

News, Notes and Queries

THREE LETTERS FROM JAMES YONGE

THE three letters here reproduced by kind permission of the Librarian of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, provide a fascinating appendix to the recently published *Journal of James Yonge, Plymouth Surgeon (1647–1721)* reviewed on p. 389 of this issue. The letters are presumably written to Dr. Charles Goodall (1642–1712) who was a friend of Yonge, as all the marginal notes are in his handwriting. Only the first letter bears the signature of James Yonge himself.

Plymouth, Feb, 17^o, 94.

My papers are by this time I hope in my honoured friends hand. I earnestly desire him to peruse them with his severest eye, and get Mr Waggstaff to doe the like, before they goe to the Press and to expunge etc. what ever is unfitt or unsafe.*

Nettle spring or knobs. As to those sudden and troublesom knobbs of the skin, which you call nettle Spring, its what often occurs to some Scorbutick persons on any sudden heat of the blood by motion or drink, and in some to a great degree. Phlebotomy, gentle Sudorificks, a cool diet is the usuall remedy, unless where it happens often and violent then an Antiscorbutick course is little enough.

Vesicatories inflamed In some habits vesicatories begett great pain, not only in the part but in the urine, and some times occasion Mortification, as in Pestilential Diseases, when the Spirits are impoverisht or exhausted (such an one is now under my care) where the part is much heated. I dress them with an Anodine Cataplasm or equal parts of Diapalm and Populeon with a little Camphor.

If they are drest with Turpentine spread upon Soft paper, they run as well as with any thing, and never affect the urin, and where that has happened no Emulsions remedy it so surprisingly as twice using this Draught.

Beat the white of an Egg to water mix it with 4 Spoonfulls of Succory or some cool simple watering, and one spoonfull of Syr. violar. or Syr. of the Juice of Houseleek.

Wounds For the ordinary wounds which happen there is no great difficulty of curing them. If they are Incisions, Powder of Bole made in to a plaster with ol. Tereb.

Bruises. q.s. will cure them at once or twice dressing. If there be loss of Substance, Lucattellus Bals made with ol. Hyperic comp. adding a little Bals. peruv. is as good a balm as any, and no less so for bruises both externally applyd and internally Swallowd. The Cerate I use for such Contusions as need, it is equal parts of Diapalm. Oxycroc. and Empl. è Cymin.

Wounds of the Head For wounds of the Head the Liniment of Arceus or unguentum è Gum Elemi is the best balm. For Scaldings unguentum populeon spread on soft paper is the common remedy, Continued till the ulcers digest and then Skin them with unguentum alb. Camphorat. Before the skin blisters it will much ease to dabb the part with a bunch of Feathers dipt in aq. Sperm. ranar. p.3, Acet. vini. p.1. and a cloth dipt in it may be applyd over the other dressings.

Scorbutick Fungus's. Those Scorbutick funguses of the Gums very often falls in my way, it being the common effect of Sea Scurveys; very soon cured after Generalls by Scarrifications and Scrubbing them with Slices of Lemon Salted, or by water, salt vinegar, and Sp. of Scurvy-grass.

Gums affected Where this accident is constant, as it is in some people, bleeding the gummies with a flegm, washing the mouth after sleep, and eating, with water made some what salter than sea water will cure and prevent it.

* The opening paragraph is lightly crossed out.

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*Slough in the
teeth full of
worms.*

Such persons may keepe a Quart of Such mixture by them, and it will be the more effectuall if they add a little Sliced Myrrh. This keeps the gums sound, the breath Sweet, and the Teeth from rotting. That white Slough apt to gather on mens teeth is as Mr Lewenhooke say full of worms and corrupt the Teeth and taints the breath etc.

James Yonge.

[MS. Rawlinson, C.406, fol. 88–9]

March 23^d, 94.

Hond. Friend,

I am now about to try the use of your vitriol Course for cure of our mangy patient, but first would be informd whether there be any way to know English from any other Vitriol? How long the Course may be continued? What Diet is to be observed? Sr if it effect the Cure I don't doubt but that the Parents will be gratefull to you for your advice, as I shall be thankfull for the communication of the Secret.

*An Endemious
Disease
aping
the Pox.*

We had a year Since a Disease fell among almost all the women that had child from Novemb. to Feb. They were seized with slight excoriating about the nipple, which in despite of all art would spread, and at last infect the whole body with a Disease resembling the Pox: viz *Ulcers in the Throat pustles*, and Scabs in the Skinn, pains mostly Nocturnal; that it was not the Pox but Some Epidemick, or rather Endemious Disease seems true; because Salivation and mercury did little to it, and the infected women hurted not their Husbands. Its true children, nurses, and even those who attended were infected often, but never any man toucht it. One of my Patients whose Breast was deeply eroded and had divers Pustula and ulcers is now going to London on some affairs. I fancy she is not yet thoroughly well, altho' I have Salivated her, and kept her long in a Course of Antimony and Drinks etc. I directd her to wait on you to crave your opinion whether the Bath would not be proper for her.

[MS. Rawlinson, C.406, fol. 89]

Plymouth, Nov. 17^o, 95^o.

*Mr. Young
about the
circulation
Dr. Harvey
etc.*

I never heard Columbus named amongst the pretenders to the discovery of the Circulation but *Casalpinus, Padra Paulo* of Venice (the Author of the Hist. of the Councill of Trent; not Paulus Venitus the Travellor) are all the modern, named that I ever heard off. I need not tell you how many disputed the truth of the Experiment it self, and what was written against it by *Æmilius Parisanus, Riolan, Primrose* and some others, which Harvey answered himself vid. *Exercitac. Anat. Edit. Lugd. Bat. 1639* but he never possitively affirmd that he was the first discoverer, after all that *Walleus, Riolan, Spigilius* had said on the point but that he has his hints from the *Exercitac. of Andr. Casalpinus*, and with *P. Paulo* (who was at Padua with Harvy, and thought to be him, who first discovered the valves in the veins to *Fab. ab aq. pendante*) seems very likely tho' the perfecting and explaining the thing were undoubtedly his as a learned Physician of this Age does Acknowledge, tho' at the same time he strives to deminish the Glory of *Dr Harvy*.

*H. Stubbs
against
plus ultra.*

[MS. Rawlinson, C. 406, fol. 89–90]

KENNETH DEWHURST