

# THE MEDICAL ADVISER,

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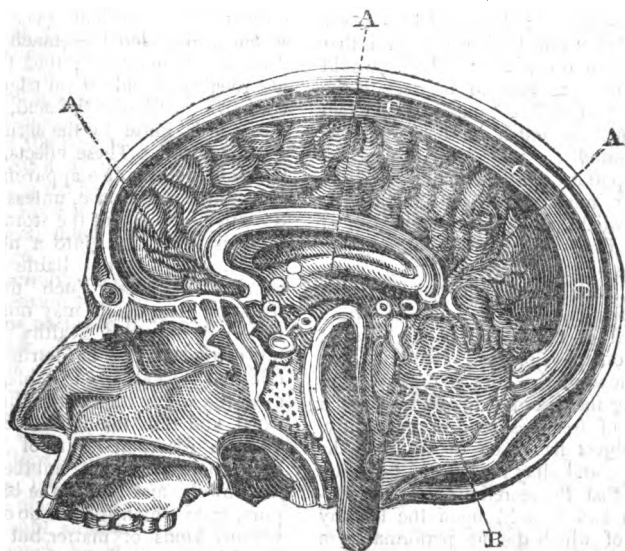
## GUIDE TO HEALTH AND LONG LIFE.

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No. 17.]

SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 1824.

[Price 3d.



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### THE BRAIN.

THE view of the brain which we present to our readers in our present number, is more intended to give a general idea of that organ than to anatomically illustrate it. With reference to phrenology, it will serve to shew to those who are unacquainted with the appearances of the brain, that the bone of the skull may have risings or protuberances to accommodate the convolutions which are represented in the

cerebrum marked A.A.A. That portion of the brain marked B. the cerebellum, the light lines of which are designated as the *tree of life*, is supposed to have a different function from the cerebrum, and it may not be improbable that one is the organ of motion, and the other of thought.

A.A.A. The cerebrum.

B. The cerebellum.

C.C.C. A membrane partly dividing the cerebrum, and partly supporting the large veins or sinuses.

## DYSPEPSIA; OR, INDIGESTION.

(Continued—From Abernethy's Works.)

### TREATMENT.

I SHALL now proceed to mention the plan which I have pursued in the treatment of these disorders, when they have been connected with surgical diseases: with what degree of success, the following cases will demonstrate. I do not feel altogether competent to give full directions relative to this subject; because I have never attended to medical cases with that degree of observation which would lead me properly to appreciate the efficacy of different medicines, when administered either in their simple or compound forms. The subject is so important, that the public would be highly indebted to any practitioner, who would point out the varieties of these diseases, and the appropriate modes of cure. The method of treatment, which I have adopted, is simple, and founded on the opinions I have formed of the nature of the disease, and on physiological views of the functions of the affected organs. Believing the disordered parts to be in a state of weakness and of irritability, my object has been to diminish the former, and allay the latter. Believing also that the secretions into the stomach and bowels, upon the healthy state of which the due performance of their functions depends, were, in consequence of such disorder, either deficient in quantity or depraved in quality; I have endeavoured to excite, by means of medicine, a more copious and healthy secretion.

“It is the principal object of medicine to give strength and tranquillity to the system at large, which must have a beneficial influence on all its parts, and greatly promote the well-doing of every local disease. We cannot reasonably expect tranquillity of the nervous system whilst there is disorder of the digestive organs. As we can perceive no permanent source of strength but from the digestion of our food, it becomes important on this account that we should attend to its quantity, quality, and the periods of taking it, with a view to ensure its perfect digestion.

“First,—With respect to quantity:

There can be no advantage in putting more food into the stomach than it is competent to digest, for the surplus can never afford nourishment to the body; on the contrary, it will be productive of various evils. Being in a warm and moist place, the undigested food will undergo those chemical changes natural to dead vegetable and animal matter: the vegetable food will ferment and become acid, the animal will grow rancid and putrid; this is only rendered evident occasionally, when a disordered stomach rejects some of its contents; then the teeth are roughened and set on edge by the corrosive qualities of the acid, and the throat feels burnt by the acrimony of the rancid oil. These effects, though occasionally made apparent, must constantly take place, unless by the digestive powers of the stomach the food is converted into a new substance, which is not liable to these chemical changes. Such new and irritating compounds may not indeed materially injure a healthy stomach, but cannot fail to be detrimental to one that is weak and irritable, as well as to the whole tract of the alimentary canal, and thus maintain and aggravate its disorder. Part of the food thus changed will be imbibed from the bowels, and render the blood impure, from which there is no outlet for various kinds of matter but through the kidneys; and this may prove a cause of foul urine, as well as of the presence of many substances in that fluid not natural to it, and be productive of serious diseases in the urinary organs. Observing the evils resulting from undigested aliment, we surely ought cautiously to guard against them by proportioning the quantity of our food to the digestive powers. Nature seems to have formed animals to live and enjoy health upon a scanty and precarious supply of food; but man in civilized society, having food always at command, and finding gratification from its taste, and a temporary hilarity and energy result from the excitement of his stomach, which he can at pleasure produce, eats and drinks an enormous deal more than is necessary for his wants or welfare; he fills his stomach and bowels with food which actually

putrifies in those organs; he fills also his blood-vessels till he oppresses them, and induces diseases in them as well as in his heart. If his digestion be imperfect he fills them with unassimilated substances, from which nutriment cannot be drawn, and which must be injurious. In proportion as the powers of the stomach are weak, so ought we to diminish the quantity of our food, and take care that it should be as nutritive and easy of digestion as possible. By adopting an abstinent plan of diet even to a degree that produces a sensation of want in the system, we do that which is most likely to create appetite and increase the powers of digestion. In how great a degree want effects these objects, is evident in those who have been obliged to fast from necessity, or have been much reduced from hemorrhage.

“Secondly,—As to quality: It is not my intention to discuss the question as to the nature of the food proper for mankind. When the stomach is weak, it seems particularly necessary that it should be nutritive and easy of digestion. I may further observe, that its qualities should be adapted to the feelings of the stomach. In proof of this proposition, numerous instances might be mentioned of apparently unfit substances agreeing with the stomach, being digested and even quieting an irritable state of stomach, merely because they were suitable to its feelings. Instances might also be mentioned of changes in diet producing a tranquil and healthy state of the stomach in cases where medicines had been tried in vain. Neither can such occurrences excite surprise, for as digestion and the consequent tranquillity of the stomach depends on a proper quantity of healthy juices being secreted and commixed with the food, such secretions are likely to be produced by whatever agreeably excites it, and obstructed by whatever has a contrary tendency.

“Thirdly,—As to the times of taking food: It is evident that the intention of nature that we should put into the stomach a certain portion of food, the excitement of which inducing a secretion of gastric fluid, by its actions becomes digested. This office of the

stomach being effected, it should be left in a state of repose till its powers are restored and accumulated, and this return of energy would in health be denoted by a return of appetite. It is probable that three hours may elapse in health before the digestion of a moderate meal is effected, so that the stomach is empty and in a state of repose. It is therefore reasonable to allot the same portion of time for the same purpose when the organ is disordered, whilst we have diminished the quantity of our food in order to proportion it to the diminished powers of the organ; yet, instead of pursuing this rational plan of diet, many persons are taking food every third or fourth hour, pleading in excuse for such conduct that they cannot do without it. The truth is, that when the stomach is disordered, the exertion of digesting a single meal after its excitement and efforts have ceased, is productive of sensations of languor sinking and inquietude, which ought to be calmed or counteracted by medicines and not by food, for a second meal cannot be digested in this state of the stomach. We also often tease and disorder our stomachs by fasting for too long a period; and when we have thus brought on what I may call a discontented state of the organ, unfitting it for its office, we sit to a meal and fill it to its utmost, regardless of its power, or its feelings. The rules then for diet may be thus summarily expressed: we should proportion the quantity of food to the powers of the stomach, adapt its quality to the feelings of the organ, and take it at regular intervals of six or seven hours thrice during the day. It would be well if the public would follow the advice of Mr. Addison, given in the *Spectator*, of reading the writings of L. Cornaro, who having naturally a weak constitution, which he seemed to have ruined by intemperance, so that he was expected to die at the age of thirty-five, did at that period adopt a strict regimen, allowing himself only twelve ounces of food daily. By this plan of diet he lived to more than one hundred years; and it was delightful to observe the tranquil, cheerful and energetic state of mind that accompanied his bodily health

and in a great degree induced it. Cornaro found that as the powers of his stomach declined with the powers of life in general, that it was necessary he should diminish the quantity of his food, and by so doing he retained to the last the feelings of health.

(To be continued.)

### INFLAMMATORY SWELLING OF THE BREASTS OF WOMEN.

WE stated in our last number, when treating on milk fever, that neglecting to put the infant to the breast in due time, or the non-evacuation of the milk by other means, produces very frequently inflammation of the breasts, which often terminates in hardness and ulceration, and remains for a long time, causing great pain and trouble. Practitioners differ in their opinions upon the modes of treatment in this disorder, some holding that in all cases the inflammation should be put back, while others think that every means should be resorted to, to make the tumour suppurate, lest, as they say, that schirrous indurations and cancer may be induced. This latter opinion, we think, is like pulling down a house because we fear it may catch fire. Every inflammation should be treated with a cooling and antiphlogistic plan at first, for thus we counteract the febrile symptoms which attend such disease, and if we do not altogether put an end to it, yet we lessen the violence of its action. As to bringing forward or putting back tumours in general, by topical applications (with the exception of leeches and blisters) we confess that we are sceptical. If a tumour is to be discussed, it must be done by constitutional means, such as bleeding, purging, and other evacuations, and we think that fomentations or poultices—where these means are employed—will not tend one jot to bring forward the suppuration; on the contrary, they will accelerate the dispersion of the tumour, if the means employed upon the constitution be sufficient for the purpose. Therefore, when practitioners say that the tumour ought not to be put back, and at the same time administer purgatives and antifebriles, their

opinions are one way, and their actions another. If they would strictly follow such opinion, they should not permit either laxative medicines or venesection, but leave the patient to the mercy of the fire, or perhaps add fuel to it by stimulants, and thus endanger, life by inducing such a degree of fever as it would be difficult to subdue. In inflammatory tumours of the breasts discussion should be attempted, by all means, as early as possible; and this is to be done by the application of leeches to the parts, after which cloths, dipped in the following lotion, are to be repeatedly applied cold—

Of camphorated spirit an ounce,  
Sugar of lead a scruple,  
Distilled vinegar six ounces.—Mix.

The patient must take a saline purgative, which is to have a full effect. She must avoid stimulating food or drink, stay in bed, and take every four hours two table-spoons full of the following mixture—

Of antimonial wine, a drachm and a half,  
Of common water four ounces.—Mix and sweeten with a little syrup.

The milk must be evacuated whenever the accumulation takes place, which will be often necessary two or three times a day, and when the breasts are so much swelled as to render it impossible to do it by the nipple alone, the glasses made for the purpose must be employed; however, care should be taken to avoid producing pain as much as possible.

If, notwithstanding this plan, the tumour should proceed toward suppuration, that process must be assisted by warm fomentations of camomile flowers and water, and poultices changed every three hours, the fomentations to be used immediately on the removal of each poultice, and the patient may leave off the other medicines. The tumour will frequently open of itself, and after this has taken place, the poultices and fomentations must be continued until the swelling recedes. When this object is accomplished, a dressing of lint with some simple ointment should be laid upon it, and repeated twice a day. If the tumour becomes