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TREATISE

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SCURVY.

IN THREE PARTS.

Illegit CONTAINING *Regie*

An inquiry into the Nature, Causes,
and Cure, of that Disease.

Medicor. Together with *Edinburgh*

A Critical and Chronological View of what
has been published on the subject.

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From the Author

P. 9. 40.

The following are the experiments.

On the 20th of *May* 1747, I took twelve patients in the scurvy, on board the *Salisbury* at sea. Their cases were as similar as I could have

have them. They all in general had putrid gums, the spots and lassitude, with weakness of their knees. They lay together in one place, being a proper apartment for the sick in the fore-hold; and had one diet common to all, *viz.* water-gruel sweetened with sugar in the morning; fresh mutton-broth often times for dinner; at other times puddings, boiled biscuit with sugar, &c.; and for supper, barley and raisins, rice and currants, sago and wine, or the like. Two of these were ordered each a quart of cyder a-day. Two others took twenty-five gutts of *elixir vitriol* three times a-day, upon an empty stomach; using a gargle strongly acidulated with it for their mouths. Two others took two spoonfuls of vinegar three times a-day, upon an empty stomach; having their gruels and their other food well acidulated with it, as also the gargle for their mouth. Two of the worst patients, with the tendons in the ham rigid, (a symptom none of the rest had), were put under a course of sea-water. Of this they drank half a pint every day, and sometimes more or less as it operated, by way of gentle physic. Two others had each two oranges and one lemon given them every day. These they eat with green-
diness,

diness, at different times, upon an empty stomach. They continued but six days under this course, having consumed the quantity that could be spared. The two remaining patients, took the bigness of a nutmeg three times a-day, of an electuary recommended by an hospital-surgeon, made of garlic, mustard-seed, *rad. raphan.* balsam of *Peru*, and gum myrrh; using for common drink, barley-water well acidulated with tamarinds; by a decoction of which, with the addition of *cremor tartar*, they were gently purged three or four times during the course.

The consequence was, that the most sudden and visible good effects were perceived from the use of the oranges and lemons; one of those who had taken them, being at the end of six days fit for duty. The spots were not indeed at that time quite off his body, nor his gums sound; but without any other medicine, than a gargarism of *elixir vitriol*, he became quite healthy before we came into *Plymouth*, which was on the 16th of *June*. The other was the best recovered of any in his condition; and being now deemed pretty well, was appointed nurse to the rest of the sick.

Next to the oranges, I thought the cyder (g) had the best effects. It was indeed not very sound, being inclinable to be aigre or pricked. However, those who had taken it, were in a fairer

(g) *Extract of a letter from Mr Ives.*

I judge it proper to communicate to you, what good effects I have observed in the scurvy, from the use of cyder and sea-water, during the last cruise I made in the western squadron, with my honoured benefactor Admiral *Martin*. But as I do not pretend to have taken notice of any thing, more than merely a palliative benefit from them, I think, without mentioning particular cases, it will be sufficient for me to inform you, that, in our proceeding cruise with the western squadron, his Majesty's ship *Yarmouth*, of 70 guns and 500 men, was not only troubled with the scurvy in common with other ships, but, in spite of all my endeavours, lost in it a proportioned number of men. Upon our return from that cruise, I took an opportunity to represent to the Admiral, that as vegetable juices of all sorts were from experience found to be the only true antiscorbutics, and I had myself formerly experienced the good effects of apples, it was reasonable to presume that cyder must certainly be of service. This suggestion agreed with some accounts the Admiral had received from others; and he with great readiness bought, and put under my care, several hogheads of the best *South-Ham* cyder. During the next cruise, each scorbutic patient had daily a quart or three pints of cyder; and as many of them as I could prevail on, took twice a-week three quarters of a pint of sea-water in a morning. In all other respects I treated them as I used to do people in the scurvy; which you well know, from the conversation which has often passed betwixt us on this subject, was with squill vomits, pills composed of soap, squills, garlic, &c. *elixir vitriol*, and other medicines suited to the different stages and symptoms of the malady. In one word, we had this cruise as many scorbutic patients as any other ship,

fairer way of recovery than the others at the end of the fortnight, which was the length of time all these different courses were continued, except the oranges. The putrefaction of their gums, but especially their lassitude and weakness, were somewhat abated, and their appetite increased by it.

As to the *elixir of vitriol*, I observed that the mouths of those who had used it by way of gargarism, were in a much cleaner and better condition than many of the rest, especially those who used the vinegar; but perceived otherwise no good effects from its internal use upon the other symptoms. I indeed never had a great opinion of the efficacy of this medicine in the scurvy, since our longest cruise in the *Salisbury*, from the 10th of *August* to the 28th *October* 1746; when we had but one scurvy in the ship. The patient was a marine, (one *Walsh*); who, after recovering from a quotidian ague in the latter end of *September*, had ta-

in proportion to our complement of men. But although all the rest buried a great many, some to the number of 20, others 30, 40, 50, and upwards; yet the *Yarwood* did not bury more than two or three; and these at the latter end of the cruise, all our cyder having been expended for a week or ten days before. Upon our arrival at port, we sent to the hospital a great many in very dreadful circumstances.

ken the *elixir vitriol* by way of restorative for three weeks; and yet at length contracted the disease, while under a course of a medicine recommended for its prevention.

There was no remarkable alteration upon those who took the electuary and tamarind decoction, the sea-water, or vinegar, upon comparing their condition, at the end of the fortnight, with others who had taken nothing but a little lenitive electuary and *cremor tartar*, at times, in order to keep their belly open; or a gentle pectoral in the evening, for relief of their breast. Only one of them, while taking the vinegar, fell into a gentle flux at the end of ten days. This I attributed to the genius and course of the disease, rather than to the use of the medicine. As I shall have occasion elsewhere to take notice of the effects of other medicines in this disease, I shall here only observe, that the result of all my experiments was, that oranges and lemons were the most effectual remedies for this distemper at sea. I am apt to think oranges preferable to lemons, though perhaps both given together will be found most serviceable.

It may be now proper to confirm the efficacy of these fruits by the experience of others.