

October 2d, 1797.

To Mr. BENJAMIN WYNKOOP.

A POWERFUL desire of ascertaining the origin and true cause of the Fever, which unfortunately prevails in Philadelphia, induces me to address you again on the interesting subject, and to submit the following particulars to your consideration, thro' a public channel, that the public may judge whose arguments and facts are most conclusive.

With respect to febrile contagion, it is proper to observe, that all the most accurate and best informed physicians agree that it never acts but when it is near to the source from whence it arises; that is, either near to the bodies of men from which it immediately issues, or near to some substances which, having been near to the bodies of men, are imbued with the effluvia, and in which substances these effluvia are sometimes retained in an active state for a very long time.

The substances thus imbued with an active and contagious matter may be called fomites, and it appears probable and is consonant to observation, that febrile contagion, as it arises from fomites, is more powerful, than when it arises immediately from the human body.—The effluvia (says the celebrated Cullen) which rises from marshes or moist ground, acted upon by heat, is universally the cause of intermitting and remitting or bilious fevers. So many observations have been made with respect to this, in so many different regions of the earth, as leave no doubt of the truth of this observation.

The similarity of the climate, season and soil in the different countries in which intermitting, remitting and bilious fevers (for they are all of the same kind, differing only in degree) arise and become epidemic, and the similarity of the diseases, though arising in different regions, concur in proving, that there is one common cause of these fevers in all their varieties, and that this cause is the effluvia of putrid vegetable substances, for of these the soil of marshy ground is chiefly composed.

And human effluvia are universally the cause of all continued fevers of a nervous or putrid kind, only varied in their symptoms, by the circumstances of climate, season, temperature of the air, condition of the soil, mode of living and constitution of the patient concurring with the effluvia and modifying their power.

It has now been rendered probable that the effluvia of marshes or putrid vegetable substances are the cause of the intermitting fever in all varieties—and that effluvia from human bodies are the sole cause of the continued fever in all its varieties.

The fevers produced by the effluvia of marshes, or moist ground, acted upon by heat, are often epidemic, and sometimes malignant; but there is no maxim in experimental philosophy, no problem in geometry, better established, than that they are never contagious in any situation, notwithstanding what has been asserted by superficial observers to the contrary; Whereas those produced by human effluvia are always more or less contagious in confined or impure and warm air.

That fevers arising from human effluvia are generally attended in the beginning with inflammatory symptoms in cold climates, appears evident from Dr. Cullen's observations relative to their symptoms in Scotland;—hence he denominates the disease Synochus, i. e. a fever beginning like inflammatory, and ending like a putrid fever. And that the inflammatory symptoms are still higher and more evident when the disease attacks persons of vigorous constitutions, with an inflammatory diathesis, in a hot dry season, is not only agreeable to reason, but has been often observed and recorded by different authors.

That the yellow fever is propagated by contagion, that is from the effluvia of the diseased conveyed a short distance from its source, through the medium of the air, and received into a sound body by the lungs, stomach, and perhaps the pores of the skin, is a fact too notorious to admit of dispute—and that the contagion by which it is propagated is derived from living human bodies under particular circumstances, I think the following facts, extracted from different authors, sufficiently establish.

"The first ship which arrived towards the latter end of this year (1758) from the fleet in N. America, was the Loefkoffe. On the 18th of October, 18 of her men were sent to the hospital, and 13 more on the 21st of the same month. The scurvy, the flux, and fevers were reported to be the prevailing diseases in that ship.

"The company of the Loefkoffe were in perfect health the 8 months they were in America, and until a few days before their departure from Quebec. At that time 6 recovered marines came on board from Point Levy hospital, and in 48 hours afterwards, among her company of 200 people, 50 were seized with fevers and fluxes.

"In some, the sickness began with a flux, in others with a fever; but the flux was generally moderate and gentle. The fever continued commonly from 5 to 10 days; two patients were distressed with it for a whole month. When the first attack was from the fever, a supervening flux proved salutary; but where the contagion made its first appearance with a flux, the accession of the fever carried off the patient.

"This ship was 27 days in her passage to England from Quebec, and during that time six of her men died.

"One of the crew, a Spaniard, having relapsed, turned yellow on the 6th day of the fever. His chief complaint at this time was an universal uneasiness over his whole body, his head alone being unaffected. He earnestly intreated to be bled;

though his pulse was low I consented to his repeated solicitations, and permitted a small quantity to be taken from his arm. The mass of this blood was exceedingly viscid and fizy; and after standing some time, the grumous concretion became covered with a yellow gluten, half an inch in thickness, impenetrable to the finger, tunnels cut by the nail; the serum being at the same time of the consistence of thin syrup, and of a deep yellow colour. A person, prompted by curiosity, tasted the serum and found it bitter. Another, not knowing it to be the serum of blood, judged it to be a composition of food.

"This fever was plainly the same as that which was brought last year from North America, and commonly by us denominated the Yellow Fever. It was oftener accompanied with a flux than the fever of the preceding year; and of the sick sent to the hospital, a greater proportion died from this ship than from any other; for of 34 which were admitted, some with the flux, and others with the scurvy, but the greatest number with the fever, we lost nine patients.

"In November, after the conquest of Quebec, the North American fleet returned to England, with several of the ships' companies in perfect health; while the crews of others were afflicted with an active and powerful contagion. The most vigorous contagion was in the Dublin and Neptune; the former had buried in their passage home 19 men, and on her arrival at Spithead 96 were reported, to the hospital in fevers, fluxes and the scurvy. The Neptune had lost 160 of her complement in a few months, and on her arrival her sick list contained 133 sick. The surgeon had been seized with the yellow fever, but had recovered; one of his mates had a fifth relapse into it, when at Spithead. Some attributed their sickness to the French prisoners whom they had received on board; others to the New England volunteers, who were very sickly; but the fever was introduced into several ships by the marines from the hospital at Point Levy."

Observations on the phenomena produced by this contagion, as they were written at different times, in the wards of the hospital, by the experienced Lind.

"20th November. The crisis of this fever happens at no fixed period, nor on any certain day that can be foretold. A few had spots; on some they were petechial, most of whom are well; as also many who in the course of the disease became yellow. This yellowness is at present much more frequent than the spots. The tincture over the skin is universal, of a deep yellow tinge, often painful, and disagreeable to the sight. One Ashley has relapsed three times, and in each relapse there appeared this jaundice. The blood taken from a marine resembles that of the Spaniard before mentioned, is viscid and glutinous; both the gluten and the serum, as well as the patient, being yellow.

"Three men from the Cambridge, received into the hospital December 14th, report, that the company on board the Cambridge, consisting of 650 men, had enjoyed a good state of health for a long time past, until they, with some of their shipmates, were ordered on board the Neptune to prepare that ship for the dock, which was then in distress for want of men, most of her people being at the hospital. Of those three men, one became spotted on the 5th day and died, and another narrowly escaped with life; and I have reason to believe, that their other shipmates who were employed in the Neptune, communicated the distemper to the Cambridge, as he soon after sent several with the fever to the hospital."

"When those men from the Cambridge, one of the most healthy ships then in the fleet, became infected, the contagion by which they were infected, did not proceed from any person sick in the Neptune, (for upon the first appearance of any man being there taken ill, he was immediately sent to the hospital), but from the infection retained in the ship."

"It was a very remarkable, that no seamen but those who had been on board the American ships, were seized in this hospital with that fever, notwithstanding their frequent intercourse."

"The practice of cleanliness, and the benefit of the freshest air, did not avail to remove this contagion; which continued till the ships were taken into dock and properly purified by fire and smoke—After this operation the ship and crew became perfectly healthy—This was the case likewise with all the N. American vessels."

(Perhaps the severe frosts which set in about this time had some share in this salutary effect.)

"On board most of the other ships of war we were able to trace out the importation of the contagion, from guard ships, from jails, unseasoned landmen, contaminated persons or ships."

Sometimes only one man in a ship may be seized with a petechial or yellow fever, and all the rest continue unaffected. The Magnanime was 7 weeks at sea in 1760, with 700 men. Upon her return to port only 5 were sick—one of them with a spotted fever, of which he died.—Another person was sent from the Raven floop with the yellow fever, of which he also died, and yet no persons on either of these ships were infected."

Sir John Pringle relates, that of 23 persons who were employed in refitting the old barracks in which some sick had lain, 17 died of the fever occasioned by the infection.

* Lind on the best method of preserving the health of seamen. Edition of 1762.

† Lind, page 206.

‡ Lind on fevers and infection, p. 209. § By infection is meant the original effluvia from a person in a fever, which occasions a fever distinguished by the same assemblage of symptoms.

(page 27th of his diseases of the army.) Hence it appears that contagion is more violent at one time than another, as well as in some situations and circumstances than in others—and the danger of mortality will always be in proportion to the strength of the contagious effluvia, provided the disposition of the body be favourable to its operation.

"In the month of April, 3 months after the yellow fever had entirely ceased, two nurses belonging to the same chamber were seized with fevers, and both became yellow; one died, the other recovered. From a strict examination it was found that they had concealed some shirts and other clothes belonging to the infected men from America."

"There died in 8 months only 5 out of an hundred attendants at the hospital, that were constantly employed during that time in various offices about the sick." Why then is it thought so extraordinary that the attendants escape the disease at the hospital near Schuylkill?

In a few days I propose communicating facts which corroborate those extracted from the works of the experienced and observing Lind, from the observations of Doctors Monroe, Chisholm and Brier, which will settle the question to the conviction of every one whose object is truth. In the mean time, accept of the best wishes for your personal welfare, of your humble servant, WILLIAM CURRIE.

See Lind on preserving seamen, p. 255.

By this day's Mail.

FRANCE.

COUNCIL OF FIVE HUNDRED.

23 Messidor, August 10.

The following message was received from the Executive Directory:

In answer to the resolution of the Council, respecting the march of the troops within the Constitutional limits.

Citizens Representatives,

"The Executive Directory delayed replying to your message of the 17th of this month, relative to the marching orders given to four regiments of Chasseurs which were to pass by Ferte Alais in the expectation that the report of the committee of Inspectors, upon which the message had been adopted, would be printed. It is not yet printed; but the Directory, who in the mean time have been collecting the documents they were desirous of procuring respecting the route of these troops, consider it their duty to transmit to you such information as has reached them.

"Citizen Lefage, commissary of war, has made the following declaration upon this subject:

"Citizen Lefage, commissary of war for the army of the Sambre and Meuse, charged with the police of the division of Chasseurs commanded by gen. Richepaufe, certifies, that after the said general had given to him at Dorene, the itinerary of the route which this division was to observe in going to Chartres (an itinerary which was entirely written by gen. Richepaufe, but not signed by him) he received at Aix-la-Chapelle, the order of proceeding in that destination, and preparing before hand, at the places pointed out, the necessary provisions and quarters for the four regiments which composed that division, but which were only to arrive in succession at these resting places; that without examining the itinerary which had been given to him, or knowing that the Ferte Alais was within the constitutional limits of Paris, he expedited the order for the route, in consequence of which the troops were to march—that he followed the same route to Rheims—that, being there assured that the letters he has written to Charville, with directions to the municipalities of the places through which the troops were to pass, had been duly received, and having no further precautions to take, as the municipal administrations were charged with quartering and providing for the troops, he yielded to the desire of seeing his family who reside at Chartres, and left the route of the division to take the shorter one by Soissons. He farther certifies, that neither general Richepaufe, nor any other Staff officer, gave him any other marching order than the above, the itinerary of which was transmitted to him at Dorene; that, during the course of the march he did not hear a y one of the troops speak of their destination; that he only heard at Bonn and Dorene, persons who did not belong to the army, say that the division was to embark at Breff.

"General Richepaufe states, on his part, that he received an order from gen. Hoche, dated Cologne, the 13th Messidor, in the following terms:

"General Richepaufe, commanding the division of horse Chasseurs, is hereby ordered to proceed, with the four regiments under his command, to Breff, by the way of Chartres and Alencon. (Signed) "HOCHÉ."

"General Richepaufe has besides made the following declaration, which he subscribed before the Directory on the 23d of Thermidor:

"I certify, that it was in consequence of the order of the general in chief, Hoche, dated the 13th Messidor, directing me to proceed with the four regiments under my command to Breff, by the way of Chartres and Alencon, that I traced the route by which the first division I commanded was to proceed to Chartres;—that I was totally ignorant of the existence of any law which required that the troops should not come within 12 leagues of Paris; that I even was inclined to have made them pass thro' Paris; and that the difficulty of maintaining order among troops quartered in a large city, was the only reason determined me not to adopt that route;—that my intention was evidently pure; for if it had not, I would not have ordered a commissary of war to have preceded me, who was six days be-

fore the van of the troops, which was the head of the column commanded by me.

(Signed) "RICHEPAUFE."

"Such is the information which the Directory has procured respecting the marching order given to four regiments of Chasseurs drawn from the army of the Sambre and Meuse, and which were to pass by Ferte Alais to Breff. While the Directory confine their answer to the point, they consider it necessary to direct your attention to a statement which appears to have been contained in the report on which your message was founded. All the journals agree in stating that you were informed that arms and ammunition had recently been distributed at Chartres to 500 ruffians for the purpose of suppressing or of threatening the freedom of the legislative body. This statement is completely disproved by the municipality of that place: the process-verbal of the municipality has been addressed to you; so that you must already be convinced that the enemies of the country have led the members of your committee into an error upon this subject. We now come, citizens representatives, to the second part of your message. The executive directory did not, till the day before yesterday, receive the originals of the addresses of the defenders of the country from the different divisions that compose the army of Italy. They were all destined for the executive directory, with the exception of two only; and these were addressed to the defenders of the country composing the other armies. Though the meaning and sense of the word "deliberer" (to deliberate) has not been so accurately defined as to be clearly applied to the act by which, after having expressed their fears and their hopes to the executive directory and their brethren in arms, the defenders of the country have only stated the wishes they had formed, and the sentiments that animated them, the executive directory have nevertheless resolved to prevent its circulation.—They have also written to the general in chief, deploring the circumstances which had induced the brave republican soldiers to commit those acts which might be considered irregular, and inviting them carefully to avoid every thing which may in the least degree tend to the infraction or violation of the constitution. The directory has not stopped there; they have thought it their duty to go back to the causes, and to point them out, persuaded that you will, in your wisdom, adopt such measures as shall make them cease to exist. The cause of these proceedings, on the part of the defenders of the country, is to be attributed to the general alarm and disquietude which for some months past, having taken possession of all the persons, has succeeded the profound tranquillity that reigned, and the general confidence which every where prevailed. It is to be attributed to the defalcation in the revenue, which leaves all parts of the administration in the most deplorable situation, and deprives, often, of their pay and their subsistence, the men who, for years past, have shed their blood, and sacrificed their health to serve the republic. It is to be attributed to the persecution and assassination of the purchasers of national property, of the public functionaries, of the defenders of the country—in short, of all those who have dared to shew themselves the friends of the republic. It is to be attributed to the want of firmness and vigour in the punishment of criminals, and in the partiality of the public tribunals—It is to be attributed to the insolence of the emigrants and the refractory priests, who, recalled, and openly favoured, appear every where, keep alive the flame of discord, and inspire a contempt of the laws. It is to be ascribed to the multitude of journals with which the armies, like the interior, are inundated—Journals which threaten death to the supporters of liberty, which vilify all the republican institutions, which openly and shamefully desire the return of royalty, and all the oppressive and vexatious institutions, which equally torment and humiliate the merchant, the artisan and the labourer, and even the rich proprietor who is untitled. It is to be found in the interest, always ill-dissembled, and frequently openly manifested, which the enemies of their country take in the glory and the prosperity of the English government and the Austrian court, while they endeavor, on the contrary, to diminish the true renown of our warriors, and speak with an ill disguised contempt of the high destiny held out to France, and of the eminent degree of glory and of happiness which she was about to reach. It is owing to the blame which has been thrown upon the most glorious and useful consequences of the victories of our defenders—to the plan, openly declared, of calumniating and ruining the reputation of our republican generals, and particularly those who, to the glory of the most brilliant triumphs and the most skillful campaigns, have added, the one in the west of France, the other in Italy, the immortal honor of a political conduct, which will procure to their philosophy and humanity as much praise as has already been bestowed on their military genius. Finally, the cause is to be found in the despair to which all true citizens, and particularly the defenders of their country, are reduced, in seeing at the same moment of its conclusion, and after they had purchased it with so much blood and so many sufferings, the definitive peace, solicited by the chiefs of the vanquished coalition; placed at a distance—that peace which a government, the friend of humanity, seeks still with the greatest earnestness to conclude. But, all at once reanimating their hopes, and reckoning upon the dissolution of the republican government in consequence of the exhausted state of our finances, upon the death or the exile of our bravest generals, and on the dispersion or destruction of our armies, the same cooled powers have exhibited as much tardiness in the progress of their negotiations as they at first testified ardour to terminate them. Such, citizens representatives, are the causes which have agitated the minds of the soldiers of the republic, and induced them to express their

fears and their resolutions. The executive directory repeat, that they shall do what they ought to do, in recommending to the troops to avoid all irregular proceedings which are contrary to that discipline which is the soul of armies, and opposite to the laws which are the support of the state; but they owe to you, in the mean time, a frank and faithful declaration of their sentiments. The government still confidently hopes to to save France from the dissolution to which it is precipitately hurried, to extinguish the torches of civil war which are lighted up with fury, and to protect persons and property from the danger of a new revolution. This resolution the directory will pursue with perseverance and with courage, and will not be turned aside by any fears or by any influence. They will not, however, consent to inspire a false security, either in their fellow-citizens of the interior, or in those who defend the country without. They should consider themselves guilty of treason towards their country if they concealed the atrocious attempts that are unremittingly made to lead us into all the horrors of a second revolution, by overthrowing the present government, either by treason or force.

(Signed) "CARNOT, President.

"LAGARDE, Sec'y.

After it was read Bailly moved that it be printed, referred to a special committee, consisting of seven members, and that it should be communicated by a message to the council of elders.

Lamarque opposed this.—"The only complaint he said, which your commission of inspectors is empowered to examine, is the fact which was denounced to you relative to the violation of the boundary of 12 leagues. You have acknowledged that this boundary had not been geometrically measured; thus the grievance which the echoes of faction have so very complacently repeated, is done away. This indeed, is proved by the report of your committee.—Why then has it occupied itself with the movements of the troops beyond the limits of the constitutional boundary? it was necessary to examine many questions which have not even been touched upon. The first was to know, if the 116th article of the constitution did not empower the directory to direct the movements of the army beyond the constitutional boundary? The second, whether the existing circumstances would permit us to deviate in any degree from principles, in order to take into consideration pretended alarms? I contend that all these denunciations all these combined attacks, tend only to place the different authorities at variance, to provoke the civil war, to renew the reign of circumstances and that of government committees. Has it not been proclaimed from the tribune, that an alarming division existed between the members of the directory? as if the majority of the directory did not possess the power given to it by the constitution. Have not those journals who are in the pay of the king's friends, given to this majority the appellation of Triumvirate? And yet this unprecedented audacity remains unpunished—no notice, indeed, has ever been taken of it. Have not some orators spoken of attempts against the national representation? Has not the council permitted that article of the constitution which says, that the heads of an accusation shall be specifically stated, to be violated? Instead of pursuing the salutary forms of the constitution, we hear men speak of indulgence and generosity towards the directory, as if the directory were subordinate to the council."—[Murmurs.]

Bailly—"This is an insulting wrong to the legislative body,—President, call the speaker to order."

Lamarque—"I observe to my colleagues—[a voice, I am not your colleague.] I remind those who are my colleagues [Murmurs.] I move that the president call to order those who are not my colleagues—[Great noise.] Talot—"President, tell the representatives to silence their cries.—We cannot hear."

A number of voices insist that Talot (by name) should be called to order—a violent altercation ensues between Talot, and the members near him. Great agitation prevails, but tranquility is at length restored.

Lamarque—"Explain the phrase here employed.—He said that the legislative body would neither rell the law against, nor in favour of the directory."

Lamarque continued—"In a report of the 12th Messidor, has not the reporter of your commission of auditors to the treasury accused the general of the army of Italy of ordering and regulating payments himself, and of opposing the destination of the funds regulated by the commissary of the treasury? Why should the laurels of that army which has by its conquests obtained the supplies of which it stood in need, be thus tarnished? the same reporter also accused the gen. of Sambre and Meuse, of having levied a contribution of three millions and a half; which sum, he said, was placed in the hands of the etat major, and in the Caisse of the receivers, out of which sum General Hoche had paid many different accounts."

Lamarque then moved the previous question, relative to the motion for referring the message to a committee.

Vaublane—"I should not have presented myself to reply without preparation, to a written speech, were I not persuaded that I should be received with indulgence by my colleagues, and were I not addressing men, convinced as I am, that the opinions to which we ought to listen with the greatest attention, are precisely those from which we dissent. I proceed to the examination of the different propositions, laid down in the speech of Lamarque. He considered as unconstitutional the attention which you had bestowed upon the events which have lately taken place, and particularly upon the march of the troops. It would be difficult more completely to confound two objects very distinct. The directory doubtless

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