurious to health. It is custom only that makes men hanker after gluttony and drunkenness, and a contrary custom will make men abhor it as much: And therefore it is a wonder the rich do not strive to attain to it; for

*A fatal error 'tis in men of wealth,  
To feed so high as will destroy their health.*

Temperance being that which will enable them to live most at ease, and enjoy their wealth the longest; this, and water drinking, being the surest way to bring men to old age, tho' it hath not power to make those young who are aged, yet it will make the aged more free from decrepitedness, and die with most ease, if the deathbed hath been well prepared for by a good life.

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