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A Letter, about a Good Management under the Dis-
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A LETTER,

About a Good Management under the Distemper of the MEASLES, at this time Spreading in the Country. Here Published for the Benefit of the Poor, and such as may want the help of Able Physicians.

My Good Friend,

THE Measles are a Distemper which in Europe ordinarily proves a Light Malady: but in these parts of America it proves a very heavy Calamity; A Malady Grievous to most, Mortal to many, & leaving pernicious Relicks behind it in All. Because the Sickness is now spreading in all parts; and its Malignity increases, as the Winter advances, and Good Physicians are not every where at hand for the Relief of the Sick, and a very nice Management of the Case is requisite: You are now address'd with a short Letter of Advice concerning it.

You will by no means forget the first and main Care, which is, To cast an Eye unto the Glorious GOD, who is, *The Lord our Healer*. You are no Stranger to *Exod. XV. 26. Psal. CVIII. 12. and XLI. 4.* One of the most Learned and Famous Physicians that ever was in the World, the Great *Kirskenius*, has this reported of him; He would ordinarily do nothing for his Patients, till he saw them first hopefully Reconciled unto God.

It should be Remembred, That multitudes of Lives have been Saved, in the Measles as well as in the Small-pox, by peoples being at last perswaded out of the pernicious Methods of *Over-doing*, and *Over-heating*, and giving Things to force Nature out of its own orderly way of proceeding. Before we go any further, Let this Advice for the Sick, be principally attended to; *Don't kill 'em!* That is to say, With mischievous Kindness. Indeed, if we stopt here, and said no more, this were enough to save more Lives, than our Wars have destroy'd.

The Usual Symptoms of an Arrest from the Measles are, An Head-ake; Troubles in the Eyes; a Dry Cough; an Oppression on the Breast or Stomach; or a pain there, and in the Back and Limbs; and sometimes a Faintness, with Sickness, perhaps Vomiting, or Griping and Purging; A Thirst, with a constant Fever, which is mild at first, but grows high enough before it has done.

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When such Symptoms of the Sickneſs, bid your Friend look about him, let him not throw away his Life by not being Sick ſoon enough.

If the Symptoms are *Gentle*, and the perſon can yet claim his place at the Table, or can bear to Sit up, Let him do ſo, till the *Red Specks* begin to ſhow themſelves. But let him keep *houſe*, and keep *warm*; not dare to expoſe himſelf. Let him *feed ſparingly* and on a very *Easy Food*. Tho' an Hourly Appearance of the Enemy may be Expected, yet be not in an Hurry. No Haſte of your *Hot Things*: Wait with a little patience. A little *Brimſtone* finely powdered, as much as may lie on a *Six-pence*, twice or thrice a day, may do more than Twelve penniworth of Service.

If there be any Shocking *Violence* in the Symptoms, or the *Red Specks* begin to make their Appearance, let the perſon take his *Bed*, and be ſure to Lie very *warm*, till all be over. In the Winter, *Infants* are beſt kept in the *Arms*.

Ordinarily, *Sweating* muſt not be indulged, much leſs provoked. But a comfortable *warmth*, I ſay, a convenient *warmth*, cannot be too much inculcated. As many *Coverings*, as the Times that the word *Warmth*, occurs in our now ſpeaking of it, may be little enough.

A *Gentle Vomit* in the beginning, has had much Benefit expected from it. Be ſure, if there be an *Oppreſſion* by a Body of Phlegm, or an overcharg'd Stomach, or any thing of a *Nauſeous Inclination*, a *Gentle Vomit* is loudly called for.

If there be none of this, but only a *pain* in the Head, and Breast, Back, and Limbs, a moderate *Sweat* may do. It may be procured, by the well-known preparation which is become every bodies Firſt Reſort, *Syrup of Saffron and Treacle Water*. A *Tea* of *Sage*, or of *Rosemary*, or a little Mull'd *Cider*, or *Wine* with thoſe Plants infuſed, will do well. Some can diſpenſe, with an Infuſion of the *Snakeweed*. But others are for waving it, as too fiery and enraging in a Diſtemper which is allow'd by all to be an *Inflammatory Fever*. A *Scabious Tea* will do. There is alſo a *Compoſition* of *Hot Beer* and *Rum* (for which they that are Learned in ſuch potions, do not want a Name,) this *coarſe Compoſition*, has been of Good Conſequence. But it muſt be very *weak*; and it muſt not be uſed *often*, it at all after the *Meaſles* appear in the Skin. The uſe of ſuch Things muſt be very *Temperate*; It may be continued until the full Eruption. But I repeat the Admonition againſt, *Over-doing* and *Over-heating*. It will ſpoil all.

The *Coarſe Compoſition* aforeſaid, will beſt ſuit the *pained Patient*. But it will hardly do ſo well, in *Coſtive Bodies*; or where the *Breast* is oppreſſed; or where the *Fever* is high, or in too *hot Conſtitutions*. That
Coarſe

Course Composition, 'tis a very strange thing, that if it happen to Do a *Little Good now and then*, people must presently be *Bewitched* with it !

Where the Patient is most prone to be *faint*, a *Balm Tea*, or a *Glass of Wine* a little *Saffronized*, may do very well. Twenty or Thirty Drops of good *Elixir Proprietatis*, have been sometimes very serviceable to them that could be *Masters* of it, in this as well as many other Cases ; But, *this does not happen to every man !*

Your Patient is by this time full of the *Measles*. He'll be *Thirsty*. And what shall he do ?

If he will venture to drink any thing that is *Cold*, it will be well, if he don't find, *There is Death in the Pot*.

Let him Drink a *Tea* of *Balm*, and *Scabious*. If he be *Faint*, or *Sick*, add a little *Saffron*. If he be *Loose*, Let the *Tea* be of *Sage*, or of *Rosemary*. If he be *Grip't*, it may have *Penny-royal* in it.

But what is to be done, if a *Cough* annoy him ? Then a *Pectoral* of *Maiden-hair*, *Anniseed*, *Liquorice*, *Raisins*, and *Figs*. *Liquorice* alone, in a *Tea*, may do. Or, if that can't be had, a *Syrup* of *Maiden-hair*, of *Hyssop*, and of *Colts foot*. The *Cough* must not be stopt ; you may allay it with *Sugar-Candied*, and with *Buttered Pills* ; and the *Pectoral* now prescribed. Or, *Hot Honey* alone will do admirably well.

In hot Constitutions especially, a proper *Drink* would be, *Water with Roasted Apples* in it. Some would add a little *Ginger* to it.

Hot Cyder, if it be not *hard*, is an allowable *Drink*.

Towards the Height of the Distemper, *Hyssop Tea* may be preferable to *Scabious*. Let the *Diet* (thro' the whole course) be *Thin* enough ; *Gruels*, *Caudles*, *Water-pottage*, and the like ; and given *Often* enough.

About the Third or Fourth Day, from the Eruption, will come the *Crisis*, which you call, the *Turning*. And this will be often attended with *Frightful Circumstances* ; *Grievous Oppression*, *Fainting*, *Vomiting*, *Purgings*, and the *Vapours*, which is to say in one word, *All that is terrible*. But all will be presently and easily relieved, if Heaven afford a *Blessing* to a proper *Management*. Sometimes the sudden *Disappearance* of the *Measles* give a *Needle's Fright*. They have perform'd their course ; but the frightened Patient flies to *hot Expellers*, which endanger the raising of a putrefactive Heat, that had better have been spared. Some have observed, That these *Frightful Circumstances* have come with their greatest Fury, where the previous use of *Hot Things*, which you have been so warn'd about, has been *Immoderate*.

For the *Oppression*, take *Wine and Oil*, (or if the Patient be *Loose*, let him take, *Rum and Oil* :) Give it pretty hot ; The Dose two or three Spoonfuls

Spoonfuls every Hour, as there may be Occasion; Or, take almost any thing, that will cause a *Vomit* or two. A *Gentle Vomit* at this Time, has Relieved many a Life, that was just Expiring: Especially when there is a Collection of strewed *Phlegm*, to be Encountred. The *Wine* and *Oil* is preferable to the *Rum* and *Oil*. And when a *Vomit* would not relieve the Oppression, the *Wine & Oil*, with a Decoction of the *Cooling Seeds*, has presently done it.

You have been taught already what you shall do for *Faintness* in your Patient. Or, Give him a few Drops of the *Spirit of Hartshorn*.

For his *Vomiting* and *Purging*, you need not go far for a Remedy. Give scalding *Hot water*; Do this, even to nine or ten times, if it be needful, & as he can bear it. Then give a little *Hot Wine* with a bit of toasted *Bread*. Or a little of the *Coarse Composition*, you were formerly told of; Or another, that is *skin* to that, and as *well-known* as that. In twenty four hours, more or less, it may be hoped, the Storm will be over.

For a *considerable while* after this, the Patient must be mighty careful of taking any *Cold*, and Eating too soon of any *Flesh-meat*. Let him not be *well too soon*, and throw himself into a *Fever*, and throw away his *Life*, as many have inconsiderately and presumptuously done. Let him *take Time*, and spend his Time, in *Studying to be Thankful*.

If a *Cough* continue, let him fly to the usual Remedies. To take a spoonful of shavings of *Castile Soap* in a Glass of *Wine* or *Beer*, for a few Nights following, has been very successful for the cure of that inconvenience. If *Flux* follow, whether a *common*, or a *Bloody*, a *Tea* made of *Rhubarb*, and sweetened with a Syrup of *Marshmallows*, given daily, so much as to cause one or two Stools, is a way to carry it safely off. The same *Tea* will also carry off the *Worms*, that so often follow the *Measles*; especially in *Children*.

A *Purge* will be necessary for all, that would not have the Venome of the *Measles* remaining in them, and follow'd with many Evil Consequences.

A *Fever* (perhaps that which they call, The *Pleuretick*) too often follows the *Measles*. But for this, I do not now offer any Directions: A *Skilful Physician* must be consulted withal.

All that is propos'd in this Letter, is to direct in the plainest manner that is possible, without any *Terms of Art*, & so that any *Child* may understand, & any *Nurse* may administer, what is to be done, in the single Case of the *Measles*: Which Malady, tho' it be not so *Dangerous* in it self perhaps, as many others are, yet upon the *Least Error* in treating of it, proves as *Deadly*, as most that the poor *Children of Death* fall before. I know not (and for some Reasons I have read in a very Ancient Book, I may add, I care not,) what *Censures* this Action may meet withal. I am sure, nothing but a pure *Act of Charity to the Poor*, where *Physicians* are wanting, is now intended; nor any thing offer'd, but what a Number of our most Eminent *Physicians* have approved of, with their Charitable Wishes to have it Communicated; and the helping, tho' of but one or two Miserables, weighs down, against all that may be said, against the Freedom which this Letter has taken. I am satisfied, The Angel of *Bethesda* would Esteem it so. I take Leave;

Your Hearty Friend and Servant.