LXXVIII. On the efficacy of yeast, and the application of vinegar in putrid fever

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it slighted at home. It seems to have remained obscure in both countries till 1699, when Savary, who probably knew more of Morland's invention than he owned, obtained a patent; and in the very same year, M. Amontons proposed something similar to the French Academy, I believe, as his own.

The description of the manuscript in which Morland explains his invention will be found in the improved Harleian Catalogue, vol. iii. No. 5771; and it is also pointed out in the preface to that volume, sect. xxii; but hitherto seems to have been as little noticed as Morland himself. But if he was the real inventor, as these circumstances seem to render certain, it is highly necessary that his name should in future be recorded with all the honour which an invention of such utility demands.

I shall just add, respecting the same catalogue, that the Biblical collections in No. 7522 were made by *Patricius Junius*, that is, Patrick Young, who, as King's librarian, had the care of the Alexandrine MS., and had thoughts of publishing it. This is nearly proved by Woide, in the preface to his edition of the N. T. sect. 16, but was not recollected when that article was written.

Yours,

R. N.

LXXVIII. *On the Efficacy of Yeast, and the Application of Vinegar in Putrid Fever.* By ROBERT JOHN THORNTON, M.D.

Letter from the late Earl of Exeter.

DEAR DOCTOR,—I AM sure you will be truly sorry to hear what a dismal house we have had since our return home. My dear son Cecil was taken ill the day after we got home, which was on the 3d of last month. It turned out to be a putrid fever. He was attended night and day by Dr. John Willis, and occasionally by a Stamford physician, Dr. Arnold, and by Lady Exeter constantly. He became so bad at last, that the Doctors said, they could do no more for him. All irritability of the eye-sight was gone, no passage down his throat could be effected, and a rattling in the throat indicated the last moments to be arrived. Our poor dear Lady Exeter and Dr. John were the miserable bearers of this dreadful news to me. Having recollected your account of the good effects of vinegar in the case of the Rev. Mr. Townsend, and others; I wished this to be tried. His body was bathed with the vinegar, he took yeast inwardly, and it was applied in clysters; and in twelve hours he was so far amended, as to raise in us all hopes, and in four days he was convalescent, and is now lively and jocose.

I cannot conclude this letter without relating a discovery of Dr. John Willis, which ought to be generally known. In cases of

spitting of blood he never fails to give a vomit, and it always stops the effusion of blood. He tells me, it has never failed him. Wishing you every success in your laudable endeavours to relieve the distresses of others, and extend the science of medicine,

I remain, dear Doctor,

Yours very sincerely,

EXETER.

Case of Mortification cured by the Application of Yeast outwardly, and by the Form of Injection inwardly.*

Glasgow, June 7, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—My son Robert (now a man) when a child about two years old, had the chicken pox, after which, in consequence of catching cold, in the course of a single night a mortification took place across his belly; on the outside it had the appearance of a mazarine blue ribband laid across from the one side to the other. Immediately cloths dipt in barm or yeast were applied, repeating them as often as they began to dry, at the same time giving him injections of barm; they were given cold, to prevent them being thrown off too soon. The reason of giving him the injections was, that he would not swallow the barm; and the Doctor assured me, the whole mass of blood was in a state of corruption; and indeed it appeared so, for in a few days after the first appearance of mortification there arose on one of his temples a gathering about the size of a pigeon's egg, of a very dark colour, and when it broke it discharged a black watery kind of stuff: before the first broke, a second began to gather on the other temple; it was longer in coming to maturity, but when it did break it discharged a good thick yellow matter, when the Doctor pronounced him out of danger. After the application of the barm, the blue part across the belly turned of a yellow colour, which the Doctor took out, and then the wound had the appearance of a mouth wide open; it could easily receive the side of a hand laid in. The barm was continued for ten days or a fortnight, till every appearance of danger was over; after that, there was some kind of simple ointment applied to heal up the wound, which now has the appearance of a deep burn after being healed.

His diet during his illness consisted chiefly of fruit.

To Mr. Tilloch.

JANET ALLAN."

* The last of these cases I communicated to Dr. Thornton, who thinks it deserves to be made generally known. The writer is a relation of my own. When R. Allan was taken ill, an able medical gentleman of Glasgow was instantly sent for. He frankly told the parents that there was no possibility of the child recovering. It was in consequence of this; and of Mrs. Allan having read, in one of the early volumes of the Philosophical Magazine, of the curative powers of yeast in putrid cases, that this remedy, and with such happy success, was resorted to.—A. T.