

Animal Simples

W. T. FERNIE, M.D.

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APPROVED

FOR MODERN USES OF CURE.

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BY

W. T. FERNIE, M.D.

Author of "Herbal Simples," "Botanical Outlines," etc., etc.

"If the rascal have not given me medicines to make
me love him, I'll be hanged."

King Henry IV, PART I—ACT II, SC. II.

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“ Round about the Cauldron go :
In the poison'd entrails throw—
Toad, that under coldest stone
Days and nights has't thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot !

“ Fillet of a fenny snake
In the Cauldron boil and bake :
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil, and bubble !

“ Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy ; maw, and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark ;
Root of hemlock, digged i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew,
Silver'd in the moon's eclipse ;
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips ;
Finger of birth-strangled babe,
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab :
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our Cauldron.

“ Double, double toil and trouble :
Fire, burn : and Cauldron, bubble !
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.”

THE WITCHES—*Macbeth*, Act iv, Sc. i.

“ Haud prorsus indignum qui in juniorum, et rure degentium
medicorum gratiam typis mandetur ”—(1700).

P R E F A C E .

IN our eager boyish days, when a travelling exhibition of wild beasts came to visit the neighbourhood, with an imposing procession of elephants, camels, monkeys, lion-tamers, gilded cars, and other multiform fascinations, its lively brass band on the boards outside, and its voluble showman on the front steps, were, to our thinking, indispensable attractions before we sought zoological instruction within the big tent.

But, of course, a doctor's medicinal menagerie is a much more serious affair; and far be it from us to announce the arrival thereof with beat of drum, or flourish of trumpet, in any such mountebank fashion! None the less we take leave to temper the grave occasion with some light prefatory patter before becoming didactic, and solemn, in the body of our book.

“Dicit enim citius, meminitque libentius illud
Quod quis deridet, quam quod probat, et veneratur.”

“Men see a joke when to a sermon blind :
And laughter's lessons long possess the mind.”

“*Risus enim Divum, atque hominum est æterna voluptas.*” “All the world allows that laughter is an eternal delight of both gods and men.”

"Tickle even the dull earth with a hoe," said Douglas Jerrold, "it will laugh with a harvest."

In the first place we would note that many of the curative Animal Simples now advocated take the place of appetising foods more readily than the medicinal form of draught, powder, or pill. It was a famous old aphorism of Arnoldus (1275), that "the wise and pious doctor gives physic only on necessity, first trying medicinal dyet before he proceeds to medicinal cure." "*Prudens, et pius medicus cibi prius medicinalibus quam medicinis puris morbum expellere satagat*": "*modestus et sapiens medicus nunquam properabit ad pharmacum nisi cogente necessitate*." Likewise "of old," quoth Lemnius (1566), "in this our island there was no use of physick amongst us, and but little at this day; the country people use kitchin physick; and common experience tells us that they who make least use of Apothecaries' physick live freest from all manner of infirmities." "Some think physicians kill as many as they save," wrote quaint old Burton. "Who can tell, *quot Themison ægros autumnis occiderit uno*," "how many unfortunate victims the complex pharmacy of Sir Benjamin Bolus sends to the shades in a single season?" "A few simples, well prepared, and understood, are better than the heap of nonsense, confused compounds, which are in Apothecaries' shops ordinarily sold."

“Vivere naturæ si convenienter amarent
Mortales, medicâ nil opus esset ope.”

“In Arcady, where nature holds the sway,
Doctors and druggists find no parts to play.”

Many of the Animal Simples to be herein discussed will be therefore regarded from a dietetic as well as from a medicinal point of view. The Schola Salernitana (1600) fully recognized in its day how important it is for the physician to regulate the diet of his patients, particularly with respect to meats, which are known to contain principles of food and physic combined.

“Quale, quid, et quando, quantum, quoties, ubi dando,
Ista notare cibo debet medicus dietando.”

“What, of what kind, and when, how much, how oft,
and where,
Food may be had, to teach sick folk should be the
doctor's care.”

“Victuals and drink,” says Poorgrass (Thomas Hardy), in a pleasant masticating manner, “is a cheerful thing, and gives nerves to the nerveless, if the form of words may be used. 'Tis the gospel of the body, without which we perish, so to speak it.”

Next we would seek to dispel beforehand such prejudices as might otherwise occupy the minds of our readers against certain edible clean-feeding *insects*, eminently delicate, and remedial, which, together with their grubs, and pupæ, have failed hitherto to gain favour as food, or medicine.

Respecting these we take up our parable boldly, and Vincent Holt is our inspired prophet. Writing about them (in *Why not eat Insects?* 1885), he humorously puts it, "Whilst confident that the caterpillars, the grubs, the chafer, and the butterflies will never condescend *to eat us*, I am equally sure that on finding out how good they are (and what excellent virtues they possess), we shall right gladly determine to cook and *eat them!* Moreover, what a welcome change it will be to the labourer's wearisome meal of bread and bacon day after day for him to get a savoury mess of fried cockchafers, or of dainty grasshoppers done on toast! In these respects the birds are much more sensible than ourselves: they well know the value of the fat chafer as food. With what joy the jaunty rooks pounce upon its luscious grubs when they follow the plough with long strides over the upturned lea! What a feast the wise creatures obtain when aloft on the wing by devouring the fledged beetles swarming in the tall tree tops!"

"Men's stomachs," says Dolly Winthrop, the village nurse in *Silas Marner*, "are made so comical they wants a change; they do, I know; God help 'em!"

Sextus Placitus (1535) has taught that Idpartus, an Egyptian king, sent to Cæsar Octavianus this message of health: "I ween that thou never camest to know Leechdoms such as those which we

obtain from Æsculapius ; and for that I wist thee worthy to wit of leechcrafts of wild beasts, as far as is well said." "Pythagoras held opinion" (tells Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice*) "that souls of animals infuse themselves into the trunks of men." Cornelius Agrippa in his Occult Philosophy supposes we have learnt the use of numerous remedies from animals ; "the sick magpie puts a bay leaf into her nest, and is recovered ; the lion, if he be feverish, is delivered by the eating of an ape."

So, ladies, and gentlemen ! now's your time ! hale and hearty ; or sick and sorry ! there are Animal Simples enough and to spare for curing all your ailments ! We shall first afford you a little amusement outside on the stage, and then take you with earnest purpose through the menagerie. So ! hi ! hi ! hi ! gather round ! tumble round ! and you shall see what you shall see !! Is any one weak in the back, or shaky in the limbs ? Here you have strong marrow, fresh from the spine of the ox ! "Who'll toll the bell ? I, said the bull, because I can pull : I'll toll the bell !" Is your only son consumptive, and racked by a cough which seems to forebode a coffin ? Our cod-liver oil will give him a fresh life ! Our milk of the jenny ass will make him wax fat, and kick, like Jeshurun in the psalms of David ! Our slug broth will heal his lungs and renew his strength like the eagle's !

“What are little boys made of? made of? snips, and snails; and puppy dogs’ tails: that’s what little boys are made of!” Is your pretty daughter inclined to grow fat, and ungraceful? A thyroid gland from the throat of a sheep will cause her to skip like a lambkin! Has your small family caught the infection of whooping cough! Give them owls! tu whit! tu whoo! and a ride on the Russian bear at the Zoo; or cochineal insects, as Goldsmith tells, and a coral to suck at with silver bells!

For dropsy from trouble of heart we supply a toad in the hole; and cockroaches ground into powder for white of egg in your water! They who suffer from corns will be sent to the ant for her juice, whilst the sluggard and drone will be taught by a text to “consider her ways, and be wise.” To keep sailors from drowning we give them a caul to be saved; and a lick (from a dog) with a promise of cure, to beggars who pains from their sores endure! For the falling sickness we’ve magpies dried; and for toothache a ladybird stuffed inside! For a nursing mother her breasts to fill we have whiting soup, or an earthworm pill! And flesh of swine; (but apply its skin to your throat, if sore, with the fat side in!)

A kingfisher hung by the heels will point with its beak to the wind; or fried (when it blows from the north-north-west) will restore one wrong in his mind! Goosegrease an “open sesame”

gives for an easy use of the w.c.; or to have a sparrow pudding for dinner relaxes sooner than senna tea! "This little cock sparrow shall make me a stew! and his giblets shall give me a little pie too!"

Such, my worshipful dames, and masters, are some of the Animal Simples we hold for your bodily good. And when at the last the doctor comes, solemnly bidding you make your will, split pigeons we put to your feet, and we keep you alive in a fleece from the slaughter-house. Like Surgeon Dobbs, and his good nag Nobbs, which was frozen stiff, and taken for dead; he flayed it alive for the sake of its hide, but then it revived in front of the fire; so some sheep were killed, and the steed sewn up, red and raw in their reeking skins; when, strange to tell! they grew to its flesh; and Surgeon Dobbs had *a woolly horse*; such a wonderful creature as never was known, before, nor since!!

Then hurry up! neighbours and friends, young and old, rich and poor! be in time! be in time! the Show is about to commence! Mr. Merryman, having now gone through his antics, will promptly retire behind the curtain; and the grand Panjandrum himself, with the little round button at top, will lead you through the caravans! So, prick up your ears! keep clear of the bars! and gather in front of the first cage!!

Certain it is that most of the creatures we shall straightway describe are endowed in their bodies with dual powers,—alike for evil, and good !

“ When Adam named the various animals
In Paradise, he little could have reck'd
Their double qualities, for weal, or woe,
To kill, or cure ! Six thousand years must pass
Ere these would be revealed, to serve as guides
In future medicine ! thus, the dog, to wit,
When rabid bites and maddens ; none the less
In kindlier mood it licks and heals a sore !
Thus too the angered snake wounds mortally
By its envenomed fang : yet when at rest
It owns remedial virtues, and its bile
Innocuous antidotes the bane ! So, man
Frenzied by passion, or debased by drink,
Does deadly mischief to his fellow man :
But pure of life, and using *simple* means,
Works God-like good, a saviour of his race.”

Furthermore, that various bodily effects besides those of a medicinal sort are exercised upon mankind by numerous animals has long been commonly allowed. For instance, in New England an injunction to rheumatic patients is that they shall take the cat to bed with them. This creature, as is well known, possesses, especially if black, a large amount of curative electricity. It was worshipped by the Egyptians, chiefly because of the supposed close resemblance between its eyes and the moon : each of the twain being most active at night, whilst subject to changes of phase, varying from the crescent to the full. Their name

for the animal—"Pasht," as signifying the face of the moon, was the origin of our familiar "Puss."

About Fifeshire, again, the Scotch folk believe that for a dog to lick a wound, or a running sore, is a certain means of cure; also that the breath and smell of a cow will serve to dispel consumption. To be straightway wrapped in a fleece taken hot from the carcase of a fresh-killed sheep will sometimes rescue a moribund sufferer. The timely use of a spider's web will stay dangerous bleeding from a cut or wound. By the repeated barkings of a dog at night, and the way in which the animal then looks, may be surely predicted the issue of an illness: if upwards, a recovery is to be expected; but if with a downcast head, imminent death must be feared.

So also continual association with this or that animal will often bring about a likeness in feature and disposition between it and its human companion. Familiar examples of which fact are to be seen in the slow, ponderous, bovine gait, the patient eye, and steady endurance of one who tends oxen; or the elongated visage, the spare frame, and the spindle shanks of a man devoted to horses.

One of our leading novelists has advanced the supposition that in many cases dogs have lived as men, and cats as women, in a former state of existence.

“ And herewith, as said Paracelsus, will we finish this preface, and write of the names of the Simples which are occupied in this arte.”

“ Et refellere sine pertinaciâ, et refelli sine iracundiâ
semper parati sumus.”

“ Prepared we are unflinchingly to stand our ground,
Or yield without offence where faulty found.”

“ What experiences soever we have digged out of hard stones, blowne out from hot fire, raked out from foule ashes, with great cost, and greater trouble, that hast thou here, gentle reader, in our book to see, and in our shops to use, at thy ready commandment.”

If so be it is remembered that some few topics which receive our present consideration have been treated of before among “Herbal Simples,” this is not without a sufficient reason. For instance, Honey, though it was reckoned of a vegetable character as gathered from flowers, is far more properly an animal product secreted by bees. Again, Snails were incidentally described with reference to the herbs they feed upon; though indeed they are undoubtedly of an animal sort when taken as curative simples. Likewise the Eggs of Poultry, which were specially mentioned in association with culinary herbs, have seemed to need a fuller notice because of their animal virtues. So that these several creatures, together

with others of a corresponding two-fold nature, may justly claim resumed attention in our following Manual.

“Hæc placuit semel : decies repetita placebit.”

“What once has pleased, ten times renewed will please.”

It will be further observed that not a few of the preparations advised to be made from Animal Simples are distinguished by the symbol (H.). This signifies that, being uncommon in character, and of strength reduced on principle, they can only be procured from a Homœopathic Chemist.

But, “A Jove principium!” “let us first begin with a prayer,” as taught by pious Burton, “and then use physick”: “not one without the other, but both together.” “I would wish,” he devoutly adds, “all such as prescribe medicines to commence with *“In nomine Dei,”* “in the name of God,” as if before a sermon.”

FOLKESTONE, 1899.

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ANIMAL SIMPLES

APPROVED

FOR MODERN USES OF CURE.

INTRODUCTION.

“ALL flesh is grass” say the Scriptures ; and, as the converse must be equally true, a connection seems to stand clearly established between Herbal and Animal Simples. Of the former we have already described the virtues and folk-lore in a comprehensive volume ; and we now proceed to discuss medicinal Simples procured from what has hitherto been called by a false distinction the *Animal Kingdom*. There are no broad lines of demarcation really existing between minerals, vegetables, and animals, as intercurrent parts of a continuous whole.

The field of *Animal Simples* for remedial uses is wider, but less fondly familiar to us than that from which our herbal medicines are gathered, almost by instinct. Parsees have said that as Ahriman created ten thousand diseases so Ormazd gave to mankind the same number of healing plants ; and this idea is firmly fixed in most minds at the present time. A belief obtains that for every disease there must of necessity be its remedy, which, with the common people, is usually supposed to be an herb.

The province of Animal Simples was explored to some purpose by early Anglo-Saxon leeches : subsequently its denizens, great and small, became credited with marvellous powers by doctors in the middle ages ; and later on, in our own day, certain organic substances are being cultivated therefrom by sure and patient science for restoring the balance of deranged health, or arresting the progress of infective disease.

It is contended by some, and not without reason, that vegetable elementary matters, in order to suit mankind as food, must be first eaten by animals, and assimilated into their tissues, just as the mineral constituents of the earth have to be taken up and sublimated by vegetables before they can minister directly to human sustenance. Certain it is that graminivorous (grass-eating) animals which live on vegetable foods are those which best commend themselves to us for edible purposes ; whilst we decide to reject carnivorous (flesh devouring) creatures as repugnant, distasteful, and unwholesome for our support. Homely examples of the one kind are the ox, the cow, the deer, the sheep, the hare, the rabbit, and domestic poultry ; whilst instances to hand of the unwelcome flesh eaters are the dog, the fox, the cat, the rat, the crow, and the earth worm. Nevertheless, we have accustomed ourselves to strange inconsistencies about observing this supposed rule, refusing, for instance, the clean-feeding horse, the ass, and the guinea-pig, but giving a ready dietetic acceptance to such eaters of animal refuse as the lobster, the oyster, the eel, and the shrimp. It must, however, be allowed that most of the fish which come to our tables, though piscivorous creatures devouring their own kind, are white-blooded, and therefore do not as a rule engender noxious animal products within themselves or us ; so that they fail to fall

strictly under the flesh-eating ban, though, at times, the oyster, the mussel, and the crab—which display a great liking for sewage—prove highly poisonous through indulging their vicious tastes in this respect !

Moreover, seeing that many of the carnivorous animals possess properties and attributes more or less harmful to the human subject when their flesh or their blood is taken as food, the inference may logically be drawn that when any ailment analogous in its symptoms to the noxious results of eating such flesh or blood occurs spontaneously in man, then a medicinal administration of these animal substances reduced to a fresh extract will serve a curative antidotal purpose.

Of the Animal Simples prescribed by our forefathers many were far-fetched, others were strangely fanciful, and some were positively disgusting. For example, by the ancient physicians Mummy was ordered “of a proper smell, and which, being burnt, does not stink of pitch,” this being reckoned proper for contusions, and to hinder the blood from coagulating in the body. So also Human grease was thought good against the gout, and was purchased from the public executioner ; whilst Man’s Skull powdered was a specific against epilepsy, and Moss from the heads of those hung in gibbets was employed as a snuff to stay obstinate bleedings from the nose. Even so recently as in the year 1852, among the select drugs on the shelves of a pharmaceutical chemist at Leamington was to be seen a bottle labelled in the ordinary way with the words “Moss from a dead man’s skull.” And soldiers had a notion that drinking out of a skull made them invulnerable in battle.

The learned Andrew Boorde, in his *Breviary of Health* (1553) commended “for a bad rheum to apply the oil of scorpions with fat of the fox, washing the place with

white wine and plastering it with an oak lefe." Also, preparations of the hyena were then made for curing seventy-nine diseases; and (saith the *Touchstone of Medicine*) "horse dung mixed with beer was given for pain of the syde." That hyenas once inhabited this country, living chiefly upon carrion, is known by a cave discovered at Kirkdale, which has afforded relics and evident traces of these animals. The floor was strewed with bones of different creatures broken and splintered, and bearing evidence of the action of jaws which, even in the more diminutive species now existing, are known to be sufficiently powerful to bite off the leg of a dog at a single snap.

In the second volume of *Amœnitates Academicæ Linnæi* (1751) is to be found a complete list of the animal materia medica then in vogue, from which we learn that there were no fewer than sixty-seven animals yielding various substances employed in physic at that time, including corals, shells, ostrich eggs, horns of stags, feathers of partridges, fat of man, bear, dog, wolf, badger, and viper, Egyptian mummy for epilepsy, peacock's dung, toad's flesh, and silkworms; the lungs of a fox good for consumption; decoctions of the base parts of a horse, stag, goat, or whale, for promoting the female monthly flow, or giving strength to the sexual functions. Southey has recently noted that in the sixteenth century six hundred pounds of mummy were brought home by the Turkey Company.

Until lately the practice has prevailed with medical men and the lettered public to look with complacent ridicule, or contempt, on the obsolete remedies thus employed at random by our empirical grandsires. Credulity and superstition are thought to have determined their choice rather than any true insight into

their natural curative powers. But unprejudiced research is beginning at length to show that when compiling their dispensatories the early mediciners often had truth on their side, and that a close, watchful perception stood them in excellent stead, though the lamp of analytical science had not as yet been lighted. For instance, the common Toad was believed in primitive times to be poisonous, and its supposed venom was given against various diseases, such as bleedings, cancer, epilepsy, and troubles of the heart with dropsy. Dried toads (*bufones exsiccati*), and the ashes of toads (*cineres bufonum*), were ordered as authorised drugs in the eighteenth century; and even until lately, tells Dr. Hewlett in current *Science Progress*, "a popular notion has prevailed in the West of England that if a dog should worry a toad the animal would become mad forthwith." But most writers of recent times, whilst shutting their eyes to these facts, have agreed in pronouncing the toad a harmless, much-abused animal, innocent of all harmful or medicinal belongings. In Patterson's *Zoology for the use of Schools* (thirty-sixth thousand), it is taught that "perhaps no individual among the amphibia has been so slandered as the toad; and if we did not know how often imagination takes the place of reason it would seem incredible that this unoffending reptile should have been regarded as highly poisonous from its bite, its breath, and even its glance!" Again, in *Silas Marner*, by George Eliot (1861), Mr. Macy, the parish clerk, is made to say oracularly, "It isn't every queer looks'ed thing as old Harry's had the making of! I mean speaking of toads and such, for they're harmless, and useful against varmin." Nevertheless, Dr. Hewlett now shows that this creature (the toad) actually possesses glands which are venomous (one on each side of the