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Trotter T (1792). Observations on the scurvy. London: Longman, pp 137-138, 184.

Title pages

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
S C U R V Y;

WITH A REVIEW OF THE
O P I N I O N S
LATELY ADVANCED ON THAT
D I S E A S E,

AND A
NEW THEORY DEFENDED,
ON THE APPROVED METHOD OF CURE, AND THE
INDUCTION OF PNEUMATIC CHEMISTRY:

BEING AN ATTEMPT
TO INVESTIGATE THAT PRINCIPLE IN RECENT
VEGETABLE MATTER, WHICH, ALONE, HAS BEEN
FOUND EFFECTUAL IN THE TREATMENT OF
THIS SINGULAR DISEASE; AND FROM
THENCE TO DEDUCE MORE CER-
TAIN MEANS OF PREVENTION
THAN HAVE BEEN ADOPT-
ED HITHERTO.

II. EDITION.

By THOMAS TROTTER, M. D.

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY; AN HONORARY MEM-
BER OF THE ROYAL PHYSICAL AND OTHER LITERARY SOCIETIES
OF EDINBURGH; AND SURGEON OF HIS MAJESTY'S SHIP THE DUKE.

*Multum egerunt qui ante nos fuerunt; multum etiam, adhuc restat operis,
multumque restabit.* SEN. EPIST.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. LONGMAN, PATERNOSTER ROW;
AND J. WATTS, GOSPORT.

M.DCC.XCII.

The superior efficacy of the acid fruit in the cure of Scurvy is so well ascertained, that it might seem superfluous to add any fresh remark to what is so fully admitted. These articles are certainly more beneficial as they approach to the nature of the citric acid, which, is that abounding in the lime, lemon, &c. Our summer fruit in this country, such as the apple and gooseberry, lose their acidity as they come to maturity; so that in their immature state they possess most of that principle valued in the cure of Scurvy. In all cases of Scurvy which I have attended, I have remarked, the longings and desires of the patient for acids; which, also, have been mentioned by some of the earliest writers on the disease, and more or less by others since that time. It is one of the strongest instincts in nature that we are acquainted with.

Having repeatedly observed the scorbutic slaves throw away the ripe guavas, while they devoured the green ones with much earnestness, I resolved to try if there were any difference to be remarked in their effects. For this purpose I selected nine blacks, affected in nearly a similar degree with Scurvy. To three of these, I gave limes, to three, green guavas, and to three, ripe guavas. They were kept under the half deck, and served by myself twice or thrice a day. They lived in this manner for a week, which was about the time we left the coast of Africa; and it is to be remarked, that the three Negroes restricted to the ripe guavas continued in much the same situation, while the others were almost well.

The *Elixir of Vitriol*, was, I believe, first introduced to the navy by the late Doctor Huxham, of Plymouth. It is usual for surgeons still to demand it, but not from any view of its being either capable of preventing or curing the Scurvy. When diluted powerfully with water it is commonly used as a gargle to the gums and mouth; but in this way it is a mere *placebo*. The sulphur which is the base of this acid, has so strong an attraction for the oxygene, that it is incapable of being acted upon, by the powers of digestion and assimilation, or converted into animal fluids; hence it passes unchanged, through the body without exerting any effects on the blood.