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THE BLACK DEATH

IN THE

FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

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GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

THE
BLACK DEATH

IN THE
FOURTEENTH CENTURY,

FROM THE GERMAN OF

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PHILADELPHIA AND ZURICK.

TRANSLATED BY

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LONDON :
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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IN reading Dr. Hecker's account of the Black Death which destroyed so large a portion of the human race in the fourteenth century, I was struck, not only with the peculiarity of the Author's views, but also with the interesting nature of the facts which he has collected. Some of these have never before been made generally known, while others have passed out of mind, being effaced from our memories by subsequent events of a similar kind, which, though really of less magnitude and importance, have, in the perspective of time, appeared greater, because they have occurred nearer to our own days.

Dreadful as was the pestilence here described, and in few countries more so than in England, our modern historians only slightly allude to its visitation:—Hume

deems a single paragraph sufficient to devote to its notice, and Henry and Rapin are equally brief.

It may not then be unacceptable to the medical, or even to the general reader, to receive an authentic and somewhat detailed account of one of the greatest natural calamities that ever afflicted the human race.

My chief motive, however, for translating this small work, and at this particular period, has been a desire that, in the study of the causes which have produced and propagated general pestilences, and of the moral effects by which they have been followed, the most enlarged views should be taken. The contagionist and the anti-contagionist may each find ample support for his belief in particular cases; but in the construction of a theory sufficiently comprehensive to explain throughout the origin and dissemination of universal disease, we shall not only perceive the insufficiency of either doctrine, taken singly, but after admitting the combined influence of both,

shall even then find our views too narrow, and be compelled, in our endeavours to explain the facts, to acknowledge the existence of unknown powers, wholly unconnected either with communication by contact or atmospheric contamination.

I by no means wish it to be understood, that I have adopted the author's views respecting astral and telluric influences, the former of which, at least, I had supposed to have been, with alchemy and magic, long since consigned to oblivion; much less am I prepared to accede to his notion, or rather an ancient notion derived from the East and revived by him, of an organic life in the system of the universe. We are constantly furnished with proofs, that that which affects life is not itself alive; and whether we look to the earth for exhalations, to the air for electrical phenomena, to the heavenly bodies for an influence over our planet, or to all these causes combined, for the formation of some unknown principle noxious to animal existence, still, if we found our

reasoning on ascertained facts, we can perceive nothing throughout this vast field for physical research which is not evidently governed by the laws of inert matter, nothing which resembles the regular succession of birth, growth, decay, death, and regeneration, observable in organized beings. To assume, therefore, causes of whose existence we have no proof, in order to account for effects which, after all, they do not explain, is making no real advance in knowledge, and can scarcely be considered otherwise than an indirect method of confessing our ignorance.

Still, however, I regard the author's opinions, illustrated as they are by a series of interesting facts diligently collected from authentic sources, as, at least, worthy of examination before we reject them, and valuable, as furnishing extensive data on which to build new theories.

I have another, perhaps I may be allowed to say a better, motive for laying before my countrymen this narrative of the sufferings

of past ages,—that by comparing them with those of our own time, we may be made the more sensible how lightly the chastening hand of Providence has fallen on the present generation, and how much reason, therefore, we have to feel grateful for the mercy shewn us.

The publication has, with this view, been purposely somewhat delayed, in order that it might appear at a moment when it is to be presumed that men's thoughts will be especially directed to the approaching hour of public thanksgiving, and when a knowledge of that which they have escaped, as well as of that which they have suffered, may tend to heighten their devotional feelings on that solemn occasion.

When we learn that, in the fourteenth century, one quarter, at least, of the population of the old world was swept away in the short space of four years, and that some countries, England among the rest, lost more than double that proportion of their inhabitants in the course of a few months,

we may well congratulate ourselves that our visitation has not been like theirs, and shall not justly merit ridicule, if we offer our humble thanks to the "Creator and Preserver of all mankind" for our deliverance.

Nor would it disgrace our feelings, if, in expiation of the abuse and obloquy not long since so lavishly bestowed by the public, we should entertain some slight sense of gratitude towards those members of the community, who were engaged, at the risk of their lives and the sacrifice of their personal interests, in endeavouring to arrest the progress of the evil, and to mitigate the sufferings of their fellow men.

I have added, at the close of the Appendix, some extracts from a scarce little work in black letter, called "A Boke or Counseill against the Disease commonly called the Sweate or Sweatyng Sicknesse," published by Caius in 1552. This was written three years before his Latin treatise on the same subject, and is so quaint, and, at the same

time, so illustrative of the opinions of his day, and even of those of the fourteenth century, on the causes of universal diseases, that the passages which I have quoted will not fail to afford some amusement as well as instruction. If I have been tempted to reprint more of this curious production than was necessary to my primary object, it has been from a belief that it would be generally acceptable to the reader to gather some particulars regarding the mode of living in the sixteenth century, and to observe the author's animadversions on the degeneracy and credulity of the age in which he lived. His advice on the choice of a medical attendant cannot be too strongly recommended, at least *by a physician*; and his warning against quackery, particularly the quackery of *painters*, who "scorne (*quære* score ?) you behind your backs with their medicines, so filthy that I am ashamed to name them," seems quite prophetic.

In conclusion, I beg to acknowledge the obligation which I owe to my friend Mr.

H. E. Lloyd, whose intimate acquaintance with the German language and literature will, I hope, be received as a sufficient pledge that no very important errors remain in a translation which he has kindly revised.

PREFACE.

WE here find an important page of the history of the world laid open to our view. It treats of a convulsion of the human race, unequalled in violence and extent. It speaks of incredible disasters, of despair and unbridled demoniacal passions. It shews us the abyss of general licentiousness, in consequence of an universal pestilence, which extended from China to Iceland and Greenland.

The inducement to unveil this image of an age, long since gone by, is evident. A new pestilence has attained almost an equal extent, and though less formidable, has partly produced, partly indicated, similar phenomena. Its causes and its diffusion over Asia and Europe, call on us to take a comprehensive view of it, because it leads to an insight into the organism of the world, in

which the sum of organic life is subject to the great powers of Nature. Now, human knowledge is not yet sufficiently advanced, to discover the connexion between the processes which occur above, and those which occur below, the surface of the earth, or even fully to explore the laws of nature, an acquaintance with which would be required, far less to apply them to great phenomena, in which one spring sets a thousand others in motion.

On this side, therefore, such a point of view is not to be found, if we would not lose ourselves in the wilderness of conjectures, of which the world is already too full: but it may be found in the ample and productive field of historical research.

History—that mirror of human life in all its bearings, offers, even for general pestilences, an inexhaustible, though scarcely explored, mine of facts; here too it asserts its dignity, as the philosophy of reality delighting in truth.

It is conformable to its spirit to conceive

general pestilences as events affecting the whole world, to explain their occurrences by the comparison of what is similar, by which the facts speak for themselves, because they appear to have proceeded from the higher laws which govern the progression of the existence of mankind. A cosmical origin and convulsive excitement, productive of the most important consequences among the nations subject to them, are the most striking features to which history points in all general pestilences. The latter, however, assume very different forms, as well in their attacks on the general organism, as in their diffusion; and in this respect a development from form to form, in the course of centuries, is manifest, so that the history of the world is divided into grand periods in which positively defined pestilences prevailed. As far as our chronicles extend, more or less certain information can be obtained respecting them.

• But this part of medical history, which has such a manifold and powerful influence

over the history of the world, is yet in its infancy. For the honor of that science which should everywhere guide the actions of mankind, we are induced to express a wish, that it may find room to flourish amidst the rank vegetation with which the field of German medical science is unhappily encumbered.

THE BLACK DEATH.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

THAT Omnipotence which has called the world with all its living creatures into one animated being, especially reveals himself in the desolation of great pestilences. The powers of creation come into violent collision; the sultry dryness of the atmosphere; the subterraneous thunders; the mist of overflowing waters, are the harbingers of destruction. Nature is not satisfied with the ordinary alternations of life and death, and the Destroying Angel waves over man and beast his flaming sword.

These revolutions are performed in vast cycles, which the spirit of man, **limited as**

it is, to a narrow circle of perception, is unable to explore. They are, however, greater terrestrial events than any of those which proceed from the discord, the distress or the passions of nations. By annihilations they awaken new life; and when the tumult above and below the earth is past, nature is renovated, and the mind awakens from torpor and depression to the consciousness of an intellectual existence.

Were it in any degree within the power of human research to draw up, in a vivid and connected form, an historical sketch of such mighty events, after the manner of the historians of wars and battles, and the migrations of nations, we might then arrive at clear views with respect to the mental development of the human race, and the ways of Providence would be more plainly discernible. It would then be demonstrable, that the mind of nations is deeply affected by the destructive conflict of the powers of nature, and that great disasters lead to striking changes in general civilization. For

all that exists in man, whether good or evil, is rendered conspicuous by the presence of great danger. His inmost feelings are roused — the thought of self-preservation masters his spirit—self denial is put to severe proof, and wherever darkness and barbarism prevail, there the affrighted mortal flies to the idols of his superstition, and all laws, human and divine, are criminally violated.

In conformity with a general law of nature, such a state of excitement, brings about a change, beneficial or detrimental, according to circumstances, so that nations either attain a higher degree of moral worth, or sink deeper in ignorance and vice. All this, however, takes place upon a much grander scale than through the ordinary vicissitudes of war and peace, or the rise and fall of empires, because the powers of nature themselves produce plagues, and subjugate the human will, which, in the contentions of nations, alone predominates.

CHAPTER II.

THE DISEASE.

THE most memorable example of what has been advanced, is afforded by a great pestilence of the fourteenth century, which desolated Asia, Europe, and Africa, and of which the people yet preserve the remembrance in gloomy traditions. It was an oriental plague, marked by inflammatory boils and tumors of the glands, such as break out in no other febrile disease. On account of these inflammatory boils, and from the black spots, indicatory of a putrid decomposition, which appeared upon the skin, it was called in Germany and in the northern kingdoms of Europe, *the Black Death*, and in Italy, *la Mortalega Grande*, *the Great Mortality*.*

* *La Mortalega Grande. Matth. de Griffonibus. Muratori. Script. rer. Italicar. T. XVIII. p. 167. D.*

Few testimonies are presented to us respecting its symptoms and its course, yet these are sufficient to throw light upon the form of the malady, and they are worthy of credence, from their coincidence with the signs of the same disease in modern times.

The imperial writer, **Kantakusenos**,* whose own son, **Andronikus**, died of this

They were called by others *Anguinalgia*. *Andr. Gratiol.* Discorso di peste. Venet. 1576, 4to. Swedish: *Diger-döden*. *Loccenii* Histor. Suecan L. III. p. 104.—Danish: *den sorte Dod*. *Pontan.* Rer. danicar Histor. L. VIII. p. 476.—Amstelod: 1631, fol. Icelandic: *Svatur Daudi*. Saabye, Tagebuch in Grönland. Introduction XVIII. *Mansa*, de Epidemiis maxime momorabilibus, quae in Dania grassatae sunt, &c. Part. I. p. 12. Havniae, 1831, 8.—In Westphalia the name of *de groete Doet* was prevalent. Meibom.

**Joann Cantacuzen* Historiar, L. IV. c. 8. Ed. Paris. p. 730. 5. The ex-emperor has indeed copied some passages from Thucydides, as *Sprengel* justly observes, (Appendix to the *Geschichte der Medicin*. Vol. 1. H. I. S. 73.) though this was most probably only for the sake of rounding a period. This is no detriment to his credibility, because his statements accord with the other accounts.

plague in Constantinople, notices great imposthumes* of the thighs and arms of those affected, which, when opened, afforded relief by the discharge of an offensive matter. Buboes, which are the infallible signs of the oriental plague, are thus plainly indicated, for he makes separate mention of smaller boils on the arms and in the face, as also in other parts of the body, and clearly distinguishes these from the blisters,† which are no less produced by plague in all its forms. In many cases, black spots‡ broke out all over the body, either single, or united and confluent.

These symptoms were not all found in every case. In many, one alone was sufficient to cause death, while some patients recovered, contrary to expectation, though afflicted with all. Symptoms of cephalic affection were frequent; many patients became stupified and fell into a deep sleep, losing

* *Αποράσεις μεγάλαι.*

† *Μελαίναι φλυχτίδες.*

‡ *ὡσπερ σιγματα μέλανα.*

also their speech from palsy of the tongue ; others remained sleepless and without rest. The fauces and tongue were black, and as if suffused with blood ; no beverage would assuage their burning thirst, so that their sufferings continued without alleviation until terminated by death, which many in their despair accelerated with their own hands. Contagion was evident, for attendants caught the disease of their relations and friends, and many houses in the capital were bereft even of their last inhabitant. Thus far the ordinary circumstances only of the oriental plague occurred. Still deeper sufferings, however, were connected with this pestilence, such as have not been felt at other times ; the organs of respiration were seized with a putrid inflammation ; a violent pain in the chest attacked the patient ; blood was expectorated, and the breath diffused a pestiferous odour.

In the West, the following were the predominating symptoms on the eruption

of this disease.* An ardent fever, accompanied by an evacuation of blood, proved fatal in the first three days. It appears that buboes and inflammatory boils did not at first come out at all, but that the disease, in the form of carbuncular (*anthraxartigen*) affection of the lungs, effected the destruction of life before the other symptoms were developed.

Thus did the plague rage in Avignon for six or eight weeks, and the pestilential breath of the sick, who expectorated blood, caused a terrible contagion far and near; for even the vicinity of those who had fallen ill of plague was certain death;§ so that parents abandoned their infected children, and all the ties of kindred were dissolved. After this period, buboes

* *Guidon de Cauliaco Chirurgia.* Tract 11. c. 5. p. 113. Ed. Lugdun, 1572.

§ Et fuit tantae contagiositatis specialiter quae fuit cum sputo sanguinis, quod non solum morando, sed etiam inspiciendo unus recipiebat ab alio: in tantum quod gentes moriebantur sine servitoribus,

in the axilla and in the groin, and inflammatory boils all over the body, made their appearance; but it was not until seven months afterwards that some patients recovered with matured buboes, as in the ordinary milder form of plague.

Such is the report of the courageous Guy de Chauliac, who vindicated the honor of medicine, by bidding defiance to danger; boldly and constantly assisting the affected, and disdaining the excuse of his colleagues, who held the Arabian notion, that medical aid was unavailing, and that the contagion justified flight. He saw the plague twice in Avignon, first in the year 1348, from January to August, and then twelve years later, in the autumn, when it returned from Germany, and for nine months spread general distress and terror. The first time it raged chiefly among the poor, but in the

et sepeliebantur sine sacerdotibus, pater non visitabat filium, nec filius patrem : charitas erat mortua, spes prostrata.

year 1360, more among the higher classes. It now also destroyed a great many children, whom it had formerly spared, and but few women.

The like was seen in Egypt.* Here also inflammation of the lungs was predominant, and destroyed quickly and infallibly, with burning heat and expectoration of blood. Here too the breath of the sick spread a deadly contagion, and human aid was as vain as it was destructive to those who approached the infected.

Boccacio, who was an eye-witness of its incredible fatality in Florence, the seat of the revival of science, gives a more lively description of the attack of the disease than his non-medical contemporaries.‡

It commenced here, not as in the East, with bleeding at the nose, a sure sign

* *Dequignes*, Histoire générale des Huns, des Turcs, des Moguls, &c. Tom. IV. Paris 1758. 4to. p. 226.

‡ Decameron Giorn. I. Introd.

of inevitable death; but there took place at the beginning, both in men and women, tumours in the groin and in the axilla, varying in circumference up to the size of an apple or an egg, and called by the people, pest-boils (gavoccioli). Then there appeared similar tumours indiscriminately over all parts of the body, and black or blue spots came out on the arms or thighs, or on other parts, either single and large, or small and thickly studded. These spots proved equally fatal with the pest-boils, which had been from the first regarded as a sure sign of death.* No power of medicine brought relief—almost all died within the first three days, some sooner, some later, after the appearance of these signs, and for the most part entirely without fever§ or other symptoms. The plague spread itself with the greater fury, as it communicated from the

* From this period black petechiæ have always been considered as fatal in the plague.

§ A very usual circumstance in plague epidemics.

sick to the healthy, like fire among dry and oily fuel, and even contact with the clothes and other articles which had been used by the infected, seemed to induce the disease. As it advanced, not only men, but animals fell sick and shortly expired, if they had touched things belonging to the diseased or dead. Thus Boccacio himself saw two hogs on the rags of a person who had died of plague, after staggering about for a short time, fall down dead, as if they had taken poison. In other places, multitudes of dogs, cats, fowls and other animals, fell victims to the contagion;* and it is to be presumed that other epizootes among animals likewise took place, although the ignorant writers of the fourteenth century are silent on this point.

In Germany there was a repetition in every respect of the same phenomena. The

* *Auger de Biterris, Vitae Romanor. pontificum, Muratori* Scriptor. rer. Italic. Vol. III. Pt. II. p. 556.

infallible signs of the oriental bubo-plague with its inevitable contagion were found there as everywhere else; but the mortality was not nearly so great as in the other parts of Europe.* The accounts do not all make mention of the spitting of blood, the diagnostic symptom of this fatal pestilence; we are not, however, thence to conclude that there was any considerable mitigation or modification of the disease, for we must not only take into account the defectiveness of the chronicles, but that isolated testimonies are often contradicted by many others. Thus, the chronicles of Strasburg, which only take notice of boils and glandular swellings in the axillæ and groins,† are opposed by another account,

* *Contin. altera Chronici Guillelmi de Nangis in d'Acher, Spicilegium sive Collectio Veterum Scriptorum, &c.* Ed. de la Barre, Tom. iii. p. 110.

† “The people all died of boils and inflamed glands which appeared under the arms and in the groins.” *Jac. v. Königshoven*, the oldest chronicle of Alsace and Strasburg, and indeed of all Germany. Strasburg, 1698. 4. cap. 5, § 86. p. 301.

according to which the mortal spitting of blood was met with in Germany;* but this again is rendered suspicious, as the narrator postpones the death of those who were thus affected, to the sixth, and (even the) eighth day, whereas, no other author sanctions so long a course of the disease; and even in Strasburg, where a mitigation of the plague may, with most probability, be assumed, since in the year 1349, only 16,000 people were carried off, the generality expired by the third or fourth day.† In Austria, and especially in Vienna, the plague was fully as malignant as any where, so that the patients who had red spots and black boils, as well as those afflicted with tumid glands, died about the third day;§ and lastly, very frequent sudden

* *Hainr. Rebdorff*, Annals, *Marq. Freher*. Germanicarum. rerum Scriptores. Francof, 1624. fol. p. 439.

† *Königshoven*, in loc. cit.

§ Anonym. Leobiens. Chron. L. VI. in *Hier. Pez*, Scriptor. rer. Austriac. Lips. 1721. fol. Tom. 1, p. 970. The above named appearances are here called, *rote sprinkel*, *swarcze erhubenn* und *druesz under den üchsen und ze den gemächten*.

deaths occurred on the coasts of the North Sea and in Westphalia, without any further development of the malady.*

To France, this plague came in a northern direction from Avignon, and was there more destructive than in Germany, so that in many places not more than two in twenty of the inhabitants survived. Many were struck, as if by lightning, and died on the spot, and this more frequently among the young and strong than the old; patients with enlarged glands in the axillæ and groins scarcely survived two or three days; and no sooner did these fatal signs appear, than they bid adieu to the world, and sought consolation only in the absolution which Pope Clement VI. promised them in the hour of death.†

In England the malady appeared, as at Avignon, with spitting of blood, and with the same fatality, so that the sick who were

* *Ubb. Emmie rer. Frisiacar. histor. L. XIV. p. 203. Lugd. Bat. 1616. fol.*

† *Guillelmus de Nangis.*

afflicted either with this symptom or with vomiting of blood, died in some cases immediately, in others within twelve hours, or at the latest, in two days.* The inflammatory boils and buboes in the groins and axillæ were recognised at once as prognosticating a fatal issue, and those were past all hope of recovery in whom they arose in numbers all over the body. It was not till towards the close of the plague that they ventured to open, by incision, these hard and dry boils, when matter flowed from them in small quantity, and thus, by compelling nature to a critical suppuration, many patients were saved. Every spot which the sick had touched, their breath, their clothes, spread the contagion; and, as in all other places, the attendants and friends who were either blind to their danger or heroically despised it, fell a sacrifice to their sympathy. Even the eyes of the patient were considered as

* *Ant. Wood*, *Historia et Antiquitates Universit. Oxoniens.* Oxon. 1764, fol. L. 1. p. 172.

sources of contagion,* which had the power of acting at a distance, whether on account of their unwonted lustre or the distortion which they always suffer in plague, or whether in conformity with an ancient notion, according to which the sight was considered as the bearer of a demoniacal enchantment. Flight from infected cities seldom availed the fearful, for the germ of the disease adhered to them, and they fell sick, remote from assistance, in the solitude of their country houses.

Thus did the plague spread over England with unexampled rapidity, after it had first broken out in the county of Dorset, whence it advanced through the counties of Devon and Somerset, to Bristol, and thence reached Gloucester, Oxford and London. Probably few places escaped, perhaps not any; for the annals of contemporaries report, that throughout the land only a

* *Mezeray*, Histoire de France, Paris, 1685. fol. T. 11 p. 418.

tenth part of the inhabitants remained alive.*

From England the contagion was carried by a ship to Bergen, the capital of Norway, where the plague then broke out in its most frightful form, with vomiting of blood; and throughout the whole country, spared not more than a third of the inhabitants. The sailors found no refuge in their ships; and vessels were often seen driving about on the ocean and drifting on shore, whose crews had perished to the last man.†

* *Barnes*, who has given a lively picture of the black plague, in England, taken from the Registers of the 14th century, describes the external symptoms in the following terms: knobs or swellings in the groin or under the arm-pits, called kernels, biles, blains, blisters, pimples, wheals or plague-sores. *The Hist. of Edw. III.* Cambridge. 1688. fol. p. 432.

† *Torfaeus*, *Historia rerum Norvegicarum*. Hafn. 1711. fol. L. ix. c. 8. p. 478. This author has followed *Pontanus* (*Rerum Danicar. Historia*. Amstelod. 1631. fol.) who has given only a general account of the plague in Denmark, and nothing respecting its symptoms.

In Poland the infected were attacked with spitting of blood, and died in a few days in such vast numbers, that, as it has been affirmed, scarcely a fourth of the inhabitants were left.*

Finally, in Russia the plague appeared two years later than in Southern Europe; yet here again, with the same symptoms as elsewhere. Russian contemporaries have recorded that it began with rigor, heat, and darting pain in the shoulders and back; that it was accompanied by spitting of blood, and terminated fatally in two, or at most, three days. It is not till the year 1360, that we find buboes mentioned as occurring in the neck, in the axillæ and in the groins, which are stated to have broken out when the spitting of blood had continued some time. According to the experience of Western Europe, however, it cannot be assumed that these

* *Dlugoss, S. Longini Histor. polonic. L. xii. Lips. 1711. fol. T. 1. p. 1086.*

symptoms did not appear at an earlier period.*

Thus much, from authentic sources, on the nature of the Black Death. The descriptions which have been communicated contain, with a few unimportant exceptions, all the symptoms of the oriental plague which have been observed in more modern times. No doubt can obtain on this point. The facts are placed clearly before our eyes. We must, however, bear in mind, that this violent disease does not always appear in the same form, and that while the essence of the poison which it produces, and which is separated so abundantly from the body of the patient, remains unchanged, it is proteiform in its varieties, from the almost imperceptible vesicle, unaccompanied by fever, which exists for some time

* *W. M. Richter*, *Geschichte der Medicin in Russland*. Moskwa, 1813. 8. p. 215. *Richter* has taken his information on the black plague in Russia, from Authentic Russian MSS.

before it extends its poison inwardly, and then excites fever and buboes, to the fatal form in which carbuncular inflammations fall upon the most important viscera.

Such was the form which the plague assumed in the 14th century, for the accompanying chest affection which appeared in all the countries whereof we have received any account, cannot, on a comparison with similar and familiar symptoms, be considered as any other than the inflammation of the lungs of modern medicine,* a disease which at present only appears sporadically, and, owing to a putrid decomposition of the fluids, is probably combined with hemorrhages from the vessels of the lungs. Now, as every carbuncle, whether it be cutaneous or internal, generates in abundance the matter of contagion which has given rise to it, so, therefore, must the breath of the affected have been poisonous in this plague,

* Compare on this point, *Ballings* treatise "Zur Diagnostik der Lungenerweichung." Vol. XVI. ii. 3. p. 257 of lit. *Annalen der ges. Heilkunde*.

and on this account its power of contagion wonderfully increased; wherefore the opinion appears incontrovertible, that owing to the accumulated numbers of the diseased, not only individual chambers and houses, but whole cities were infected, which, moreover, in the middle ages, were, with few exceptions, narrowly built, kept in a filthy state, and surrounded with stagnant ditches.* Flight was, in consequence, of no avail to the timid; for even though they had sedulously avoided all communication with the diseased and the suspected, yet their clothes were saturated with the pestiferous atmosphere, and every inspiration imparted to them the seeds of the destructive malady, which, in the greater number of cases, germinated with but too much fertility. Add to which, the usual propagation of the plague through clothes, beds, and a thousand other things

* It is expressly ascertained with respect to Avignon and Paris, that uncleanness of the streets increased the plague considerably. *Raim. Chalin de Vinario.*

to which the pestilential poison adheres,— a propagation, which, from want of caution, must have been infinitely multiplied; and since articles of this kind, removed from the access of air, not only retain the matter of contagion for an indefinite period, but also increase its activity and engender it like a living being, frightful ill-consequences followed for many years after the first fury of the pestilence was past.

The affection of the stomach, often mentioned in vague terms, and occasionally as a vomiting of blood, was doubtless only a subordinate symptom, even if it be admitted that actual hematemesis did occur. For the difficulty of distinguishing a flow of blood from the stomach, from a pulmonic expectoration of that fluid, is, to non-medical men, even in common cases, not inconsiderable. How much greater then must it have been in so terrible a disease, where assistants could not venture to approach the sick without exposing themselves to certain death? Only two medical descriptions of the malady have

reached us, the one by the brave *Guy de Chauillac*, the other by *Raymond Chalin de Vinario*, a very experienced scholar, who was well versed in the learning of his time. The former takes notice only of fatal coughing of blood; the latter, besides this, notices epistaxis, hematuria and fluxes of blood from the bowels, as symptoms of such decided and speedy mortality, that those patients in whom they were observed, usually died on the same or the following day.*

**De Peste Libri tres, opera Jacobi Dalechampii in lucem editi. Lugdani, 1552. 16. p. 35. Dalechamp* has only improved the language of this work, adding nothing to it but a preface in the form of two letters. *Raymond Chalin de Vinario* was contemporary with *Guy de Chauillac* at Avignon. He enjoyed a high reputation, and was in very affluent circumstances. He often makes mention of cardinals and high officers of the papal court, whom he had treated; and it is even probable, though not certain, that he was physician to Clement VI. (1342—1352), Innocent VI. (1352— and Urban the V. (1362—1370). He and *Guy de Chauillac* never mention each other.

That a vomiting of blood may not, here and there, have taken place, perhaps have been even prevalent in many places, is, from a consideration of the nature of the disease, by no means to be denied; for every putrid decomposition of the fluids, begets a tendency to hemorrhages of all kinds. Here, however, it is a question of historical certainty, which, after these doubts, is by no means established. Had not so speedy a death followed the expectoration of blood, we should certainly have received more detailed intelligence respecting other hemorrhages; but the malady had no time to extend its effects further over the extremities of the vessels. After its first fury, however, was spent, the pestilence passed into the usual febrile form of the oriental plague. Internal, carbuncular inflammations no longer took place, and hemorrhages became phenomena, no more essential in this than they are in any other febrile disorders. Chalin, who observed not only the *great mortality* of 1348, and the plague

of 1360, but also that of 1373 and 1382, speaks moreover of *affections of the throat*, and describes the *black spots* of plague patients more satisfactorily than any of his cotemporaries. The former appeared but in few cases, and consisted in carbuncular inflammation of the gullet, with a difficulty of swallowing, even to suffocation, to which, in some instances, was added inflammation of the ceruminous glands of the ears, with tumours, producing great deformity. Such patients, as well as others, were affected with expectoration of blood; but they did not usually die before the sixth, and sometimes, even so late as the fourteenth day.* The same occurrence, it is well known, is not uncommon in other pestilences; as also blisters on the surface of the body, in different places, in the vicinity of which, tumid glands and inflammatory boils, surrounded

* *Dalechamp*, p. 205—where, and at pp. 32-36, the plague-eruptions are mentioned in the usual indefinite terms: *Exanthemata viridia, cærulea, nigra, rubra, lata, diffusa, velut signata punctis, &c.*

by discoloured and black streaks, arose, and thus indicated the reception of the poison. These streaked spots were called, by an apt comparison, *the girdle*, and this appearance was justly considered extremely dangerous.*

* “Pestilentis morbi gravissimum symptoma est, quod zonam vulgo nuncupant. Ea sic fit: Pustulæ nonnunquam per febres pestilentes fuscæ, nigræ, lividæ existunt, in partibus corporis a glandularum emissariis sejunctis, ut in femore, tibia, capite, brachio, humeris, quarum fervore et caliditate succi corporis attracti, glandulas in traiectione replent, et attollunt, unde bubones fiunt atque carbunculi. *Ab iis tanquam solidus quidam nervus in partem vicinam distentam ac veluti convulsione rigentem producitur, puta Brachium vel tibiam, nunc rubens, nunc fuscus, nunc obscurior, nunc virens, nunc Iridis colore, duos vel quatuor digitos latus.* Hujus summo, qua desinit in emissarium, plerumque tuberculum pestilens visitur, altero vero extremo, qua in propinquum membrum porrigitur, carbunculus. Hoc scilicet malum vulgus zonam cinctumve nominat, periculosum minus, cum hic tuberculo, illic carbunculo terminatur, quam si tuberculum in capite solum emineat.” p. 198.

CHAPTER III.

CAUSES.—SPREAD.

AN enquiry into the causes of the Black Death, will not be without important results in the study of the plagues which have visited the world, although it cannot advance beyond generalisation without entering upon a field hitherto uncultivated, and, to this hour, entirely unknown. Mighty revolutions in the organism of the earth, of which we have credible information, had preceded it. From China to the Atlantic, the foundations of the earth were shaken,—throughout Asia and Europe the atmosphere was in commotion, and endangered, by its baneful influence, both vegetable and animal life.

The series of these great events began in the year 1333, fifteen years before the

plague broke out in Europe: they first appeared in China. Here a parching drought, accompanied by famine, commenced in the tract of country watered by the rivers Kiang and Hoai. This was followed by such violent torrents of rain, in and about Kingsai, at that time the capital of the Empire, that, according to tradition, more than 400,000 people perished in the floods. Finally, the mountain Tsincheou fell in, and vast clefts were formed in the earth. In the succeeding year (1334), passing over fabulous traditions, the neighbourhood of Canton was visited by inundations; whilst in Tche, after an unexampled drought, a plague arose, which is said to have carried off about 5,000,000 of people. A few months afterwards an earthquake followed, at and near Kingsai; and subsequent to the falling in of the mountains of Ki-ming-chan, a lake was formed of more than a hundred leagues in circumference, where, again, thousands found their

grave. In Hou-kouang and Ho-nan, a drought prevailed for five months; and innumerable swarms of locusts destroyed the vegetation; while famine and pestilence, as usual, followed in their train. Connected accounts of the condition of Europe before this great catastrophe, are not to be expected from the writers of the fourteenth century. It is remarkable, however, that simultaneously with a drought and renewed floods in China, in 1336, many uncommon atmospheric phenomena, and in the winter, frequent thunder storms, were observed in the north of France; and so early as the eventful year of 1333, an eruption of Etna took place.* According to the Chinese annals, about 4,000,000 of people perished by famine in the neighbourhood

* V. Hoff. Geschichte der natürlichen Veränderungen der Erdoberfläche, T. II. p. 264. Gotha, 1824. This eruption was not succeeded by any other in the same century, either of Etna or of Vesuvius.

of Kiang in 1337; and deluges, swarms of locusts, and an earthquake which lasted six days, caused incredible devastation. In the same year, the first swarms of locusts appeared in Franconia, which were succeeded in the following year by myriads of these insects. In 1338, Kingsai was visited by an earthquake of ten days duration; at the same time France suffered from a failure in the harvest; and thenceforth, till the year 1342, there was in China, a constant succession of inundations, earthquakes, and famines. In the same year great floods occurred in the vicinity of the Rhine and in France, which could not be attributed to rain alone; for, everywhere, even on the tops of mountains, springs were seen to burst forth, and dry tracts were laid under water in an inexplicable manner. In the following year, the mountain Hong-tchang, in China, fell in, and caused a destructive deluge; and in Pien-tcheou and Leang-tcheou, after

three months' rain, there followed unheard of inundations, which destroyed seven cities. In Egypt and Syria, violent earthquakes took place; and in China they became, from this time, more and more frequent; for they recurred, in 1344, in Ven-tcheou, where the sea overflowed in consequence; in 1345, in Ki-tcheou, and in both the following years in Canton, with subterraneous thunder. Meanwhile, floods and famine devastated various districts, until 1347, when the fury of the elements subsided in China.*

The signs of terrestrial commotions commenced in Europe in the year 1348, after the intervening districts of country in Asia had probably been visited in the same manner.

On the island of Cyprus, the plague from the East had already broken out; when an earthquake shook the foundations of the island, and was accompanied by so

* Deguignes *Loc. cit.* p. 226, from Chinese sources.

frightful a hurricane, that the inhabitants who had slain their Mahometan slaves, in order that they might not themselves be subjugated by them, fled in dismay, in all directions. The sea overflowed—the ships were dashed to pieces on the rocks, and few outlived the terrific event, whereby this fertile and blooming island was converted into a desert. Before the earthquake, a pestiferous wind spread so poisonous an odour, that many, being overpowered by it, fell down suddenly and expired in dreadful agonies.*

This phenomenon is one of the rarest that has ever been observed, for nothing is more constant than the composition of the air; and in no respect has nature been more careful in the preservation of organic life. Never have naturalists discovered in the atmosphere, foreign elements, which, evident to the senses, and borne by the winds, spread from land to

* Deguignes *Loc. cit.* p. 225.

land, carrying disease over whole portions of the earth, as is recounted to have taken place in the year 1348. It is, therefore, the more to be regretted, that in this extraordinary period, which, owing to the low condition of science, was very deficient in accurate observers, so little that can be depended on respecting those uncommon occurrences in the air, should have been recorded. Yet, German accounts say expressly, that a thick, stinking mist advanced from the East, and spread itself over Italy;* and there could be no de-

* There were also many locusts which had been blown into the sea by a hurricane, and afterwards cast dead upon the shore, and produced a noxious exhalation; and *a dense and awful fog was seen in the heavens, rising in the East, and descending upon Italy.* Mansfeld Chronicle, in *Cyriac Spangenberg*, chap. 287, fol. 336. Eisleben, 1572. Compare *Staind. Chron. (?) by Schnurrer.* (“Ingens vapor magnitudine horribili boreali movens, regionem magno adspicientium terrore dilabatur.”) and *Ad. von Lebenwaldt*, Land-Stadt-und Hausarzney-Buch fol. p. 15. Nuremberg, 1695, who mentions

ception in so palpable a phenomenon.* The credibility of unadorned traditions, however little they may satisfy to physical research, can scarcely be called in question when we consider the connexion of events; for just at this time earthquakes were more general than they had been within the range of history. In thousands of places chasms were formed, from whence arose noxious vapours; and as at that time natural occurrences were transformed into miracles, it was reported, that a fiery meteor, which descended on the earth far in the East, had destroyed every thing within a circumference of more than a hundred leagues, infecting the air far

a dark, thick mist which covered the earth. *Chalin* expresses himself on this subject in the following terms:— *Coelum ingravescit, aër impurus sentitur: nubes crassae ac multae luminibus coeli obstruunt, immundus ac ignavus tepor hominum emollit corpora, exoriens sol pallescit.*” p. 50.

* See *Caius*' account of the causes of the sweating sickness, in the Appendix.—*Translator*.

and wide.* The consequences of innumerable floods contributed to the same effect; vast river districts had been converted into swamps; foul vapours arose every where, increased by the odour of putrified locusts, which had never perhaps darkened the sun in thicker swarms,† and of countless corpses, which even in the well-regulated countries of Europe, they knew not how to remove quickly enough out of the sight of the living. It is probable, therefore, that the atmosphere contained foreign, and sensibly perceptible, admixtures to a great extent, which, at least in the lower regions, could not be decomposed, or rendered ineffective by separation.

* *Mezeray* Histoire de France, Tom. II. 418. Paris, 1685. V. *Oudegheerst's* Chroniques de Flandres. Antwerp, 1571, 4to. Chap. 175, f. 297.

† They spread in a direction from East to West, over most of the countries from which we have received intelligence. Anonym. *Leobiens*, Chron. Loc. cit.

Now, if we go back to the symptoms of the disease, the ardent inflammation of the lungs points out, that the organs of respiration yielded to the attack of an atmospheric poison—a poison, which (if we admit the independent origin of the Black Plague at any one place on the globe, which, under such extraordinary circumstances, it would be difficult to doubt,) attacked the course of the circulation in as hostile a manner as that which produces inflammation of the spleen and other animal contagions that cause swelling and inflammation of the lymphatic glands.

Pursuing the course of these grand revolutions further, we find notice of an unexampled earthquake, which, on the 25th of January, 1348, shook Greece, Italy and the neighbouring countries. Naples, Rome, Pisa, Bologna, Padua, Venice and many other cities suffered considerably: whole villages were swallowed up. Castles, houses and churches, were

overthrown, and hundreds of people were buried beneath their ruins.* In Carinthia, thirty villages, together with all the churches, were demolished; more than a thousand corpses were drawn out of the rubbish; the city of Villach was so completely destroyed, that very few of its inhabitants were saved; and when the earth ceased to tremble, it was found that mountains had been moved from their positions, and that many hamlets were left in ruins.‡ It is recorded, that during this earthquake, the wine in the casks became turbid, a statement which may be considered as furnishing a proof, that changes causing a decomposition of the atmosphere had taken place; but if we had no other information from which the excitement of conflicting powers of nature during

* *Giov. Villani* Istorie Fiorentine, L. XII. chap. 121, 122. in Muratori T. XIII. pp. 1001, 1002. Compare Barnes Loc. cit. p. 430.

‡ I. *Vitoduran*. Chronicon, in *Fuseli. Thesaurus Histor. Helvet.* Tigur. 1735, fol. p. 84.

these commotions, might be inferred, yet scientific observations in modern times have shewn, that the relation of the atmosphere to the earth is changed by volcanic influences. Why then, may we not, from this fact, draw retrospective inferences respecting those extraordinary phenomena?

Independently of this, however, we know that during this earthquake, the duration of which is stated by some to have been a week, and by others, a fortnight, people experienced an unusual stupor and headache, and that many fainted away.*

These destructive earthquakes extended as far as the neighbourhood of Basle,§ and recurred until the year 1360, throughout Germany, France, Silesia, Poland, England and Denmark, and much further north.‡

* *Albert Argentiniens. Chronic. in Urstis Scriptor. rer. Germanic. Francof. 1585. fol. P. II. p. 147. Compare Chalin. Loc. Cit.*

§ *Petrach. Opera. Basil 1554. fol. p. 210. Barnes. Loc. cit.*

‡ "Un tremblement de terre universel, mesme en

Great and extraordinary meteors appeared in many places, and were regarded with superstitious horror. A pillar of fire, which on the 20th of December, 1348, remained for an hour at sun rise over the pope's palace in Avignon;* a fireball, which in August of the same year was seen at sunset over Paris, and was distinguished from similar phenomena, by its longer duration,§ (not to mention other instances mixed up with wonderful prophecies and omens), are recorded in the chronicles of that age.

The order of the seasons seemed to be inverted,—rains, floods and failures in crops

France et aux pays septentrionaux, renversoit les villes toutes entières, déracinoit les arbres et les montagnes, et remplissoit les campagnes d'abysmes si profondes, qu'il sembloit que l'enfer eût voulu engloutir le genre humain. *Mezeray* Loc. cit. p. 418. *Barnes* p. 431.

* *Villani*. Loc. cit. c. 119. p. 1000.

§ *Guillelm de Nanges*, Cont. alt. Chron. Loc. cit. p. 109.

were so general, that few places were exempt from them; and though an historian of this century assures us, that there was an abundance in the granaries and storehouses,* all his contemporaries, with one voice, contradict him. The consequences of failure in the crops were soon felt, especially in Italy and the surrounding countries, where, in this year, a rain which continued for four months, had destroyed the seed. In the larger cities, they were compelled, in the spring of 1347, to have recourse to a distribution of bread among the poor, particularly at Florence, where they erected large bake-houses, from which, in April, ninety-four thousand loaves of bread, each of twelve ounces in weight, were daily dispensed.‡ It is plain, however, that humanity could only partially mitigate the general distress, not altogether obviate it.

* *Guillelm de Nanges* Cont. alt. Chron. Loc. cit. p. 110.

‡ *Villani*. Loc. cit. c. 72. p. 954.

Diseases, the invariable consequence of famine, broke out in the country, as well as in cities; children died of hunger in their mothers' arms,—want, misery and despair, were general throughout Christendom.*

Such are the events which took place before the eruption of the Black Plague in Europe. Contemporaries have explained them after their own manner, and have thus, like their posterity, under similar circumstances, given a proof, that mortals possess neither senses nor intellectual powers sufficiently acute to comprehend the phenomena produced by the earth's organism, much less scientifically to understand their effects. Superstition, selfishness in a thousand forms, the presumption of the schools, laid hold of unconnected

* Anonym. *Istorie Pistolesi*, in *Muratori*, T. XI. p. 524. “Ne gli anni di Chr. 1346 et 1347, fu grandissima carestia in tutta la Christianità, in tanto, che molta gente moria di fame, e fu grande mortalità in ogni paese del mondo.”

facts. They vainly thought to comprehend the whole in the individual, and perceived not the universal spirit which, in intimate union with the mighty powers of nature, animates the movements of all existence, and permits not any phenomenon to originate from isolated causes. To attempt, five centuries after that age of desolation, to point out the causes of a cosmical commotion, which has never recurred to an equal extent,—to indicate scientifically the influences which called forth so terrific a poison in the bodies of men and animals, exceeds the limits of human understanding. If we are even now unable, with all the varied resources of an extended knowledge of nature, to define that condition of the atmosphere by which pestilences are generated, still less can we pretend to reason retrospectively from the nineteenth to the fourteenth century; but if we take a general view of the occurrences, that century will give us copious infor-

mation, and, as applicable to all succeeding times, of high importance.

In the progress of connected natural phenomena, from East to West, that great law of nature is plainly revealed which has so often and evidently manifested itself in the earth's organism, as well as in the state of nations dependent upon it. In the inmost depths of the globe, that impulse was given in the year 1333, which in uninterrupted succession for six-and-twenty years shook the surface of the earth, even to the western shores of Europe. From the very beginning the air partook of the terrestrial concussion, atmospherical waters overflowed the land, or its plants and animals perished under the scorching heat. The insect tribe was wonderfully called into life, as if animated beings were destined to complete the destruction which astral and telluric powers had begun. Thus did this dreadful work of nature advance from year to year; it was a

progressive infection of the Zones which exerted a powerful influence both above and beneath the surface of the earth ; and after having been perceptible in slighter indications, at the commencement of the terrestrial commotions in China, convulsed the whole earth.

The nature of the first plague in China is unknown. We have no certain intelligence of the disease, until it entered the western countries of Asia. Here it shewed itself as the oriental plague with inflammation of the lungs ; in which form it probably also may have begun in China, that is to say, as a malady which spreads, more than any other, by contagion—a contagion, that, in ordinary pestilences, requires immediate contact, and only under unfavorable circumstances of rare occurrence is communicated by the mere approach to the sick. The share which this cause had in the spreading of the plague over the whole earth, was certainly very great: and the opinion that the Black

Death might have been excluded from Western Europe, by good regulations, similar to those which are now in use, would have all the support of modern experience ; provided it could be proved that this plague had been actually imported from the East ; or that the oriental plague in general, as often as it appears in Europe, always has its origin in Asia or Egypt. Such a proof, however, cannot be produced so as to enforce conviction ; for it would involve the impossible assumption, that either there is no essential difference in the degree of civilization of the European nations, in the most ancient and in modern times, or that detrimental circumstances, which have yielded only to the civilization of human society and the regular cultivation of countries, could not formerly have maintained the bubo-plague.

The plague was, however, known in Europe before nations were united by the bonds of commerce and social

intercourse ; * hence there is ground for supposing that it sprung up spontaneously, in consequence of the rude manner of living and the uncultivated state of the earth; influences which peculiarly favor the origin of severe diseases. Now, we need not go back to the earlier centuries, for the 14th itself, before it was half expired, was visited by five or six pestilences. §

If, therefore, we consider the peculiar property of the plague, that, in countries which it has once visited, it remains for

* According to *Papon*, its origin is quite lost in the obscurity of remote ages; and even before the Christian Era, we are able to trace many references to former pestilences. *De la peste, ou époques mémorables de ce fléau, et les moyens de s'en préserver.* T. II. Paris, An. VIII de la rép. 8.

§ 1301, in the South of France; 1311, in Italy; 1316, in Italy, Burgundy and Northern Europe; 1335, the locust years, in the middle of Europe; 1340, in upper Italy; 1342, in France; and 1347, in Marseilles and most of the larger islands of the Mediterranean. *Ibid.* T. II. p. 273.

a long time in a milder form, and that the epidemic influences of 1342, when it had appeared for the last time, were particularly favorable to its unperceived continuance, till 1348, we come to the notion, that in this eventful year also, the germs of plague existed in Southern Europe, which might be vivified by atmospherical deteriorations; and that thus, at least in part, the Black Plague may have originated in Europe itself. The corruption of the atmosphere came from the East; but the disease itself came not upon the wings of the wind, but was only excited and increased by the atmosphere where it had previously existed.

This source of the Black Plague was not, however, the only one; for, far more powerful than the excitement of the latent elements of the plague by atmospheric influences, was the effect of the contagion communicated from one people to another, on the great roads, and in the harbours of the Mediterranean. From China, the route of the caravans lay to the north of

the Caspian Sea, through Central Asia, to Tauris. Here ships were ready to take the produce of the East to Constantinople, the capital of commerce, and the medium of connexion between Asia, Europe and Africa.* Other caravans went from India to Asia Minor, and touched at the cities south of the Caspian Sea, and lastly, from Bagdad, through Arabia to Egypt; also the maritime communication on the Red Sea, from India to Arabia and Egypt, was not inconsiderable. In all these directions contagion made its way; and doubtless, Constantinople and the harbours of Asia Minor, are to be regarded as the foci of infection; whence it radiated to the most distant seaports and islands.

To Constantinople, the plague had been brought from the northern coast of the Black Sea,† after it had depopulated the

* Compare *Dequignes*. Loc. cit. p. 288.

† According to the general Byzantine designation, "from the country of the hyperborean Scythians." *Kantakuzen*. Loc. cit.

countries between those routes of commerce; and appeared as early as 1347, in Cyprus, Sicily, Marseilles and some of the seaports of Italy. The remaining islands of the Mediterranean, particularly Sardinia, Corsica and Majorca, were visited in succession. Foci of contagion existed also in full activity along the whole southern coast of Europe; when, in January 1348, the plague appeared in Avignon,* and in other cities in the south of France and north of Italy, as well as in Spain.

The precise days of its eruption in the individual towns, are no longer to be ascertained; but it was not simultaneous: for in Florence, the disease appeared in the beginning of April;† in Cesena, the 1st of June;§ and place after place was attacked throughout the whole year; so that the plague, after it had passed through the

* *Guid. Cauliac*, Loc. cit.

† *Matt. Villani*, *Istorie*, in *Muratori*, T. XIV. p. 14.

§ *Annal. Caesenat*, *Ibid.* p. 1179.

whole of France and Germany, where, however, it did not make its ravages until the following year, did not break out till August, in England; where it advanced so gradually, that a period of three months elapsed before it reached London.* The Northern Kingdoms were attacked by it in 1349. Sweden, indeed, not until November of that year: almost two years after its eruption in Avignon.† Poland received the plague in 1349, probably from Germany,§ if not from the northern countries; but in Russia, it did not make its appearance until 1351, more than three years after it had broken out in Constantinople. Instead of advancing in a north-westerly direction from Tauris and from the Caspian Sea, it had thus made the great circuit of the Black Sea, by way of Constan-

* *Barnes*. Loc. cit.

† *Olof Dalin's*, *Svea-Rikes Historie*, III. vol. *Stockholm*, 1747—61, 4. Vol. II. C. 12, p. 496.

§ *Dlugoss*, *Histor. Polon.* L. IX. p. 1086, T. I. *Lips.* 1711, fol.

tinople, Southern and Central Europe, England, the Northern Kingdoms and Poland, before it reached the Russian territories; a phenomenon which has not again occurred with respect to more recent pestilences originating in Asia.

Whether any difference existed between the indigenous plague, excited by the influence of the atmosphere, and that which was imported by contagion, can no longer be ascertained from the facts; for the contemporaries, who in general were not competent to make accurate researches of this kind, have left no data on the subject. A milder and a more malignant form certainly existed, and the former was not always derived from the latter, as is to be supposed from this circumstance—that the spitting of blood, the infallible diagnostic of the latter, on the first breaking out of the plague, is not similarly mentioned in all the reports; and it is therefore probable, that the milder form belonged to the native plague,—the more malignant,

to that introduced by contagion. Contagion was, however, in itself, only one of many causes which gave rise to the Black Plague.

This disease was a consequence of violent commotions in the earth's organism—if any disease of cosmical origin can be so considered. One spring set a thousand others in motion for the annihilation of living beings, transient or permanent, of mediate or immediate effect. The most powerful of all was contagion; for in the most distant countries which had scarcely yet heard the echo of the first concussion, the people fell a sacrifice to organic poison,—the untimely offspring of vital energies thrown into violent commotion.

CHAPTER IV.

MORTALITY.

WE have no certain measure by which to estimate the ravages of the Black Plague, if numerical statements were wanted, as in modern times. Let us go back for a moment to the 14th century. The people were yet but little civilized. The church had indeed subdued them; but they all suffered from the ill-consequences of their original rudeness. The dominion of the law was not yet confirmed. Sovereigns had everywhere to combat powerful enemies to internal tranquillity and security. The cities were fortresses for their own defence. Marauders encamped on the roads—The husbandman was a feudal slave, without possessions of his own.—

Rudeness was general—Humanity, as yet unknown to the people.—Witches and heretics were burned alive.—Gentle rulers were contemned as weak;—wild passions, severity and cruelty, everywhere predominated.—Human life was little regarded.—Governments concerned not themselves about the numbers of their subjects, for whose welfare it was incumbent on them to provide. Thus, the first requisite for estimating the loss of human life, namely, a knowledge of the amount of the population, is altogether wanting; and, moreover, the traditional statements of the amount of this loss, are so vague, that from this source likewise, there is only room for probable conjecture.

Kairo lost daily, when the plague was raging with its greatest violence, from 10 to 15,000; being as many as, in modern times, great plagues have carried off during their whole course. In China, more than thirteen millions are said to have died; and this is in correspondence

with the certainly exaggerated accounts from the rest of Asia. India was depopulated. Tartary, the Tartar Kingdom of Kaptschak, Mesopotamia, Syria, Armenia, were covered with dead bodies—the Kurds fled in vain to the mountains. In Carmania and Caesarea, none were left alive. On the roads, — in the camps, — in the caravansaries, — unburied bodies alone were seen ; and a few cities only (Arabian historians name, Maara el nooman, Schisur and Harem) remained, in an unaccountable manner, free. In Aleppo, 500 died daily; 22,000 people, and most of the animals, were carried off in Gaza, within six weeks. Cyprus lost almost all its inhabitants;* and ships without crews were often seen in the Mediterranean; as afterwards in the North Sea, driving about, and spreading the plague wherever they went on shore.† It was reported to Pope

* *Deguignes*, Loc. cit. p. 223, f.

† *Matt. Villani*, *Istoria*, Loc. cit. p. 13.

Clement, at Avignon, that throughout the East, probably with the exception of China, 23,840,000 people had fallen victims to the plague.* Considering the occurrences of the 14th and 15th centuries, we might, on first view, suspect the accuracy of this statement. How (it might be asked) could such great wars have been carried on—such powerful efforts have been made; how could the Greek empire, only a hundred years later, have been overthrown, if the people really had been so utterly destroyed?

This account is nevertheless rendered credible by the ascertained fact, that the palaces of princes are less accessible to contagious diseases, than the dwellings of the multitude; and that in places of importance, the influx from those districts which have suffered least, soon repairs even the heaviest losses. We must remember also, that we do not gather much from mere numbers without an intimate know-

* *Knighton*, in *Barnes*, *Loc. cit.* p. 434.

ledge of the state of Society. We will, therefore, confine ourselves to exhibiting some of the more credible accounts relative to European cities.

In Florence there died of the			
Black Plague	-	-	60,000*
In Venice	-	-	100,000†
In Marseilles, in one month			16,000§
In Siena	-	-	70,000‡
In Paris	-	-	50,000
In St. Denys	-	-	14,000¶
In Avignon	-	-	60,000°

* *Jno. Trithem Annal. Hirsaugiens. Monast. St. Gall. Hirsaug. 1690. fol. 1. T. II. p. 296. According to Boccacio, Loc. cit. 100,000; according to Matt. Villani, Loc. cit. p. 14. three out of five.*

† *Odoric Raynald Annal. ecclesiastic. Colon. Agripp. 1691. fol. Vol. XVI. p. 280.*

§ *Vitoduran Chronic. in Füssli. Loc. cit.*

‡ *Tromby, Storia de S. Brunone e dell' ordine Cartusiano. Vol. VI. L. VIII. p. 235. Napol. 1777. fol.*

|| *Barnes p. 435.*

¶ *Ditto.*

° *Baluz. Vitae Papat. Avenionens. Paris 1693—4.*

In Strasburg	-	-	16,000*
In Lübeck	-	-	9,000†

Vol. I. p. 316. According to *Rebdorf* in *Freher*.
Loc. cit. at the worst period, 500 daily.

* *Königshoven*. Loc. cit.

†According to *Reimer Kork*, from Easter to Michaelmas 1350, 80 to 90,000; among whom were eleven members of the senate, and bishop John IV. Vid. *John Rud. Becker*, Circumstantial History of the Imper. and free city of Lübeck. Lübeck: 1782, 84, 1805. 3 Vols. 4. Vol. I. p. 269. 71. Although Lübeck was then in its most flourishing state, yet this account, which agrees with that of *Paul Lange*, is certainly exaggerated. (Chronic. Citizense, in *I. Pistorius*, Rerum Germanic. Scriptores aliquot insignes, cur. *Struve* Ratisb. 1626. fol. p. 1214.) We have, therefore, chosen the lower estimate of an anonym. writer. Chronic. Sclavic. by *Erpold Lindenbrog*, Scriptores rerum Germanic. Septentrional. vicinorumque populor. diversi, Francof. 1630. fol. p. 225, and *Spangenberg*. Loc. cit. with whom again the assurance of the two authors, that on the 10th August, 1350, 15 or 1700, (according to *Becker* 2500) persons had died, does not coincide. See Chronik des Franciskaner Lesemeisters *Detmar*, nach der Urschrift und mit Ergänzungen aus anderen Chro-

In Basle	-	-	-	14,000
In Erfurt, at least			-	16,000
In Weimar	-	-	-	5,000*
In Limburg	-	-	-	2,500†
In London, at least			-	100,000§
In Norwich	-	-	-	51,100‡

To which may be added—

Franciscan Friars in Germany				124,434
Minorites in Italy	-	-	-	30,000¶

This short catalogue might, by a laborious and uncertain calculation, deduced

niken, published by I. H. Grautoff. Hamburg : 1829, —30. 8. P. I. p. 269. App. 471.

* *Förstemann*, Versuch einer Geschichte der christlichen Geisslergesellschaften, in *Staudlins und Izschirner's*, Archiv für alte und neue Kirchengeschichte, Vol. III. 1817.

† Limburg. Chronicle. pub. by *C. D. Vogel*. Marburg : 1828. 8vo. p. 14.

§ *Barnes*. Loc. cit.

‡ Ibid.

|| *Spangenberg*. fol. 339. A. Grawsam Sterben vieler faulen Troppfen. Many lazy monks died a cruel death.

¶ *Vitoduran*. Loc. cit.

from other sources, be easily further multiplied, but would still fail to give a true picture of the depopulation which took place. Lübeck, at that time the Venice of the North, which could no longer contain the multitudes that flocked to it, was thrown into such consternation on the eruption of the plague, that the citizens destroyed themselves as if in frenzy.

Merchants whose earnings and possessions were unbounded, coldly and willingly renounced their earthly goods. They carried their treasures to monasteries and churches, and laid them at the foot of the altar; but gold had no charms for the monks, for it brought them death. They shut their gates; yet, still it was cast to them over the convent walls. People would brook no impediment to the last pious work to which they were driven by despair. When the plague ceased, men thought they were still wandering among the dead, so appalling was the livid aspect of the survivors, in consequence of the anxiety they had

undergone, and the unavoidable infection of the air.* Many other cities probably presented a similar appearance; and it is ascertained that a great number of small country towns and villages which have been estimated, and not too highly, at 200,000,† were bereft of all their inhabitants.

In many places in France not more than two out of twenty of the inhabitants were left alive,§ and the capital felt the fury of the plague, alike in the palace and the cot.

Two queens,‡ one bishop,|| and great numbers of other distinguished persons, fell a sacrifice to it, and more than 500 a day died in the Hôtel-Dieu, under the faithful care of the sisters of charity, whose disinterested courage, in this age of horror,

* *Becker*, Loc. cit.

† *Hainr. Rebdorf*. P. 630.

§ *Guillelm de Nang*. Loc. cit.

‡ *Johanna*, queen of Navarre, daughter of *Louis X.*, and *Johanna* of Burgundy, wife of king *Philip de Valois*.

|| *Fulco de Chanar*.

displayed the most beautiful traits of human virtue. For although they lost their lives, evidently from contagion, and their numbers were several times renewed, there was still no want of fresh candidates, who, strangers to the unchristian fear of death, piously devoted themselves to their holy calling.

The church-yards were soon unable to contain the dead,* and many houses, left without inhabitants, fell to ruins.

In Avignon, the pope found it necessary to consecrate the Rhone, that bodies might be thrown into the river without delay, as the church-yards would no longer hold them; † so likewise, in all populous cities, extraordinary measures were adopted, in order speedily to dispose of the dead. In Vienna, where for some time 1200 in-

* *Mich. Felibien*, Histoire de la ville de Paris. Liv. XII. Vol. II. p. 601, Paris: 1725. fol. Comp. *Guilhelm de Nangis*. Loc. cit, and *Daniel* Histoire de France, Tom. II. p. 484. Amsterd. 1720. 4to.

† *Torfaeus*. Loc. cit.

habitants died daily,* the interment of corpses in the church-yards and within the churches, was forthwith prohibited; and the dead were then arranged in layers, by thousands, in six large pits outside the city,† as had already been done in Cairo and Paris. Yet, still many were secretly buried; for at all times, the people are attached to the consecrated cemeteries of their dead, and will not renounce the customary mode of interment.

In many places, it was rumoured that plague patients were buried alive,§ as may

* According to another account, 960. Chronic. Salisburg, in *Pez. Loc. cit.* T. I. p. 412.

† According to an anonymous Chronicler, each of these pits is said to have contained 40,000; this, however, we are to understand as only in round numbers. Anonym. Leobiens, in *Pez.* p. 970. According to this writer, above seventy persons died in some houses, and many were entirely deserted, and at St. Stephen's alone, fifty-four ecclesiastics were cut off.

§ *Auger. de Biterris* in *Muratori.* Vol. III. P. II. p. 556. In *Gobelin Person*, the same is said of Pa-

sometimes happen through senseless alarm and indecent haste; and thus the horror of the distressed people was every where increased. In Erfurt, after the church-yards were filled, 12,000 corpses were thrown into eleven great pits; and the like might, more or less exactly, be stated with respect to all the larger cities.* Funeral ceremonies, the last consolation of the survivors, were every where impracticable.

In all Germany, according to a probable calculation, there seem to have died only 1,244,434† inhabitants; this country, however, was more spared than others: Italy, on the contrary, was most severely visited. It is said to have lost half its inhabitants;§ and this account is rendered credible from the immense losses of individual cities and provinces: for in Sardinia and

derborn, in *Henr. Meibom. Rer. Germanic. Script.* T. I. p. 286. Helmstadt: 1688. fol.

* *Spangenberg. Loc. cit. chap. 287, fol. 336-7.*

† *Barnes. 435.*

§ *Trithem. Annal. Hirsaug. Loc. cit.*

Corsica, according to the account of the distinguished Florentine, John Villani, who was himself carried off by the Black Plague,* scarcely a third part of the population remained alive; and it is related of the Venetians, that they engaged ships at a high rate to retreat to the islands; so that after the plague had carried off three fourths of her inhabitants, that proud city was left forlorn and desolate.† In Padua, after the cessation of the plague, two thirds of the inhabitants were wanting; and in Florence it was prohibited to publish the numbers of the dead, and to toll the bells at their funerals, in order that the living might not abandon themselves to despair.§

We have more exact accounts of Eng-

* Loc. cit. L. XII. c. 99. p. 977.

† Chronic. Claustro-Neuburg. in *Pez.* Vol. I. p. 490. Comp. *Barnes* p. 435. *Raynald* Histor. ecclesiastic Loc. cit. According to this, a runaway Venetian is said to have brought the plague to Padua.

§ *Giov. Villani*, l. XII. c. 83, p. 964.

land; most of the great cities suffered incredible losses; above all, Yarmouth, in which, 7052 died: Bristol, Oxford, Norwich, Leicester, York and London where, in one burial ground alone, there were interred upwards of 50,000 corpses, arranged in layers, in large pits.* It is said, that in the whole country, scarcely a tenth part remained alive;† but this estimate is evidently too high. Smaller losses were sufficient to cause those convulsions, whose consequences were felt for some centuries, in a false impulse given to civil life, and whose indirect influence, unknown to the English, has, perhaps, extended even to modern times.

Morals were deteriorated every where, and the service of God was, in a great measure, laid aside; for, in many places, the churches were deserted, being bereft of their priests. The instruction of the people

* *Barnes*, p. 436.

† *Wood*, *Loc. cit.*

was impeded ;* covetousness became general; and when tranquility was restored, the great increase of lawyers was astonishing, to whom the endless disputes regarding inheritances, offered a rich harvest. The want of priests too, throughout the country, operated very detrimentally upon the people (the lower classes being most exposed to the ravages of the plague, whilst the houses of the nobility were, in proportion, much more spared) and it was no compensation that whole bands of ignorant laymen, who had lost their wives during the pestilence, crowded into the monastic orders, that they might participate in the respectability of the priesthood, and in the rich heritages which

* *Wood* says, that before the plague, there were 13,000 students at Oxford; a number, which may, in some degree, enable us to form an estimate of the state of education in England at that time, if we consider that the universities were, in the middle ages, frequented by younger students, who in modern times do not quit school till their 18th year.

fell in to the church from all quarters. The sittings of Parliament, of the King's Bench, and of most of the other courts, were suspended as long as the malady raged. The laws of peace availed not during the dominion of death. Pope Clement took advantage of this state of disorder, to adjust the bloody quarrel between Edward III. and Philip VI. ; yet he only succeeded during the period that the plague commanded peace. Philip's death (1350) annulled all treaties; and it is related, that Edward, with other troops indeed, but with the same leaders and knights, again took the field. Ireland was much less heavily visited than England. The disease seems to have scarcely reached the mountainous districts of that kingdom; and Scotland too would, perhaps, have remained free, had not the Scots availed themselves of the discomfiture of the English, to make an irruption into their territory, which terminated in the destruction of their army, by the plague and

by the sword, and the extension of the pestilence, through those who escaped, over the whole country.

At the commencement, there was in England a superabundance of all the necessaries of life; but the plague, which seemed then to be the sole disease, was soon accompanied by a fatal murrain among cattle. Wandering about without herdsmen, they fell by thousands; and, as has likewise been observed in Africa, the birds and beasts of prey are said not to have touched them. Of what nature this murrain may have been, can no more be determined, than whether it originated from communication with plague patients, or from other causes; but thus much is certain, that it did not break out until after the commencement of the Black Death. In consequence of this murrain, and the impossibility of removing the corn from the fields, there was every where a great rise in the price of food, which to many was inexplicable, because the harvest

had been plentiful; by others it was attributed to the wicked designs of the labourers and dealers; but it had its foundation in the actual deficiency, arising from circumstances by which individual classes at all times endeavour to profit. For a whole year, until it terminated in August, 1349, the Black Plague prevailed in this beautiful island, and every where poisoned the springs of comfort and prosperity.*

In other countries, it generally lasted only half a year, but returned frequently in individual places; on which account, some, without sufficient proof, assigned to it a period of seven years.†

Spain was uninterruptedly ravaged by the Black Plague till after the year 1350, to which the frequent internal feuds and the wars with the Moors not a little contributed. Alphonso XI., whose passion for war carried him too far, died of it at

* *Barnes and Wood. Loc. cit.*

† *Gobelin Person. in Meibom. Loc. cit.*

the siege of Gibraltar, on the 26th of March, 1350. He was the only king in Europe who fell a sacrifice to it; but even before this period, innumerable families had been thrown into affliction.* The mortality seems otherwise to have been smaller in Spain than in Italy, and about as considerable as in France.

The whole period during which the Black Plague raged with destructive violence in Europe, was, with the exception of Russia, from the year 1347 to 1350. The plagues, which in the sequel often returned until the year 1383,† we do not consider as belonging to “the Great Mortality.” They were rather common

* *Juan de Mariana*. Historia General de España. Illustrated by Don *José Sabau y Blanco*. Tom. IX. Madrid: 1819, 8vo. Libro XVI. p. 225. Don *Diego Ortiz de Zuñiga*, Annales ecclesiasticos y seculares de Sevilla. Madrid: 1795, 4to. T. II. p. 121. Don *Juan de Ferreras*, Historia de España. Madrid: 1721. T. VII. p. 353.

† *Gobelin Person*. Loc. cit. *V. Chalin*, p. 53.

pestilences, without inflammation of the lungs, such as in former times, and in the following centuries, were excited by the matter of contagion everywhere existing, and which, on every favorable occasion, gained ground anew, as is usually the case with this frightful disease.

The concourse of large bodies of people was especially dangerous; and thus, the premature celebration of the Jubilee, to which Clement VI. cited the faithful to Rome, (1350), during the great epidemic, caused a new eruption of the plague, from which it is said, that scarcely one in an hundred of the pilgrims escaped.*

Italy was, in consequence, depopulated anew; and those who returned, spread poison and corruption of morals in all directions.† It is, therefore, the less apparent, how that Pope, who was in

* *Guillelm de Nangis*. Loc. cit.

† *Spangenberg*. fol. 337. b. Limburg. Chronic. p. 20.
 “Und die auch von Rom kamen, wurden eines Theils böser als sie vor gewesen waren.”

general so wise and considerate, and who knew how to pursue the path of reason and humanity, under the most difficult circumstances, should have been led to adopt a measure so injurious; since he, himself, was so convinced of the salutary effect of seclusion, that during the plague in Avignon, he kept up constant fires, and suffered no one to approach him;* and, in other respects, gave such orders as averted, or alleviated, much misery.

The changes which occurred about this period in the north of Europe, are sufficiently memorable to claim a few moments attention. In Sweden, two princes died—Häken and Knut, half-brothers of King Magnus; and in Westgothland alone, 466 priests.† The inhabitants of Iceland and Greenland, found in the coldness of their inhospitable climate, no protection against the southern enemy who had penetrated to

* *Guillelm de Nangis*. Loc. cit. and many others.

† *Dalin's Svea Rikes Historie*, Vol. II. c. xii. p. 496.

them from happier countries. The plague caused great havoc among them. Nature made no allowance for their constant warfare with the elements, and the parsimony with which she had meted out to them the enjoyments of life.* In Denmark and Norway, however, people were so occupied with their own misery, that the accustomed voyages to Greenland ceased. Towering ice-bergs formed at the same time on the coast of East Greenland, in consequence of the general concussion of the earth's organism; and no mortal, from that time forward, has ever seen that shore or its inhabitants.†

It has been observed above, that in

* *Saabye*. Tagebuch in Grönland. Einleit. XVIII.—*Torfaei* Histor. Norveg. Tom. IV. L. IX, c. viii. p. 478-79. *F. G. Mansa*, De epidemiis maxime memorabilibus quæ in Dania Grassatæ sunt, et de Medicinæ statu. Partic. I. Havn. 1831, 8vo. p. 12.

† *Torfaei* Groenlandia antiqua, s. veteris Groenlandiæ descriptio. Havnæ, 1715, 8vo. p. 23—*Potan*. Rer. danicar. Histor. Amstelod. 1631, fol. L. VII. p. 476.

Russia, the Black Plague did not break out until 1351, after it had already passed through the south and north of Europe. In this country also, the mortality was extraordinarily great; and the same scenes of affliction and despair were exhibited, as had occurred in those nations which had already passed the ordeal. The same mode of burial—the same horrible certainty of death—the same torpor and depression of spirits. The wealthy abandoned their treasures, and gave their villages and estates to the churches and monasteries; this being, according to the notions of the age, the surest way of securing the favor of Heaven and the forgiveness of past sins. In Russia too, the voice of nature was silenced by fear and horror. In the hour of danger, fathers and mothers deserted their children, and children their parents.*

Of all the estimates of the number of

* *Richter, Loc. cit.*

lives lost in Europe, the most probable is, that altogether, a fourth part of the inhabitants were carried off. Now, if Europe at present contain 210,000,000 inhabitants, the population, not to take a higher estimate, which might easily be justified, amounted to at least 105,000,000, in the 16th century.

It may, therefore, be assumed, without exaggeration, that Europe lost during the Black Death, 25,000,000 of inhabitants.

That her nations could so quickly overcome such a fearful concussion in their external circumstances, and, in general, without retrograding more than they actually did, could so develop their energies in the following century, is a most convincing proof of the indestructibility of human society as a whole. To assume, however, that it did not suffer any essential change internally, because in appearance every thing remained as before, is inconsistent with a just view of cause and effect. Many historians seem to have adopted such an

opinion ; accustomed, as usual, to judge of the moral condition of the people solely according to the vicissitudes of earthly power, the events of battles, and the influence of religion, but to pass over with indifference, the great phenomena of nature, which modify, not only the surface of the earth, but also the human mind. Hence, most of them have touched but superficially on the “great mortality” of the 14th century. We, for our parts are convinced, that in the history of the world, the Black Death is one of the most important events which have prepared the way for the present state of Europe.

He who studies the human mind with attention, and forms a deliberate judgment on the intellectual powers which set people and states in motion, may, perhaps, find some proofs of this assertion in the following observations:—at that time, the advancement of the hierarchy was, in most countries, extraordinary ; for the church acquired treasures and large properties in

land, even to a greater extent than after the crusades; but experience has demonstrated, that such a state of things is ruinous to the people, and causes them to retrograde, as was evinced on this occasion.

After the cessation of the Black Plague, a greater fertility in women was everywhere remarkable—a grand phenomenon, which, from its occurrence after every destructive pestilence, proves to conviction, if any occurrence can do so, the prevalence of a higher power in the direction of general organic life. Marriages were, almost without exception, prolific; and double and treble births were more frequent than at other times; under which head, we should remember the strange remark, that after the “great mortality” the children were said to have got fewer teeth than before; at which, contemporaries were mightily shocked, and even later writers have felt surprise.

If we examine the grounds of this oft-repeated assertion, we shall find that they

were astonished, to see children cut twenty, or at most, twenty-two teeth, under the supposition that a greater number had formerly fallen to their share.* Some writers of authority, as, for example, the physician Savonarola,† at Ferrara, who probably looked for twenty-eight teeth in children, published their opinions on this subject. Others copied from them, without seeing for themselves, as often happens in other matters which are equally evident; and thus the world believed in the miracle of an imperfection in the human body which had been caused by the Black Plague.

The people gradually consoled themselves after the sufferings which they had undergone; the dead were lamented and forgotten; and in the stirring vicissitudes

* We may take this view of the subject from *Guillelm de Nangis* and *Barnes*, if we read them *with attention*. *Olof Dalin*, Loc. cit.

† *Practica de aegritudinibus a capite usque ad pedes*. Papiæ, 1486, fol. Tract, VI. c. vii.

of existence, the world belonged to the living.*

* "Darnach, da das Sterben, die Geiselfarth, Römerfarth, Judenschlacht, als vorgeschrieben steht, ein End hatte, da hub die Welt wieder an zu leben und fröhlich zu seyn, und machten die Männer neue Kleidung." Limburg Chronik, p. 26. After this when, as was stated before, the mortality, the processions of the Flagellants, the expeditions to Rome, and the massacre of the Jews, were at an end, the world begun to revive and be joyful, and the people put on new clothing.

CHAPTER V.

MORAL EFFECTS.

THE mental shock sustained by all nations during the prevalence of the Black Plague, is without parallel and beyond description. In the eyes of the timorous, danger was the certain harbinger of death; many fell victims to fear, on the first appearance of the distemper,* and the most stout hearted lost their confidence. Thus, after reliance on the future had died away, the spiritual union which binds man to his family and his fellow creatures, was gradually dissolved. The pious closed their accounts with the world,—eternity presented itself to their view,—their only

* *Chalin*, Loc. cit. p. 92. *Detmar's Lübeck Chronicle*, T. I. p. 401.

remaining desire, was for a participation in the consolations of religion, because to them death was disarmed of its sting.

Repentance seized the transgressor, admonishing him to consecrate his remaining hours to the exercise of Christian virtues. All minds were directed to the contemplation of futurity; and children, who manifest the more elevated feelings of the soul without alloy, were frequently seen, while labouring under the plague, breathing out their spirit with prayer and songs of thanksgiving.*

* Chronic. *Ditmari*, Episcop. Mersepurg, Francof. 1580, fol. p. 358.—“*Spangenberg*, p. 338. The lamentation was pitiful; and the only remaining solace, was the prevalent anxiety, inspired by the danger, to prepare for a glorious departure; no other hope remained — death appeared inevitable. Many were hence induced to search into their own hearts, to turn to God, and to abandon their wicked courses: parents warned their children, and instructed them how to pray, and to submit to the ways of Providence: neighbours mutually admonished each other; none could reckon on a single hour's respite. Many persons, and even

An awful sense of contrition seized Christians of every communion; they resolved to forsake their vices—to make restitution for past offences, before they were summoned hence — to seek reconciliation with their Maker, and to avert, by self-chastisement, the punishment due to their former sins. Human nature would be exalted, could the countless noble actions, which, in times of most imminent danger, were performed in secret, be recorded for the instruction of future generations. They, however, have no influence on the course of worldly events. They are known only to silent eye-witnesses, and soon fall into oblivion. But hypocrisy, illusion and bigotry, stalk abroad undaunted; they desecrate what is noble—they pervert what is divine, to the unholy purposes of selfishness; which hurries along every good feeling in the false

young children, were seen bidding farewell to the world; some with prayer, others with praises on their lips.”

excitement of the age. Thus it was in the years of this plague. In the 14th century, the monastic system was still in its full vigour,—the power of the ecclesiastical orders and brotherhoods, was revered by the people, and the hierarchy was still formidable to the temporal power. It was, therefore, in the natural constitution of society that bigotted zeal, which in such times makes a shew of public acts of penance, should avail itself of the semblance of religion. But this took place in such a manner, that unbridled, self-willed penitence, degenerated into luke-warmness, renounced obedience to the hierarchy, and prepared a fearful opposition to the church, paralysed by antiquated forms.

While all countries were filled with lamentations and woe, there first arose in Hungary,* and afterwards in Germany,

* *Torfaei Hist. rer. Norvegic*, L. IX. c. viii. p. 478. (Havn. 1711, fol.) *Die Cronica van der hilliger stat*

the Brotherhood of the Flagellants, called also the Brethren of the Cross, or Cross-bearers, who took upon themselves the repentance of the people, for the sins they had committed, and offered prayers and supplications for the averting of this plague. This Order consisted chiefly of persons of the lower class, who were either actuated by sincere contrition, or, who joyfully availed themselves of this pretext for idleness, and were hurried along with the tide of distracting frenzy. But, as these brotherhoods gained in repute, and were welcomed by the people with veneration and enthusiasm, many nobles and ecclesiastics ranged themselves under their standard; and their bands were not unfrequently augmented by children, honour-

van Coellen, off dat tzytboich, Coellen, 1499, fol. p. 263. "In dem vurss jair erhoiff sich eyn alzo wunderlich nuwe Gesellschaft in Ungarien." &c. The Chronicle of the holy city of Cologne, 1499. In this same year, a very remarkable Society was formed in Hungary.

able women and nuns; so powerfully were minds of the most opposite temperaments enslaved by this infatuation.* They marched through the cities, in well-organized processions, with leaders and singers; their heads covered as far as the eyes; their look fixed on the ground, accompanied by every token of the deepest contrition and mourning. They were robed in sombre garments, with red crosses on the breast, back, and cap, and bore triple scourges, tied in three or four knots, in which points of iron were fixed. Tapers and magnificent banners of velvet and cloth of gold, were carried before them;

* *Albert. Argentinens. Chronic.* p. 149, in *Chr. Urstisius. Germaniae historicorum illustrium Tomus unus.* Francof. 1585, fol.—*Guillelm de Nang.* Loc. cit.—See also the *Saxon Chronicle*, by *Mattheus Dresseren*, Physician and Professor at Leipsig, Wittenberg, 1596, fol. p. 340; the above-named *Limburg Chronicle*, and the *Germaniae Chronicon*, on the origin, name, commerce, &c., of all the Teutonic Nations of Germany: by *Seb. Francken*, of Wörd. Tubingen, 1534, fol. p. 201.

wherever they made their appearance, they were welcomed by the ringing of the bells ; and the people flocked from all quarters, to listen to their hymns and to witness their penance, with devotion and tears. In the year 1349, two hundred Flagellants first entered Strasburg, where they were received with great joy, and hospitably lodged by the citizens. Above a thousand joined the brotherhood, which now assumed the appearance of a wandering tribe, and separated into two bodies, for the purpose of journeying to the north and to the south. For more than half a year, new parties arrived weekly ; and, on each arrival, adults and children left their families to accompany them ; till, at length, their sanctity was questioned, and the doors of houses and churches were closed against them.* At Spires, two hundred boys, of twelve years of age and under, constituted themselves

* *Königshoven*, Elsassische und Strassburgische Chronicke. Loc cit. p. 297.

into a Brotherhood of the Cross, in imitation of the children, who, about a hundred years before, had united, at the instigation of some fanatic monks, for the purpose of recovering the Holy Sepulchre. All the inhabitants of this town, were carried away by the illusion; they conducted the strangers to their houses with songs of thanksgiving, to regale them for the night. The women embroidered banners for them, and all were anxious to augment their pomp; and at every succeeding pilgrimage, their influence and reputation increased.* It was not merely some individual parts of the country that fostered them: all Germany, Hungary, Poland, Bohemia, Silesia, and Flanders, did homage to the mania; and they at length became as formidable to the secular, as they were to the ecclesiastical power. The influence of this fanaticism, was great and threatening;

* *Albert Argentin. Loc. cit.* They never remained longer than one night at any place.

resembling the excitement which called all the inhabitants of Europe into the deserts of Syria and Palestine, about two hundred and fifty years before. The appearance, in itself, was not novel. As far back as the 11th century, many believers, in Asia and Southern Europe, afflicted themselves with the punishment of flagellation. *Dominicus Loricatus*, a monk of St. Croce d'Avellano, is mentioned as the master and model of this species of mortification of the flesh; which, according to the primitive notions of the Asiatic Anchorites, was deemed eminently Christian. The author of the solemn processions of the Flagellants, is said to have been St. Anthony; for even in his time (1231), this kind of penance was so much in vogue, that it is recorded as an eventful circumstance in the history of the world. In 1260, the Flagellants appeared in Italy as *Devoti*. "When the land was polluted by vices and crimes,* an un-

* Words of *Monachus Paduanus*, quoted in Förstermann's Treatise, which is the best upon this subject.— See p. 60.

exemplified spirit of remorse suddenly seized the minds of the Italians. The fear of Christ fell upon all : noble and ignoble, old and young, and even children of five years of age, marched through the streets with no covering but a scarf round the waist. They each carried a scourge of leathern thongs, which they applied to their limbs, amid sighs and tears, with such violence, that the blood flowed from the wounds. Not only during the day, but even by night, and in the severest winter, they traversed the cities with burning torches and banners, in thousands and tens of thousands, headed by their priests, and prostrated themselves before the altars. They proceeded in the same manner in the villages ; and the woods and mountains resounded with the voices of those whose cries were raised to God. The melancholy chaunt of the penitent alone, was heard. Enemies were reconciled ; men and women vied with each other in splendid works of charity, as if they dreaded, that Divine Omnipotence

would pronounce on them the doom of annihilation.”

The pilgrimages of the Flagellants extended throughout all the provinces of Southern Germany, as far as Saxony, Bohemia and Poland, and even further; but at length, the priests resisted this dangerous fanaticism, without being able to extirpate the illusion, which was advantageous to the hierarchy, as long as it submitted to its sway. Regnier, a hermit of Perugia, is recorded as a fanatic preacher of penitence, with whom the extravagance originated.* In the year 1296, there was a great procession of the Flagellants in Strasburg;† and in 1334, fourteen years before the great mortality, the sermon of Venturinus, a Dominican friar, of Bergamo, induced above 10,000 persons to undertake a new pilgrimage. They scourged themselves in the churches, and were entertained in the market-places, at the

* *Schnurrer*, Chronicle of the Plagues, T. I. p. 291.

† Königshoven. Loc.cit.

public expense. At Rome, Venturinus was derided, and banished by the Pope to the mountains of Riccondona. He patiently endured all—went to the Holy Land, and died at Smyrna, 1346.* Hence we see that this fanaticism was a mania of the middle ages, which, in the year 1349, on so fearful an occasion, and while still so fresh in remembrance, needed no new founder; of whom, indeed, all the records are silent. It probably arose in many places at the same time; for the terror of death, which pervaded all nations and sud-

* *Förstemann*, Loc. cit. The pilgrimages of the Flagellants of the year 1349, were not the last. Later in the 14th century, this fanaticism still manifested itself several times, though never to so great an extent: in the 15th century, it was deemed necessary, in several parts of Germany, to extirpate them by fire and sword;—and in the year 1710, processions of the Cross-bearers were still seen in Italy. How deep this mania had taken root, is proved by the deposition of a citizen of Nordhausen (1446): that his wife, in the belief of performing a Christian act, wanted to scourge her children, as soon as they were baptized.

denly set such powerful impulses in motion, might easily conjure up the fanaticism of exaggerated and overpowering repentance.

The manner and proceedings of the Flagellants of the 13th and 14th centuries, exactly resemble each other. But, if during the Black Plague, simple credulity came to their aid, which seized, as a consolation, the grossest delusion of religious enthusiasm, yet it is evident that the leaders must have been intimately united, and have exercised the power of a secret association. Besides, the rude band was generally under the controul of men of learning, some of whom at least, certainly had other objects in view, independent of those which ostensibly appeared. Whoever was desirous of joining the brotherhood, was bound to remain in it thirty-four days, and to have four-pence per day at his own disposal, so that he might not be burthensome to any one; if married, he was obliged to have the sanction of his wife, and give the assurance that he was recon-

ciled to all men. The Brothers of the Cross, were not permitted to seek for free quarters, or even to enter a house without having been invited; they were forbidden to converse with females; and if they transgressed these rules, or acted without precaution, they were obliged to confess to the Superior, who sentenced them to several lashes of the scourge, by way of penance. Ecclesiastics had not, as such, any pre-eminence among them; according to their original law, which, however, was often transgressed, they could not become Masters, or take part in the *Secret Councils*. Penance was performed twice every day: in the morning and evening, they went abroad in pairs, singing psalms, amid the ringing of the bells; and when they arrived at the place of flagellation, they stripped the upper part of their bodies and put off their shoes, keeping on only a linen dress, reaching from the waist to the ancles. They then lay down in a large circle, in different positions, according to the nature of their crime:

the adulterer with his face to the ground ; the perjurer on one side, holding up three of his fingers, &c., and were then castigated, some more and some less, by the Master, who ordered them to rise in the words of a prescribed form.* Upon this, they scourged themselves, amid the singing of psalms and loud supplications for the averting of the plague, with genuflexions, and other ceremonies, of which contemporary writers give various accounts ; and at the same time constantly boasted of their penance, that the blood of their wounds was mingled with that of the Saviour.† One of them, in conclusion, stood up to read a letter, which it was pretended an angel had brought from heaven, to St. Peter's church, at Jerusalem, stating that Christ, who was sore displeased at the sins of man, had granted at the intercession of the

* *Königshoven*, p. 298 :

“ *Stant uf durch der reinen Martel ere ;
Und hüte dich vor der Sünden mere.*”

† *Guill. de Nang.* Loc. cit.

Holy Virgin and of the angels, that all who should wander about for thirty-four days and scourge themselves, should be partakers of the Divine grace.* This scene caused as great a commotion among the believers as the finding of the holy spear once did at Antioch; and if any among the clergy enquired who had sealed the letter? he was boldly answered, the same who had sealed the Gospel!

All this had so powerful an effect, that the church was in considerable danger; for the Flagellants gained more credit than the priests, from whom they so entirely withdrew themselves, that they even absolved each other. Besides, they everywhere took possession of the churches, and their new songs, which went from mouth to mouth, operated strongly on the minds of the people. Great enthusiasm and originally pious feelings, are clearly distinguishable in these hymns, and espe-

* *Albert Argentinens. Loc. cit.*

cially in the chief psalm of the Cross-bearers, which is still extant, and which was sung all over Germany, in different dialects, and is probably of a more ancient date.* Degeneracy, however, soon crept in; crimes were everywhere committed; and there was no energetic man capable

* We meet with fragments of different lengths in the Chronicles of the times, but the only entire MS. which we possess, is in the valuable Library of President von Meusebach. Massmann has had this printed, accompanied by a translation, entitled *Erläuterungen zum Wessobrunner Gebet des 8^{ten} Jahrhunderts. Nebst ZWEIEN noch ungedruckten, GEDICHTEN DES VIERZEHNTEN JAHRHUNDERTS*, Berlin, 1824. "Elucidation of the Wessobrunn Prayer of the 8th century, together with two unpublished Hymns of the 14th century." We shall subjoin it at the end of this Treatise, as a striking document of the age. The Limburg Chronicle asserts, indeed, that it was not composed till that time, although a part, if not the whole, of it, was sung in the procession of the Flagellants, in 1260.—See, *Incerti auctoris Chronicon rerum per Austriam Vicinasque regiones gestarum inde ab anno 1025, usque ad annum 1282*, Munich, 1827-8, p. 9.

of directing the individual excitement to purer objects, even had an effectual resistance to the tottering church been at that early period seasonable, and had it been possible to restrain the fanaticism. The Flagellants sometimes undertook to make trial of their power of working miracles; as in Strasburg, where they attempted, in their own circle, to resuscitate a dead child: they however failed, and their unskilfulness did them much harm, though they succeeded here and there in maintaining some confidence in their holy calling, by pretending to have the power of casting out evil spirits.*

The Brotherhood of the Cross announced that the pilgrimage of the Flagellants was to continue for a space of thirty-four years; and many of the Masters had, doubtless, determined to form a lasting league against the church; but they had gone too far. Already, in the same year,

* *Trithem. Annal. Hirsaugiens, T. II. p. 206.*

the general indignation set bounds to their intrigues; so that the strict measures adopted by the Emperor Charles IV. and Pope Clement,* who, throughout the whole of this fearful period, manifested prudence and noble-mindedness, and conducted himself in a manner every way worthy of his high station, were easily put into execution.†

The Sorbonne, at Paris, and the Emperor Charles, had already applied to the Holy See, for assistance against these formidable and heretical excesses, which had well nigh destroyed the influence of the clergy in every place; when a hundred of the Brotherhood of the Cross arrived at Avignon from Basle, and desired admission.

* He issued a bull against them, Oct. 20, 1349.
Raynald. Trithem. Loc. cit.

† But as they at last ceased to excite astonishment, were no longer welcomed by the ringing of bells, and were not received with veneration, as before, they vanished as human imaginations are wont to do. *Saxon Chronicle*, by *Matt. Dresseren.* Wittenberg, 1596, fol. p. 340-341.

The Pope, regardless of the intercession of several cardinals, interdicted their public penance, which he had not authorized; and, on pain of excommunication, prohibited throughout Christendom the continuance of these pilgrimages.* Philip VI., supported by the condemnatory judgment of the Sorbonne, forbid their reception in France.† Manfred, King of Sicily, at the same time threatened them with punishment by death: and in the East, they were withstood by several bishops, among whom was Janussius, of Gnesen,‡ and Preczlaw, of Breslaw, who condemned to death one of their Masters, formerly a deacon; and, in conformity with the barbarity of the times, had him publicly burnt.§ In Westphalia, where so shortly

* *Albert Argentinens. Loc. cit.*

† *Guillelm de Nangis.*

‡ *Ditmar. Loc. cit.*

§ *Klose of Breslaw's Documental History and Description, 8vo. Vol. II. p. 190. Breslaw, 1781.*

before, they had venerated the Brothers of the Cross, they now persecuted them with relentless severity ;* and in the Mark, as well as in all the other countries of Germany, they pursued them, as if they had been the authors of every misfortune.†

The processions of the Brotherhood of the Cross, undoubtedly promoted the spreading of the plague ; and it is evident, that the gloomy fanaticism which gave rise to them, would infuse a new poison into the already desponding minds of the people.

Still, however, all this was within the bounds of barbarous enthusiasm ; but horrible were the persecutions of the Jews, which were committed in most countries, with even greater exasperation than in the 12th century, during the first Crusades. In every destructive pestilence, the common people at first attribute the mortality to

* Limburg Chronicle, p. 17.

† *Kehrberg's Description of Königsberg, i. e. Neumark, 1724, 4to. p. 240.*

poison. No instruction avails; the supposed testimony of their eyesight, is to them a proof, and they authoritatively demand the victims of their rage. On whom then was it so likely to fall, as on the Jews, the usurers and the strangers who lived at enmity with the Christians? They were everywhere suspected of having poisoned the wells or infected the air.* They alone were considered as having brought this fearful mortality among the Christians.† They were, in consequence, pursued with merciless cruelty; and either indiscriminately given up to the fury of the populace, or sentenced by sanguinary

* So says the Polish historian *Dlugoss*, *Loc. cit.*, while most of his contemporaries, mention only the poisoning of the wells. It is evident, that in the state of their feelings, it mattered little to them to add another still more formidable accusation.

† In those places where no Jews resided, as in Leipzig, Magdeburg, Brieg, Frankenstein, &c. the grave-diggers were accused of the crime.—V. *Möhsen's History of the Sciences in the March of Brandenburg*, T. II. p. 265.

tribunals, which, with all the forms of law, ordered them to be burnt alive. In times like these, much is indeed said of guilt and innocence; but hatred and revenge bear down all discrimination, and the smallest probability, magnifies suspicion into certainty. These bloody scenes, which disgraced Europe in the 14th century, are a counterpart to a similar mania of the age, which was manifested in the persecutions of witches and sorcerers; and, like these, they prove, that enthusiasm, associated with hatred, and leagued with the baser passions, may work more powerfully upon whole nations, than religion and legal order; nay, that it even knows how to profit by the authority of both, in order the more surely to satiate with blood, the sword of long suppressed revenge.

The persecution of the Jews, commenced in September and October, 1348,* at Chillon, on the Lake of Geneva, where

* See the original proceedings, in the Appendix.

the first criminal proceedings were instituted against them, after they had long before been accused by the people of poisoning the wells; similar scenes followed in Bern and Freyburg, in January, 1349. Under the influence of excruciating suffering, the tortured Jews confessed themselves guilty of the crime imputed to them; and it being affirmed that poison had in fact been found in a well at Zoffingen, this was deemed a sufficient proof to convince the world; and the persecution of the abhorred culprits, thus appeared justifiable. Now, though we can take as little exception at these proceedings, as at the multifarious confessions of witches, because the interrogatories of the fanatic and sanguinary tribunals, were so complicated, that by means of the rack, the required answer must inevitably be obtained; and it is besides conformable to human nature, that crimes which are in every body's mouth, may, in the end, be actually committed by some, either from wantonness,

revenge, or desperate exasperation : yet crimes and accusations, are, under circumstances like these, merely the offspring of a revengeful, frenzied, spirit in the people ; and the accusers, according to the fundamental principles of morality, which are the same in every age, are the more guilty transgressors.

Already in the autumn of 1348, a dreadful panic, caused by the supposed poisoning, seized all nations ; and in Germany especially, the springs and wells were built over, that nobody might drink of them, or employ the water for culinary purposes ; and for a long time, the inhabitants of numerous towns and villages, used only river and rain water.* The city gates were also guarded with the greatest

* *Hermanni Gygantis Flores temporum, sive Chronicon Universale—Ed. Meuschen.* Lugdun, Bat. 1743. 4to. p. 139. Hermann, a Franciscan monk of Franconia, who wrote in the year 1349, was an eye-witness of the most revolting scenes of vengeance, throughout all Germany.

caution,—only confidential persons were admitted; and if medicine, or any other article, which might be supposed to be poisonous, was found in the possession of a stranger,—and it was natural that some should have these things by them for their private use,—they were forced to swallow a portion of it.* By this trying state of privation, distrust and suspicion, the hatred against the supposed poisoners, became greatly increased, and often broke out in popular commotions, which only served still further to infuriate the wildest passions. The noble and the mean, fearlessly bound themselves by an oath, to extirpate the Jews by fire and sword, and to snatch them from their protectors, of whom the number was so small, that throughout all Germany, but few places can be mentioned where these unfortunate people were not regarded as outlaws—

* *Guid. Cauliac. Loc. cit.*

† *Hermann. Loc. cit.*

martyred and burnt.† Solemn summonses were issued from Bern to the towns of Basle, Freyburg in the Breisgau, and Strasburg, to pursue the Jews as poisoners. The Burgomasters and Senators, indeed, opposed this requisition; but in Basle the populace obliged them to bind themselves by an oath, to burn the Jews, and to forbid persons of that community from entering their city, for the space of two hundred years. Upon this, all the Jews in Basle, whose number could not have been inconsiderable, were enclosed in a wooden building, constructed for the purpose, and burnt together with it, upon the mere outcry of the people, without sentence or trial, which indeed would have availed them nothing. Soon after, the same thing took place at Freyburg. A regular Diet was held at Bennefeld, in Alsace, where the bishops, lords and barons, as also deputies of the counts (*query* counties?) and towns, consulted how they should proceed with regard to the Jews; and when

the deputies of Strasburg—not indeed the bishop of this town, who proved himself a violent fanatic—spoke in favor of the persecuted, as nothing criminal was substantiated against them; a great outcry was raised, and it was vehemently asked, why, if so, they had covered their wells and removed their buckets? A sanguinary decree was resolved upon, of which the populace, who obeyed the call of the nobles and superior clergy, became but the too willing executioners.* Wherever the Jews were not burnt, they were at least banished; and so being compelled to wander about, they fell into the hands of the country people, who without humanity, and regardless of all laws, persecuted them with fire and sword. At Spires, the Jews, driven to despair, assembled in their own habitations, which they set on fire, and thus consumed themselves with their families. The few

* *Albert Argentin.—Königshoven, Loc. cit.*

that remained, were forced to submit to baptism; while the dead bodies of the murdered, which lay about the streets, were put into empty wine casks, and rolled into the Rhine, lest they should infect the air. The mob was forbidden to enter the ruins of the habitations that were burnt in the Jewish quarter; for the senate itself caused search to be made for the treasure, which is said to have been very considerable. At Strasburg, two thousand Jews were burnt alive in their own burial ground, where a large scaffold had been erected: a few who promised to embrace Christianity, were spared, and their children taken from the pile. The youth and beauty of several females also excited some commiseration; and they were snatched from death against their will: many, however, who forcibly made their escape from the flames, were murdered in the streets.

The senate ordered all pledges and bonds

to be returned to the debtors, and divided the money among the work-people.* Many, however, refused to accept the base price of blood, and, indignant at the scenes of blood-thirsty avarice, which made the infuriated multitude forget † that the plague was raging around them, presented it to monasteries, in conformity with the advice of their confessors. In all the countries on the Rhine, these cruelties continued to be perpetrated during the succeeding months; and after quiet was in some degree restored, the people thought to render an acceptable service to God, by

* *Dies was ouch die Vergift, die die Juden döttete.* “This is also the poison that killed the Jews,” observes *Königshoven*, which he illustrates by saying, that their increase in Germany was very great, and their mode of gaining a livelihood, which, however, was the only resource left them, had engendered ill-will against them in all quarters.

† Many wealthy Jews, for example, were, on their way to the stake, stripped of their garments, for the sake of the gold coin that was sewed in them.—*Albert Argentinens.*

taking the bricks of the destroyed dwellings, and the tombstones of the Jews, to repair churches and to erect belfreys.*

In Mayence alone, 12,000 Jews are said to have been put to a cruel death. The Flagellants entered that place in August; the Jews, on this occasion, fell out with the Christians, and killed several; but when they saw their inability to withstand the increasing superiority of their enemies, and that nothing could save them from destruction, they consumed themselves and their families, by setting fire to their dwellings. Thus also, in other places, the entry of the Flagellants gave rise to scenes of slaughter; and as thirst for blood was everywhere combined with an unbridled spirit of proselytism, a fanatic zeal arose among the Jews, to perish as martyrs to their ancient religion. And how was it possible, that they could from the heart embrace Christianity, when its

* Vide preceding note.

precepts were never more outrageously violated? At Eslingen, the whole Jewish community burned themselves in their synagogue;* and mothers were often seen throwing their children on the pile, to prevent their being baptised, and then precipitating themselves into the flames.† In short, whatever deeds, fanaticism, revenge, avarice and desperation, in fearful combination, could instigate mankind to perform, — and where in such a case is the limit? — were executed in the year 1349, throughout Germany, Italy and France, with impunity, and in the eyes of all the world. It seemed as if the plague gave rise to scandalous acts and frantic tumults, not to mourning and grief: and the greater part of those who, by their education and rank, were called upon to raise the voice of reason, themselves led on the savage mob to murder

* *Spangenberg. Loc. cit.*

† *Guillelm. de Nangis.—Dlugoss. Loc. cit.*

and to plunder. Almost all the Jews who saved their lives by baptism, were afterwards burnt at different times; for they continued to be accused of poisoning the water and the air. Christians also, whom philanthropy or gain had induced to offer them protection, were put on the rack and executed with them.* Many Jews who had embraced Christianity, repented of their apostacy,—and, returning to their former faith, sealed it with their death.†

The humanity and prudence of Clement VI., must, on this occasion, also be mentioned to his honor; but even the highest ecclesiastical power was insufficient to restrain the unbridled fury of the people. He not only protected the Jews at Avignon, as far as lay in his power, but also issued two bulls, in which he declared them innocent; and admonished all Christians, though without success, to cease from such

* *Albert. Argentinens.*

† *Spangenberg* describes a similar scene which took place at Kostnitz.

groundless persecutions.* The Emperor Charles IV. was also favourable to them, and sought to avert their destruction, wherever he could; but he dared not draw the sword of justice, and even found himself obliged to yield to the selfishness of the Bohemian nobles, who were unwilling to forego so favorable an opportunity of releasing themselves from their Jewish creditors, under favor of an imperial mandate.† Duke Albert of Austria burned and pillaged those of his cities, which had persecuted the Jews, — a vain and inhuman proceeding, which, moreover, is not exempt from the suspicion of covetousness; yet he was unable, in his own fortress of Kyberg, to protect some hundreds of Jews, who had been received there, from being barbarously burnt by the inhabitants.‡ Several other princes and

* *Guillelm de Nang.*—*Raynald.*

† *Histor. Landgrav. Thuring.* in *Pistor.* Loc. cit. Vol. I. p. 948.

‡ *Anonym. Leobiens,* in *Pez.* Loc. cit.

counts, among whom was Ruprecht von der Pfalz, took the Jews under their protection, on the payment of large sums: in consequence of which they were called "Jew-masters," and were in danger of being attacked by the populace and by their powerful neighbours.* These persecuted and ill-used people, except indeed where humane individuals took compassion on them at their own peril, or when they

* *Spangenberg*. In the county of Mark, the Jews were no better off than in the rest of Germany. Margrave *Ludwig*, the Roman, even countenanced their persecutions, of which *Kehrberg*, *Loc. cit.* 241, gives the following official account: Coram cunctis Christi fidelibus praesentia percepturis, ego *Johannes* dictus *de Wedel* Advocatus, inclyti Principis Domini, *Ludovici*, Marchionis, publice profiteor et recognosco, quod nomine Domini mei civitatem Königsberg visitavi et intravi, et ex parte Domini Marchionis Consulibus ejusdem civitatis in adjutorium mihi assumtis, *Judaeos inibi morantes igne cremavi*, bonaque omnia eorundem Judaeorum ex parte Domini mei totaliter usurpavi et assumsi. In cujus testimonium praesentibus meum sigillum appendi. Datum A. D. 1351. in Vigilia S. Matthaei Apostoli.

could command riches to purchase protection, had no place of refuge left but the distant country of Lithuania, where Boleslav V., Duke of Poland (1227-1279), had before granted them liberty of conscience ; and King Casimir the Great (1333-1370), yielding to the entreaties of Esther, a favourite Jewess, received them, and granted them further protection :* on which account, that country is still inhabited by a great number of Jews, who by their secluded habits, have, more than any people in Europe, retained the manners of the middle ages.

But to return to the fearful accusations against the Jews : it was reported in all Europe, that they were in connection with

* *Basnage Histoire des Juifs.* A la Haye, 1716. 8vo. T. IX. Pt. II. Liv. IX. ch. 23. §. 12-24. p. 664-679. This valuable work gives an interesting account of the state of the Jews of the middle ages. Compare *J. M. Jost's History of the Israelites from the time of the Maccabees to the present day.* T. VII. Berlin, 1827. 8vo. p. 8-262.

secret superiors in Toledo, to whose decrees they were subject, and from whom they had received commands respecting the coining of base money, poisoning, the murder of christian children, &c.;* that they received the poison by sea from remote parts, and also prepared it themselves from spiders, owls and other venomous animals; but, in order that their secret might not be discovered, that it was known only to their Rabbis and rich men.† Apparently there were but few who did not consider this extravagant accusation well founded; indeed, in many writings of the 14th century, we find great acrimony with regard to the suspected poison-mixers, which plainly demonstrates the prejudice existing against them. Unhappily, after the confessions of the first victims in Switzerland, the rack extorted similar ones in various places. Some even acknowledged having received

* *Albert Argentinens.*

† *Hermann. Gygis. Loc. cit.*

poisonous powder in bags, and injunctions from Toledo, by secret messengers. Bags of this description, were also often found in wells, though it was not unfrequently discovered that the Christians themselves had thrown them in; probably to give occasion to murder and pillage; similar instances of which may be found in the persecutions of the witches.*

* On this subject see *Königshoven*, who has preserved very valuable original proceedings. The most important are, the criminal examinations of ten Jews, at Chillon, on the Lake of Geneva, held in September and October, 1348.—V. Appendix. They produced the most strange confessions, and sanctioned, by the false name of justice, the blood-thirsty fanaticism which lighted the funeral piles. Copies of these proceedings were sent to Bern and Strasburg, where they gave rise to the first persecutions against the Jews.—V. also the original Document of the offensive and defensive Alliance between *Berthold von Götz*, Bishop of Strasburg, and many powerful lords and nobles, in favor of the city of Strasburg, against Charles IV. The latter saw himself compelled, in consequence, to grant to that city an amnesty for the Jewish persecutions, which in our days would be

This picture needs no additions. A lively image of the Black Plague, and of the moral evil which followed in its train, will vividly represent itself to him who is acquainted with nature and the constitution of society. Almost the only credible accounts of the manner of living, and of the ruin which occurred in private life, during this pestilence, are from Italy; and these may enable us to form a just estimate of the general state of families in Europe, taking into consideration what is peculiar in the manners of each country.

“When the evil had become universal,” (speaking of Florence) “the hearts of all the inhabitants were closed to feelings of humanity. They fled from the sick and all that belonged to them, hoping by these means to save themselves. Others shut themselves up in their houses, with their wives, their children and households, living

deemed disgraceful to an imperial crown. Not to mention many other documents, which no less clearly shew the spirit of the 14th century, p. 1021. f.

on the most costly food, but carefully avoiding all excess. None were allowed access to them; no intelligence of death or sickness was permitted to reach their ear; and they spent their time in singing and music, and other pastimes. Others, on the contrary, considered eating and drinking to excess, amusements of all descriptions, the indulgence of every gratification, and an indifference to what was passing around them, as the best medicine, and acted accordingly. They wandered day and night, from one tavern to another, and feasted without moderation or bounds. In this way they endeavoured to avoid all contact with the sick, and abandoned their houses and property to chance, like men whose death-knell had already tolled.

Amid this general lamentation and woe, the influence and authority of every law, human and divine, vanished. Most of those who were in office, had been carried off by the plague, or lay sick, or had lost so many members of their families, that

they were unable to attend to their duties; so that thenceforth every one acted as he thought proper. Others, in their mode of living, chose a middle course. They ate and drank what they pleased, and walked abroad, carrying odoriferous flowers, herbs or spices, which they smelt to from time to time, in order to invigorate the brain, and to avert the baneful influence of the air, infected by the sick, and by the innumerable corpses of those who had died of the plague. Others carried their precaution still further, and thought the surest way to escape death was by flight. They therefore left the city; women as well men abandoning their dwellings and their relations, and retiring into the country. But of these also, many were carried off, most of them alone and deserted by all the world, themselves having previously set the example. Thus it was, that one citizen fled from another—a neighbour from his neighbours—a relation from his relations;—and in the end, so completely had

terror extinguished every kindlier feeling, that the brother forsook the brother—the sister the sister—the wife her husband; and at last, even the parent his own offspring, and abandoned them, unvisited and unsoothed, to their fate. Those, therefore, that stood in need of assistance fell a prey to greedy attendants; who for an exorbitant recompence, merely handed the sick their food and medicine, remained with them in their last moments, and then, not unfrequently, became themselves victims to their avarice and lived not to enjoy their extorted gain. Propriety and decorum were extinguished among the helpless sick. Females of rank seemed to forget their natural bashfulness, and committed the care of their persons, indiscriminately, to men and women of the lowest order. No longer were women, relatives or friends, found in the house of mourning, to share the grief of the survivors—no longer was the corpse accompanied to the grave by neighbours and a

numerous train of priests, carrying wax tapers and singing psalms, nor was it borne along by other citizens of equal rank. Many breathed their last without a friend to sooth their dying pillow; and few indeed were they who departed amid the lamentations and tears of their friends and kindred. Instead of sorrow and mourning, appeared indifference, frivolity and mirth; this being considered, especially by the females, as conducive to health. Seldom was the body followed by even ten or twelve attendants; and instead of the usual bearers and sextons, mercenaries of the lowest of the populace undertook the office for the sake of gain; and accompanied by only a few priests, and often without a single taper, it was borne to the very nearest church, and lowered into the first grave that was not already too full to receive it. Among the middling classes, and especially among the poor, the misery was still greater. Poverty or negligence induced most of

these to remain in their dwellings, or in the immediate neighbourhood; and thus they fell by thousands; and many ended their lives in the streets, by day and by night. The stench of putrefying corpses was often the first indication to their neighbours that more deaths had occurred. The survivors, to preserve themselves from infection, generally had the bodies taken out of the houses, and laid before the doors; where the early morn found them in heaps, exposed to the affrighted gaze of the passing stranger. It was no longer possible to have a bier for every corpse, — three or four were generally laid together — husband and wife, father and mother, with two or three children, were frequently borne to the grave on the same bier; and it often happened that two priests would accompany a coffin, bearing the cross before it, and be joined on the way by several other funerals; so that instead of one, there were five or six bodies for interment.”

Thus far Boccacio. On the conduct of the priests, another contemporary observes:* “In large and small towns, they had withdrawn themselves through fear, leaving the performance of ecclesiastical duties to the few who were found courageous and faithful enough to undertake them.” But we ought not on that account to throw more blame on them than on others; for we find proofs of the same timidity and heartlessness in every class. During the prevalence of the Black Plague, the charitable orders conducted themselves admirably, and did as much good as can be done by individual bodies, in times of great misery and destruction; when compassion, courage, and the nobler feelings, are found but in the few,—while cowardice, selfishness and ill-will, with the baser passions in their train—assert the supremacy. In place of virtue which had been driven from the earth, wickedness every-

* *Guillelm de Nangis.* p. 110.

where reared her rebellious standard, and succeeding generations were consigned to the dominion of her baleful tyranny.

CHAPTER VI.

PHYSICIANS.

IF we now turn to the medical talent which encountered the "Great Mortality," the middle ages must stand excused, since even the moderns are of opinion that the art of medicine is not able to cope with the Oriental plague, and can afford deliverance from it only under particularly favorable circumstances.* We must bear in mind also, that human science and art, appear particularly weak in great pestilences, because they have to contend with the powers of nature, of which they have no knowledge; and which, if they had been, or could be comprehended in

* "Curationem omnem respuit pestis confirmata."—*Chalin*, p. 33.

their collective effects, would remain uncontrollable by them, principally on account of the disordered condition of human society. Moreover, every new plague has its peculiarities, which are the less easily discovered on first view, because, during its ravages, fear and consternation humble the proud spirit.

The physicians of the 14th century, during the Black Death, did what human intellect could do in the actual condition of the healing art; and their knowledge of the disease was by no means despicable. They, like the rest of mankind, have indulged in prejudices, and defended them, perhaps, with too much obstinacy: some of these, however, were founded in the mode of thinking of the age, and passed current in those days, as established truths: others continue to exist to the present hour.

Their successors in the 19th century, ought not therefore to vaunt too highly the pre-eminence of their knowledge, for

they too will be subjected to the severe judgment of posterity — they too, will, with reason, be accused of human weakness and want of foresight.

The medical faculty of Paris, the most celebrated of the 14th century, were commissioned to deliver their opinion on the causes of the Black Plague, together with some appropriate regulations with regard to living, during its prevalence. This document is sufficiently remarkable to find a place here.

“We, the Members of the College of Physicians, of Paris, have, after mature consideration and consultation on the present mortality, collected the advice of our old masters in the art, and intend to make known the causes of this pestilence, more clearly than could be done according to the rules and principles of astrology and natural science ; we, therefore, declare as follows :—

“It is known that in India, and the vicinity of the Great Sea, the constella-

tions which combated the rays of the sun, and the warmth of the heavenly fire, exerted their power especially against that sea, and struggled violently with its waters. Hence, vapours often originate which envelope the sun, and convert his light into darkness. These vapours alternately rose and fell for twenty-eight days; but at last, sun and fire acted so powerfully upon the sea, that they attracted a great portion of it to themselves, and the waters of the ocean arose in the form of vapour; thereby the waters were in some parts, so corrupted, that the fish which they contained, died. These corrupted waters, however, the heat of the sun could not consume, neither could other wholesome water, hail or snow, and dew, originate therefrom. On the contrary, this vapour spread itself through the air in many places on the earth, and enveloped them in fog.

“ Such was the case all over Arabia, in a part of India; in Crete; in the plains and

valleys of Macedonia; in Hungary; Albania and Sicily. Should the same thing occur in Sardinia, not a man will be left alive; and the like will continue, so long as the sun remains in the sign of Leo, on all the islands and adjoining countries to which this corrupted sea-wind extends, or has already extended from India. If the inhabitants of those parts do not employ and adhere to the following, or similar means and precepts, we announce to them inevitable death — except the grace of Christ preserve their lives.

“ We are of opinion, that the constellations, with the aid of Nature, strive, by virtue of their divine might, to protect and heal the human race; and to this end, in union with the rays of the sun, acting through the power of fire, endeavour to break through the mist. Accordingly, within the next ten days, and until the 17th of the ensuing month of July, this mist will be converted into a stinking deleterious rain, whereby the air will be

much purified. Now, as soon as this rain announces itself, by thunder or hail, every one of you should protect himself from the air; and, as well before as after the rain, kindle a large fire of vine-wood, green laurel, or other green wood; worm-wood and chamomile should also be burnt in great quantity in the market places, in other densely inhabited localities, and in the houses. Until the earth is again completely dry, and for three days afterwards, no one ought to go abroad in the fields. During this time the diet should be simple, and people should be cautious in avoiding exposure in the cool of the evening, at night, and in the morning. Poultry and water-fowl, young pork, old beef, and fat meat, in general, should not be eaten; but on the contrary, meat of a proper age, of a warm and dry nature, by no means, however, heating and exciting. Broth should be taken, seasoned with ground pepper, ginger and cloves, especially by those who are accustomed to live temperately, and

are yet choice in their diet. Sleep in the day-time is detrimental; it should be taken at night until sun-rise, or somewhat longer. At breakfast, one should drink little; supper should be taken an hour before sun-set, when more may be drunk than in the morning. Clear light wine, mixed with a fifth or sixth part of water, should be used as a beverage. Dried or fresh fruits with wine are not injurious; but highly so without it. Beet-root and other vegetables, whether eaten pickled or fresh, are hurtful; on the contrary, spicy pot-herbs, as sage or rosemary, are wholesome. Cold, moist, watery food is, in general, prejudicial. Going out at night, and even until three o'clock in the morning, is dangerous, on account of the dew. Only small river fish should be used. Too much exercise is hurtful. The body should be kept warmer than usual, and thus protected from moisture and cold. Rain-water must not be employed in cooking, and every one should guard against exposure to wet

weather. If it rain, a little fine treacle should be taken after dinner. Fat people should not sit in the sunshine. Good clear wine should be selected and drunk often, but in small quantities, by day. Olive oil, as an article of food, is fatal. Equally injurious are fasting or excessive abstemiousness, anxiety of mind, anger, and excessive drinking. Young people, in autumn especially, must abstain from all these things, if they do not wish to run a risk of dying of dysentery. In order to keep the body properly open, an enema, or some other simple means, should be employed, when necessary. Bathing is injurious. Men must preserve chastity as they value their lives. Every one should impress this on his recollection, but especially those who reside on the coast, or upon an island into which the noxious wind has penetrated.”*

* *Jacob. Francischini de Ambrosiis.* In the Appendix to the *Istorie Pistolesi.* *Muratori,* Tom. XI. p. 528.

On what occasion these strange precepts were delivered can no longer be ascertained, even if it were an object to know it. It must be acknowledged, however, that they do not redound to the credit either of the faculty of Paris, or of the 14th century in general. This famous faculty found themselves under the painful necessity of being wise at command, and of firing a point blank shot of erudition at an enemy who enveloped himself in a dark mist, of the nature of which they had no conception. In concealing their ignorance by authoritative assertions, they suffered themselves, therefore, to be misled ; and while endeavouring to appear to the world with eclat, only betrayed to the intelligent their lamentable weakness. Now some might suppose, that in the condition of the sciences in the 14th century, no intelligent physicians existed ; but this is altogether at variance with the laws of human advancement, and is contradicted by his-

tory. The real knowledge of an age, is only shown in the archives of its literature. Men of talent here alone deposit the results of their experience and reflection, without vanity or a selfish object:—here alone the genius of truth speaks audibly. There is no ground for believing that, in the 14th century, men of this kind were publicly questioned regarding their views; and it is, therefore, the more necessary that impartial history should take up their cause and do justice to their merits.

The first notice on this subject is due to a very celebrated teacher in Perugia, Gentilis of Foligno, who, on the 18th of June, 1348, fell a sacrifice to the plague, in the faithful discharge of his duty.* Attached to Arabian doctrines, and to the universally respected Galen, he, in common with all his contemporaries, believed in a putrid corruption of the blood in the

* *Gentilis de Fulgineo*, Consilia. De Peste cons. I. II. fol. 76. 77. Venet. 1514. fol.

lungs and in the heart, which was occasioned by the pestilential atmosphere, and was forthwith communicated to the whole body. He thought, therefore, that everything depended upon a sufficient purification of the air, by means of large blazing fires of odoriferous wood, in the vicinity of the healthy, as well as of the sick, and also upon an appropriate manner of living ; so that the putridity might not overpower the diseased. In conformity with notions derived from the ancients, he depended upon bleeding and purging, at the commencement of the attack, for the purpose of purification ; ordered the healthy to wash themselves frequently with vinegar or wine, to sprinkle their dwellings with vinegar, and to smell often to camphor, or other volatile substances. Hereupon he gave, after the Arabian fashion, detailed rules, with an abundance of different medicines, of whose healing powers wonderful things were believed. He laid little stress upon super-lunar influences, so far

as respected the malady itself; on which account, he did not enter into the great controversies of the astrologers, but always kept in view, as an object of medical attention, the corruption of the blood in the lungs and heart. He believed in a progressive infection from country to country, according to the notions of the present day; and the contagious power of the disease, even in the vicinity of those affected by plague, was, in his opinion, beyond all doubt.* On this point, intelligent contemporaries were all agreed; and in truth, it required no great genius to be convinced of so palpable a fact. Besides, correct notions of contagion have descended from remote antiquity, and were maintained unchanged in the 14th century.† So far back as the age of Plato,

* “Venenosa putredo circa partes cordis et pulmonis de quibus exeunte venenoso vapore, periculum est in vicinitatibus.” Cons. I. fol. 76, a.

† *Dr. Maclean's* notion that the doctrine of contagion was first promulgated in the year 1547, by Pope

a knowledge of the contagious power of malignant inflammations of the eye, of which also no physician of the middle ages entertained a doubt,* was general among the people;† yet, in modern times, surgeons have filled volumes with partial controversies on this subject. The whole language of antiquity has adapted itself to the notions of the people, respecting the contagion of pestilential diseases; and their terms were, beyond comparison, more expressive than those in use among the moderns.‡

Arrangements for the protection of the healthy against contagious diseases, the

Paul III. &c., thus falls to the ground, together with all the arguments founded on it.—See *Macleay* on Epid. and Pestilent. Diseases, 8vo. 1817, Pt. II. Book II. ch. 3. 4.—*Transl. note.*

* *Lippitudo contagione spectantium oculos afficit.*—*Chalin de Vinario*, p. 149.

† See the Author's *Geschichte der Heilkunde*, Vol. II. P. III.

‡ Compare *Marx*, *Origines contagii*. Caroliruh. et Bad. 1824. 8.

necessity of which is shewn from these notions, were regarded by the ancients as useful; and by many, whose circumstances permitted it, were carried into effect in their houses. Even a total separation of the sick from the healthy, that indispensable means of protection against infection by contact, was proposed by physicians of the 2nd century after Christ, in order to check the spreading of leprosy. But it was decidedly opposed, because, as it was alleged, the healing art ought not to be guilty of such harshness.* This mildness of the ancients, in whose manner of thinking inhumanity was so often and so undisguisedly conspicuous, might excite surprise, if it were anything more than apparent. The true ground of the neglect of public protection against pestilential diseases, lay in the general

* *Cael. Aurelian. Chron. L. IV. c. l. p. 497. Ed. Amman.* "Sed hi ægrotantem destituendum magis imperant, quam curandum, quod a se alienum humanitas approbat medicinæ."

notion and constitution of human society,— it lay in the disregard of human life, of which the great nations of antiquity have given proofs in every page of their history. Let it not be supposed that they wanted knowledge respecting the propagation of contagious diseases. On the contrary, they were as well informed on this subject as the moderns; but this was shewn where individual property, not where human life, on the grand scale, was to be protected. Hence the ancients made a general practice of arresting the progress of murrains among cattle, by a separation of the diseased from the healthy. Their herds alone enjoyed that protection which they held it impracticable to extend to human society, because they had no wish to do so.* That the governments in the 14th century, were not yet so far advanced, as to put into practice general regulations for checking the plague,

* *Geschichte der Heilkunde*, Vol. II. p. 248.

needs no especial proof. Physicians could, therefore, only advise public purifications of the air by means of large fires, as had often been practised in ancient times ; and they were obliged to leave it to individual families, either to seek safety in flight, or to shut themselves up in their dwellings,* a method which answers in common plagues, but which here afforded no complete security, because such was the fury of the disease when it was at its height, that the atmosphere of whole cities was penetrated by the infection.

Of the astral influence which was considered to have originated the "Great Mortality," physicians and learned men

* *Chalin* assures us expressly, that many nunneries, by closing their gates, remained free from the contagion. It is worthy of note, and quite in conformity with the prevailing notions, that the continuance in a thick, moist atmosphere, was generally esteemed more advantageous and conservative, on account of its being more impenetrable to the astral influence, inasmuch as the inferior cause kept off the superior.—*Chalin*, p. 48.

were as completely convinced as of the fact of its reality. A grand conjunction of the three superior planets, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars, in the sign of Aquarius, which took place according to Guy de Chauliac, on the 24th of March, 1345, was generally received as its principal cause. In fixing the day, this physician, who was deeply versed in astrology, did not agree with others; whereupon there arose various disputations, of weight in that age, but of none in ours; people, however, agreed in this—that conjunctions of the planets infallibly prognosticated great events; great revolutions of kingdoms, new prophets, destructive plagues, and other occurrences which bring distress and horror on mankind. No medical author of the 14th and 15th century, omits an opportunity of representing them as among the general prognostics of great plagues; nor can we, for our parts, regard the astrology of the middle ages, as a mere offspring of superstition. It has not

only, in common with all ideas which inspire and guide mankind, a high historical importance, entirely independent of its error or truth—for the influence of both is equally powerful—but there are also contained in it, as in alchymy, grand thoughts of antiquity, of which modern natural philosophy is so little ashamed that she claims them as her property. Foremost among these, is the idea of the general life which diffuses itself throughout the whole universe, expressed by the greatest Greek sages, and transmitted to the middle ages, through the new Platonic natural philosophy. To this impression of an universal organism, the assumption of a reciprocal influence of terrestrial bodies could not be foreign,* nor did this cease to correspond with a higher view of nature, until astrologers overstepped the limits

* This was called *Affluxus*, or *Forma specifica*, and was compared to the effect of a magnet on iron, and of amber on chaff.—*Chalin de Vinario*, p. 23.

of human knowledge with frivolous and mystical calculations.

Guy de Chauliac, considers the influence of the conjunction, which was held to be all-potent, as the chief general cause of the Black Plague; the diseased state of bodies, the corruption of the fluids, debility, obstruction, and so forth, as the especial subordinate causes.* By these, according to his opinion, the quality of the air, and of the other elements, was so altered, that they set poisonous fluids in motion towards the inward parts of the body, in the same manner as the magnet attracts iron; whence there arose in the commencement fever and the spitting of blood; afterwards, however, a deposition in the form of glandular swellings and inflammatory boils. Herein the notion of an epidemic constitution was set forth, clearly and conformably, to the spirit of the age. Of contagion, Guy de

* *Causa universalis agens—causa particularis patientis.* To this correspond, in *Chalin*, the expressions *Causa superior et inferior.*

Chauliac was completely convinced. He sought to protect himself against it by the usual means;* and it was probably he who advised Pope Clement VI. to shut himself up while the plague lasted. The preservation of this pope's life, however, was most beneficial to the city of Avignon, for he loaded the poor with judicious acts of kindness,—took care to have proper attendants provided, and paid physicians himself to afford assistance wherever human aid could avail; an advantage which, perhaps, no other city enjoyed.† Nor was the treatment of

* Purgings with alöetic pills; bleeding; purification of the air by means of large fires; the use of treacle; frequent smelling to volatile substances, of which certain "poma," were prepared; the internal use of Armenian bole,—a plague-remedy derived from the Arabians, and, throughout the middle ages, much in vogue, and very improperly used; and the employment of acescent food, in order to resist putridity. *Guy de Chauliac* appears to have recommended flight to many. Loc. citat. p. 115. Compare *Chalin*, L. II. who gives most excellent precepts on this subject.

† *Auger. de Biterris*. Loc. cit.

plague patients in Avignon by any means objectionable; for, after the usual depletions by bleeding and aperients, where circumstances required them, they endeavoured to bring the buboes to suppuration; they made incisions into the inflammatory boils, or burned them with a red-hot iron, a practice which at all times proves salutary, and in the Black Plague saved many lives. In this city, the Jews, who lived in a state of the greatest filth, were most severely visited, as also the Spaniards, whom Chalin accuses of great intemperance.*

Still more distinct notions on the causes of the plague were stated to his contemporaries in the 14th century, by Galeazzo di Santa Sofia, a learned man, a native of Padua, who likewise treated plague-patients at Vienna,† though in what year is undetermined. He distinguishes carefully *pestilence* from *epidemie* and *endemie*. The common notion of the

* L. I. c. 4. p. 39.

† Fol. 32. a. a. O.

two first accords exactly with that of an epidemic constitution, for both consist, according to him, in an unknown change or corruption of the air; with this difference, that *pestilence* calls forth diseases of different kinds; *epidemie*, on the contrary, always the same disease. As an example of an *epidemie*, he adduces a cough (influenza) which was observed in all climates at the same time, without perceptible cause; but he recognized the approach of a *pestilence*, independently of unusual natural phenomena, by the more frequent occurrence of various kinds of fever, to which the modern physicians would assign a nervous and putrid character. The *endemie* originates, according to him, only in local telluric changes—in deleterious influences which develop themselves in the earth and in the water, without a corruption of the air. These notions were variously jumbled together in his time, like everything which human understanding separates by too fine a line

of limitation. The estimation of cosmical influences, however, in the *epidemie* and *pestilence*, is well worthy of commendation; and Santa Sofia, in this respect, not only agrees with the most intelligent persons of the 14th and 15th centuries, but he has also promulgated an opinion which must, even now, serve as a foundation for our scarcely commenced investigations into cosmical influences.* *Pestilence* and *epidemie*, consist, not in alterations of the four primary qualities,† but in a corruption of the air, powerful, though quite immaterial, and not cognoscible by the senses: (*corruptio aëris non substantialis, sed qualitativa*) in a disproportion of the imponderables in the atmosphere, as it would be expressed by the moderns.‡

* *Galeacii de Sancta Sophia*, Liber de Febribus. Venet. 1514, fol. (Printed together with *Guilelmus Brixiensis*, *Marsilius de Sancta Sophia*, *Ricardus Parisiensis*. fol. 29. seq.)

† Warmth, cold, dryness and moisture.

‡ The talented *Chalin* entertains the same convic-

The causes of the *pestilence* and *epidemie* are, first of all, astral influences, especially on occasion of planetary conjunctions; then extensive putrefaction of animal and vegetable bodies, and terrestrial corruptions (*corruptio in terra*); to which also, bad diet and want may contribute. Santa Sofia considers the putrefaction of locusts, that had perished in the sea, and were again thrown up, combined with astral and terrestrial influences, as the cause of the pestilence in the eventful year of the "Great Mortality."

All the fevers which were called forth by the *pestilence*, are, according to him, of the putrid kind; for they originate prin-

tion, "*Obscurum interdum esse vitium aëris, sub pestis initia et menses primos, hoc est argumento: quod cum nec odore tetro gravis, nec turpi colore fædatus fuerit, sed purus, tenuis, frigidus, qualis in montosis et asperis locis esse solet, et tranquillus, vehementissima sit tamen pestilentia infestaque, etc.*" p. 28. The most recent observers of malaria have stated nothing more than this.

cipally from putridity of the heart's blood, which inevitably follows the inhalation of infected air. The Oriental Plague is, sometimes, but by no means always, occasioned by *pestilence* (?), which imparts to it a character (*qualitas occulta*) hostile to human nature. It originates frequently from other causes, among which, this physician was aware that contagion was to be reckoned; and it deserves to be remarked, that he held epidemic small-pox and measles to be infallible forerunners of the plague, as do the physicians and people of the East* at the present day.

In the exposition of his therapeutical views of the plague, a clearness of intellect is again shewn by Santa Sofia, which reflects credit on the age. It seemed to him to depend, 1st, on an evacuation of putrid matters, by purgatives and bleeding: yet he did not sanction the employment of these means indiscriminately,

* Compare *Enr. di Wolmar*, Abhandlung über die Pest. Berlin, 1827. 8vo.

and without consideration; least of all where the condition of the blood was healthy. He also declared himself decidedly against bleeding *ad deliquium* (*venæ sectio eradicatoria*). 2d, Strengthening of the heart and prevention of putrescence. 3d, Appropriate regimen. 4th, Improvement of the air. 5th, Appropriate treatment of tumid glands and inflammatory boils, with emollient, or even stimulating poultices (mustard, lily-bulbs), as well as with red-hot gold and iron. Lastly, 6th, Attention to prominent symptoms. The stores of the Arabian pharmacy, which he brought into action to meet all these indications, were indeed very considerable; it is to be observed, however, that, for the most part, gentle means were accumulated, which in case of abuse, would do no harm; for the character of the Arabian system of medicine, whose principles were everywhere followed at this time, was mildness and caution. On this account too, we cannot believe

that a very prolix treatise by Marsigli di Santa Sofia,* a contemporary relative of Galeazzo, on the prevention and treatment of plague, can have caused much harm, although, perhaps, even in the 14th century, an agreeable latitude and confident assertions respecting things which no mortal has investigated, or which it is quite a matter of indifference to distinguish, were considered as proofs of a valuable practical talent.

The agreement of contemporary and later writers, shews that the published views of the most celebrated physicians of the 14th century, were those generally adopted. Among these, Chalin de Vinario is the most experienced. Though devoted to astrology, still more than his distinguished contemporary, he acknowledges the great power of terrestrial influences, and expresses himself very sensibly on the indisputable doctrine of contagion, endeavouring

* Tractatus de Febris, fol. 48.

thereby to apologize for many surgeons and physicians of his time, who neglected their duty.* He asserted boldly, and with truth, “*that all epidemic diseases might become contagious,† and all fevers*

* De Peste Liber, pura latinitate donatus a *Jacobo Dalechampio*, Lugdun. 1552. 16. p. 40. 188. “Longe tamen plurimi congressu eorum qui fuerunt in locis pestilentibus periclitantur et gravissime, quoniam e causa duplici, nempe et aëris vitio, et eorum qui versantur nobiscum, vitio. *Hoc itaque modo fit, ut unius accessu in totam modo familiam, modo civitatem, modo villam, pestis invehatur.*” Compare p. 20, “Solæ privatorum aedes pestem sentiunt, si adeat qui in pestilenti loco versatus est.”—“Nobis proximi ipsi sumus, nemoque est tanta occæcatus amentia, qui de sua salute potius quam aliorum sollicitus non sit, maxime in contagione tam cita et rapida.” Rather a loose principle, which might greatly encourage low sentiments, and much endanger the honor of the medical profession, but which, in *Chalin*, who was aware of the impossibility of avoiding contagion in uncleanly dwellings, is so far excusable, that he did not apply it to himself.

† Morbos omnes pestilentes contagiosos, audacter ego equidem pronuntio et assevero, p. 149.

epidemic," which attentive observers of all subsequent ages have confirmed.

He delivered his sentiments on blood-letting with sagacity, as an experienced physician; yet he was unable, as may be imagined, to moderate the desire for bleeding shewn by the ignorant monks. He was averse to draw blood from the veins of patients under fourteen years of age; but counteracted inflammatory excitement in them by cupping; and endeavoured to moderate the inflammation of the tumid* glands by leeches.* Most of those who were bled, died; he therefore reserved this remedy for the plethoric; especially for the papal courtiers, and the hypocritical priests, whom he saw gratifying their sensual desires, and imitating Epicurus, whilst they pompously pretended to follow Christ.† He recom-

* Vide preceding note, p. 162. 163.

† Ibid. p. 97. 166. "Qualis (vita) esse solet eorum, qui sacerdotiorum et cultus divini prætextu, genio plus satis indulgent et obsequuntur, ac Christum

mended burning the boils with a red-hot iron, only in the plague without fever, which occurred in single cases;* and was always ready to correct those over-hasty surgeons, who, with fire and violent remedies, did irremediable injury to their patients.† Michael Savonarola, professor in Ferrara (1462), reasoning on the susceptibility of the human frame to the influence of pestilential infection, as the cause of such various modifications of disease, expresses himself as a modern physician would on this point; and an adoption of the principle of contagion, was the foundation of his definition of the plague.‡ No less worthy of observation are the views of the celebrated Valescus of Tarenta, who, during the final visitation of the

speciosis titulis ementientes, Epicurum imitantur.” Certainly a remarkable freedom of sentiment for the 14th century.

* *Ibid.* p. 183. 151. † *Ibid.* p. 159. 189.

‡ *Canonica de Febris, ad Raynerium Siculum, 1487, s. l., cap. 10, sine pag.* “*Febris pestilentialis est febris contagiosa ex ebullitione putrefactiva in altero quatuor humorum cordi propinquorum principaliter.*”

Black Death, in 1382, practised as a physician at Montpellier, and handed down to posterity what has been repeated in innumerable treatises on plague, which were written during the 15th and 16th centuries.*

Of all these notions and views regarding the plague, whose development we have represented, there are two especially, which are prominent in historical importance:—1st, The opinion of learned physicians, that the *pestilence*, or epidemic constitution, is the *parent of various kinds of disease*; that the plague sometimes, indeed, but by no means always, originates from it: that, to speak in the language of the moderns, *the pestilence* bears the same relation to contagion, that a predisposing cause does to an occasional cause: and 2dly, the universal conviction of the contagious power of that disease.

* *Valesci de Tharanta*, Philonium. Lugdani, 1535. 8. L. VII., c. 18., fol. 401., b. seq.—Compare *Astruc*, Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de la Faculté de Médecine de Montpellier, Paris, 1767. 4. p. 208.

Contagion gradually attracted more notice: it was thought that in it, the most powerful occasional cause might be avoided; the possibility of protecting whole cities by separation, became gradually more evident; and so horrifying was the recollection of the eventful year of the "*Great Mortality*," that before the close of the 14th century, ere the ill effects of the Black Plague had ceased, nations endeavoured to guard against the return of this enemy, by an earnest and effectual defence.

The first regulation which was issued for this purpose, originated with Viscount Bernabo, and is dated the 17th Jan. 1374. "Every plague patient was to be taken out of the city into the fields, there to die or to recover. Those who attended upon a plague patient, were to remain apart for ten days, before they again associated with any body. The priests were to examine the diseased, and point out to special commissioners, the persons

infected; under punishment of the confiscation of their goods, and of being burned alive. Whoever imported the plague, the state condemned his goods to confiscation. Finally, none except those who were appointed for that purpose, were to attend plague-patients, under penalty of death and confiscation.*

These orders, in correspondence with the spirit of the 14th century, are sufficiently decided to indicate a recollection of the good effects of confinement, and of keeping at a distance those suspected of having plague. It was said that Milan itself, by a rigorous barricado of three houses in which the plague had broken out, maintained itself free from the "*Great Mortality*," for a considerable time;† and examples of the preser-

* *Chronicon Regiense, Muratori, Tom. XVIII. p. 82.*

† *Adr. Chenot, Hinterlassene Abhandlungen über die ärztlichen und politischen Anstalten bei der Pestseuche, Wien, 1798, 8vo. p. 146.* From this period it was common in the middle ages to barricade the

vation of individual families, by means of a strict separation, were certainly very frequent. That these orders must have caused universal affliction from their uncommon severity, as we know to have been especially the case in the city of Reggio, may be easily conceived; but Bernabo did not suffer himself to be frightened from his purpose—on the contrary, when the plague returned in the year 1383, he forbade the admission of people from infected places into his territories, on pain of death.* We have now, it is true, no account how far he succeeded; yet it is to be supposed that he arrested the disease, for it had long lost the property of the Black Death, to spread abroad in the air the contagious matter which proceeded from the lungs, charged with putridity, and to taint the atmosphere of whole cities by the vast

doors and windows of houses infected with plague, and to suffer the inhabitants to perish without mercy.—*S. Möhsen, Loc. cit.*

* *Chron. Reg. Loc. cit.*

numbers of the sick. Now that it had resumed its milder form, so that it infected only by contact, it admitted being confined within individual dwellings, as easily as in modern times.

Bernabo's example was imitated; nor was there any century more appropriate for recommending to governments strong regulations against the plague, than the 14th; for when it broke out in Italy, in the year 1399, and still demanded new victims, it was for the 16th time; without reckoning frequent visitations of measles and small-pox. In this same year, Viscount John, in milder terms than his predecessor, ordered that no stranger should be admitted from infected places, and that the city gates should be strictly guarded. Infected houses were to be ventilated for at least eight or ten days, and purified from noxious vapours by fires, and by fumigations with balsamic and aromatic substances. Straw, rags, and the like, were to be burned; and

the bedsteads which had been used, set out for four days in the rain or the sunshine, so that, by means of the one or the other, the morbid vapour might be destroyed. No one was to venture to make use of clothes or beds out of infected dwellings, unless they had been previously washed and dried either at the fire or in the sun. People were, likewise, to avoid, as long as possible, occupying houses which had been frequented by plague-patients.*

We cannot precisely perceive in these an advance towards general regulations; and perhaps people were convinced of the insurmountable impediments which opposed the separation of open inland countries, where bodies of people connected together could not be brought, even by the most obdurate severity, to renounce the habit of a profitable intercourse.

Doubtless it is Nature which has done the most to banish the Oriental plague from

* *Muratori*, Tom. XVI., p. 560.—Compare *Chenot*, loc. cit. p. 146.

western Europe, where the increasing cultivation of the earth, and the advancing order in civilized society, prevented it from remaining domesticated; which it most probably had been in the more ancient times.

In the fifteenth century, during which it broke out seventeen times in different places in Europe*, it was of the more consequence to oppose a barrier to its entrance from Asia, Africa, and Greece (which had become Turkish); for it would have been difficult for it to maintain itself indigenously any longer. Among the southern commercial states, however, which were called on to make the greatest exertions to this end, it was principally Venice, formerly so severely attacked by the black plague, that put the necessary restraint upon the perilous profits of the merchant. Until towards the end of the fifteenth century, the very considerable intercourse with the East was free and unimpeded. Ships of commercial cities had often brought over the plague: nay,

* *Papon*, loc. cit.

the former irruption of the *great mortality* itself had been occasioned by navigators. For, as in the latter end of Autumn, 1347, four ships full of plague-patients returned from the Levant to Genoa, the disease spread itself there with astonishing rapidity. On this account, in the following year, the Genoese forbid the entrance of suspected ships into their port. These sailed to Pisa and other cities on the coast, where already Nature had made such mighty preparations for the reception of the Black Plague, and what we have already described took place in consequence.*

In the year 1485, when, among the cities of northern Italy, Milan especially felt the scourge of the plague, a special council of health, consisting of three nobles, was established at Venice, who probably tried every thing in their power to prevent the entrance of this disease, and gradually called into activity all those regulations

* *Chenot*, p. 145.

which have served in later times as a pattern for the other southern states of Europe. Their endeavours were, however, not crowned with complete success; on which account their powers were increased, in the year 1504, by granting them the right of life and death over those who violated the regulations.* Bills of health were probably first introduced in the year 1527, during a fatal plague† which visited Italy for five years (1525—30), and called forth redoubled caution.

The first lazarettos were established upon islands at some distance from the city, seemingly as early as the year 1485. Here all strangers coming from places where the existence of plague was suspected were detained. If it appeared in the city itself, the sick were despatched with their families to what was called the Old Lazaretto, where there furnished with provisions and

* *Le Bret*, Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig. Riga, 1775. 4, Part II., Div. 2, p. 752.

† *Zagata*, Cronica di Verona, 1744. 4, III., p. 93.

medicines, and, when they were cured, were detained, together with all those who had had intercourse with them, still forty days longer in the New Lazaretto, situated on another island. All these regulations were every year improved, and their needful rigour was increased, so that from the year 1585 onwards no appeal was allowed from the sentence of the Council of Health; and the other commercial nations gradually came to the support of the Venetians, by adopting corresponding regulations.* Bills of health, however, were not general until the year 1665.†

The appointment of a forty days' detention, whence quarantines derive their name, was not dictated by caprice, but probably had a medical origin, which is derivable in part from the doctrine of critical days; for the fortieth day, according to the most an-

* *Le Bret*, loc. cit. Compare *Hamburger Remarques* of the year 1700, p. 282 and 305.

† *Göttinger gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1772, p. 22.

cient notions, has been always regarded as the last of ardent diseases, and the limit of separation between these and those which are chronic. It was the custom to subject lying-in women for forty days to a more exact superintendance. There was a good deal also said in medical works of forty day epochs in the formation of the fœtus, not to mention that the alchymists expected more durable revolutions in forty days, which period they called the philosophical month.

This period being generally held to prevail in natural processes, it appeared reasonable to assume and legally to establish it as that required for the development of latent principles of contagion, since public regulations cannot dispense with decisions of this kind, even though they should not be wholly justified by the nature of the case. Great stress has likewise been laid on theological and legal grounds which were certainly of greater

weight in the fifteenth century than in more modern times.*

On this matter, however, we cannot decide, since our only object here is to point out the origin of a political means of protection against a disease, which has been the greatest impediment to civilization within the memory of man; a means, that, like Jenner's vaccine after the small-pox had ravaged Europe for twelve hundred years, has diminished the check which mortality puts on the progress of civilization, and thus given to the life and manners of the nations of this part of the world a new direction, the result of which we cannot foretel.

* The forty days' duration of the Flood, the forty days' sojourn of Moses on Mount Sinai, our Saviour's fast for the same length of time in the wilderness; lastly, what is called the Saxon term (Sächsische Frist,) which lasts for forty days, &c. Compare *G. W. Wedel. Centuria Exercitationum Medico-philologicarum. De Quadragesima Medica. Jenae, 1701. 4, Dec. IV., p. 16.*

APPENDIX.

I.

Das alte Geisslerlied

NACH MASSMANN'S AUSGABE VON HERRN PROFESSOR LACHMANN
MIT DER HANDSCHRIFT VERGLICHEN.

Sve siner sele wille pleghen
 De sal gelden unde weder geuen
 So wert siner sele raed
 Des help uns leue herre goed
 5 Nu tredet here we botsen wille
 Vle wi io de hetsen helle
 Lucifer is en bose geselle
 Sven her hauet
 Mit peke he en lauet
 10 Datz vle wi ef wir hauen sin
 Des help uns maria koninghin
 Das wir dines kindes hulde win
 Jesus crist de wart ge vanghen
 An en cruce wart he ge hanghen
 15 Dat cruce wart des blodes rod
 Wer klaghen sin marter unde sin dod
 Sunder war mide wilt tu mi lonen
 Dre negele unde en dornet crone
 Das cruce vrone en sper en stich
 20 Sunder datz leyd ich dor dich
 Was wltu nu liden dor mich

The Ancient Song of the Flagellants

ACCORDING TO MASSMANN'S EDITION COMPARED WITH THE MS.

BY PROFESSOR LACHMANN.

(*Translation*).

- WHOE'ER to save his soul is fain,
 Must pay and render back again.
 His safety so shall he consult :
 Help us, good Lord, to this result.
 5 Ye that repent your crimes, draw nigh.
 From the burning hell we fly,
 From Satan's wicked company.
 Whom he leads
 With pitch he feeds.
 10 If we be wise we this shall flee.
 Maria! Queen! we trust in thee,
 To move thy Son to sympathy.
 Jesus Christ was captive led,
 And to the cross was riveted.
 15 The cross was reddened with his gore
 And we his martyrdom deplore.
 " Sinner, canst thou to me atone,
 " Three pointed nails, a thorny crown,
 " The holy cross, a spear, a wound,
 20 " These are the cruel pangs I found.
 " What wilt thou, sinner, bear for me?"

So rope wir herre mit luden done
 Unsen denst den nem to lone
 Be hode uns vor der helle nod
 25 Des bidde wi dich dor dinen dod
 Dor god vor gete wi unse blot
 Dat is uns tho den suden guot
 Maria muoter koninginghe
 Dor dines leuen kindes minne
 30 Al unse nod si dir ghe klaghet
 Des help uns moter maghet reyne.
 De erde beuet och kleuen de steyne
 Lebe hertze du salt weyne
 Wir wenen trene mit den oghen
 35 Unde hebben des so guden louen
 Mit unsen sinnen unde mit hertzen
 Dor uns leyd crist vil manighen smertzen
 Nu slaed w sere
 Dor cristus ere.
 40 Dor god nu latet de sunde mere
 Dor god nu latet de sunde varen
 Se wil sich god ouer uns en barmen
 Maria stund in grotzen noden
 Do se ire leue kint sa doden
 45 En svert dor ire sele snet
 Sunder dat la di wesen led
 In korter vrist
 God tornich ist

- Lord, with loud voice we answer thee,
 Accept our service in return,
 And save us lest in hell we burn.
- 25 We, through thy death, to thee have sued.
 For God in heaven we shed our blood :
 This for our sins will work to good.
 Blessed Maria! Mother! Queen!
 Through thy loved Son's redeeming mean
- 30 Be all our wants to thee pourtrayed.
 Aid us, Mother! spotless Maid!
 Trembles the earth, the rocks are rent,*
 Fond heart of mine, thou must relent.
 Tears from our sorrowing eyes we weep;
- 35 Therefore so firm our faith we keep
 With all our hearts — with all our senses.
 Christ bore his pangs for our offences.
 Ply well the scourge for Jesus' sake,
 And God through Christ your sins shall take.
- 40 For love of God abandon sin,
 To mend your vicious lives begin,
 So shall we his mercy win.
 Direful was Maria's pain
 When she beheld her dear One slain.
- 45 Pierced was her soul as with a dart :
 Sinner, let this affect thy heart.
 The time draws near
 When God in anger shall appear.

* We hence perceive with what feelings subterraneous thunders were regarded by the people.

- Jesus wart gelauet mid gallen
 50 Des sole wi an en cruce vallen
 Er heuet uch mit uwen armen
 Dat sic god ouer uns en barme
 Jesus dorch dine namen dry
 Nu make uns hir van sunde vry
 55 Jesus dor dine wnden rod
 Be hod uns vor den gehen dod
 Dat he sende sinen geist
 Und uns dat kortelike leist
 De vrowe unde man ir e tobreken
 60 Dat wil god selven an en wreken
 Sveuel pik und och de galle
 Dat gutet de duuel in se alle
 Vor war sint se des duuels spot
 Dor vor behode uns herre god
 65 De e de ist en reyne leuen
 De had uns god selven gheuen
 Ich rade uch vrowen unde mannen
 Dor god gy solen houard annen
 Des biddet uch de arme sele
 70 Dorch god nu latet houard mere
 Dor god nu latet houard varen
 So wil sich god ouer uns en barmen
 Cristus rep in hemelrike
 Sinen engelen al gelike
 75 De cristenheit wil mi ent wichen
 Des wil lan och se vor gaen

- Jesus was refreshed with gall :
- 50 Prostrate crosswise let us fall,
Then with uplifted arms arise,
That God with us may sympathise.
Jesus, by thy titles three,*
From our bondage set us free.
- 55 Jesus, by thy precious blood,
Save us from the fiery flood.
Lord, our helplessness defend,
And to our aid thy spirit send.
If man and wife their vows should break
- 60 God will on such his vengeance wreak .
Brimstone and pitch, and mingled gall,
Satan pours on such sinners all.
Truly, the devil's scorn are they :
Therefore, O Lord, thine aid we pray.
- 65 Wedlock 's an honorable tie
Which God himself doth sanctify.
By this warning, man, abide,
God shall surely punish pride.
Let your precious soul entreat you,
- 70 Lay down pride lest vengeance meet you.
I do beseech ye, pride forsake,
So God on us shall pity take.
Christ in heaven, where he commands,
Thus addressed his angel bands :—
- 75 “ Christendom dishonors me,
“ Therefore her ruin I decree.”

* For the sake of thy Trinity.

- Maria bat ire kint so sere
 Leue kint la se di boten
 Dat wil ich sceppen dat se moten
 80 Bekerē sich.
 Des bidde ich dich
 Gi logenere
 Gy meynen ed sverer
 Gi bichten reyne und lan de sunde uch ruwen
 85 So wil sich god in uch vor nuwen
 Owe du arme wokerere
 Du bringest en lod up en punt
 Dat senket din an der helle grunt
 Ir morder und ir straten rouere
 90 Ir sint dem leuen gode un mere
 Ir ne wilt uch ouer nemende barmen
 Des sin gy eweliken vor loren
 Were dusse bote nicht ge worden
 De cristenheit wer gar vorsunden
 95 De leyde duuel had se ge bunden
 Maria had lost unsen bant
 Sunder ich saghe di leue mere
 Sunte peter is portenere
 Wende dich an en he letset dich in
 100 He bringhet dich vor de koninghin
 Leue herre sunte Michahel
 Du bist en plegher aller sel
 Be hode uns vor der helle nod
 Dat do dor dines sceppers dod

Then Mary thus implored her son :—

“ Penance to thee, loved Child, be done ;

“ That she repent be mine the care ;

80 Stay then thy wrath, and hear my prayer.

Ye liars !

Ye that break your sacrament,

Shrive ye thoroughly and repent.

Your heinous sins sincerely rue,

85 So shall the Lord your hearts renew.

Woe ! usurer, though thy wealth abound,

For every ounce thou mak'st a pound

Shall sink thee to the hell profound.

Ye murd'ers, and ye robbers all,

90 The wrath of God on you shall fall.

Mercy ye ne'er to others shew,

None shall ye find ; but endless woe.

Had it not been for our contrition,

All Christendom had met perdition.

95 Satan had bound her in his chain ;

Mary hath loosed her bonds again.

Glad news I bring thee, sinful mortal,

In heaven Saint Peter keeps the portal,

Apply to him with suppliant mien,

100 He bringeth thee before thy Queen.

Benignant Michael, blessed saint,

Guardian of souls, receive our plaint.

Through thy Almighty Maker's death,

Preserve us from the hell beneath.

II.

**Examination of the Jews accused of poisoning
the Wells.***

*Answer from the Castellan of Chillon to the City of
Strasburg, together with a Copy of the Inquisition
and Confession of several Jews confined in the Castle
of Chillon on suspicion of poison. Anno 1348.*

To the Honorable the Mayor, Senate and Citizens
of the City of Strasburg, the Castellan of Chillon, De-
puty of the Bailiff of Chablais, sendeth greeting with
all due submission and respect.

Understanding that you desire to be made acquaint-
ed with the confession of the Jews, and the proofs
brought forward against them, I certify, by these pre-
sents, to you, and each of you that desires to be in-

* An appearance of justice having been given to all later per-
secutions by these proceedings, they deserve to be recorded as
important historical documents. The original is in Latin, but we
have preferred the German translation in Königshoven's Chronicle,
p. 1029.

formed, that they of Berne have had a copy of the inquisition and confession of the Jews who lately resided in the places specified, and who were accused of putting poison into the wells and several other places: as also the most conclusive evidence of the truth of the charge preferred against them. Many Jews were put to the question, others being excused from it, because they confessed, and were brought to trial and burnt. Several Christians, also, who had poison given them by the Jews for the purpose of destroying the Christians, were put on the wheel and tortured. This burning of the Jews and torturing of the said Christians took place in many parts of the county of Savoy.

Fare you well."

The Confession made on the 15th day of September, in the year of our Lord 1348, in the Castle of Chillon, by the Jews arrested in Neustadt, on the Charge of Poisoning the Wells, Springs and other places; also Food &c., with the Design of destroying and extirpating all Christians.

I. Balavignus, a Jewish physician, inhabitant of Thonon, was arrested at Chillon in consequence of being found in the neighbourhood. He was put for a short time to the rack, and, on being taken down, confessed, after much hesitation, that, about ten weeks before, the Rabbi Jacob of Toledo, who because of a cita-

tion, had resided at Chamberi since Easter, sent him, by a Jewish boy, some poison in the mummy of an egg: it was a powder sewed up in a thin leathern pouch accompanied by a letter, commanding him, on penalty of excommunication, and by his required obedience to the law, to throw this poison into the larger and more frequented wells of the town of Thonon, to poison those who drew water there. He was further enjoined not to communicate the circumstance to any person whatever, under the same penalty. In conformity with this command of the Jewish rabbis and doctors of the law, he, Balavignus, distributed the poison in several places, and acknowledged having one evening placed a certain portion under a stone in a spring on the shore at Thonon. He further confessed that the said boy brought various letters of a similar import, addressed to others of his nation, and particularly specified some directed severally to Mossoiet, Banditon, and Samoletto of Neustadt; to Musseo Abramo and Aquetus of Montreantz, Jews residing at Thurn in Vivey; to Benetonus and his son at St. Moritz; to Vivianus Jacobus, Aquetus and Sonetus, Jews at Aquani. Several letters of a like nature were sent to Abram and Musset, Jews at Moncheoli; and the boy told him that he had taken many others to different and distant places, but he did not recollect to whom they were addressed. Balavignus further confessed that, after having put the poison into the spring at Thonon, he had positively forbidden his wife and children to drink the water, but

had not thought fit to assign a reason. He avowed the truth of this statement, and, in the presence of several credible witnesses, swore by his Law, and the Five Books of Moses to every item of his deposition.

On the day following, Balavignus, voluntarily and without torture, ratified the above confession verbatim before many persons of character, and, of his own accord, acknowledged that, on returning one day from Tour near Vivey, he had thrown into a well below Mustruez, namely that of La Conerayde, a quantity of the poison tied up in a rag, given to him for the purpose by Aquetus of Montreantz, an inhabitant of the said Tour: that he had acquainted Manssiono, and his son Delosaz, residents of Neustadt, with the circumstance of his having done so, and advertised them not to drink of the water. He described the colour of the poison as being red and black.

On the nineteenth day of September, the above-named Balavignus confessed, without torture, that about three weeks after Whitsuntide, a Jew named Mussus told him that he had thrown poison into the well in the custom-house of that place, the property of the Borneller family; and that he no longer drank the water of this well, but that of the lake. He further deposed that Mussus informed him that he had also laid some of the poison under the stones in the custom-house at Chillon. Search was accordingly made in this well, and the poison found: some of it was given to a Jew by way of trial, and he died in con-

sequence. He also stated that the rabbis had ordered him and other Jews to refrain from drinking of the water for nine days after the poison was infused into it; and, immediately on having poisoned the waters, he communicated the circumstance to the other Jews. He, Balavignus, confessed that about two months previously, being at Evian, he had some conversation on the subject with a Jew called Jacob, and, among other things, asked him whether he also had received writings and poison, and was answered in the affirmative; he then questioned him whether he had obeyed the command, and Jacob replied that he had not, but had given the poison to Savetus, a Jew, who had thrown it into the Well de Morer at Evian. Jacob also desired him, Balavignus, to execute the command imposed on him with due caution. He confessed that Aquetus of Montreantz had informed him that he had thrown some of the poison into the well above Tour, the water of which he sometimes drank. He confessed that Samolet had told him that he had laid the poison which he had received in a well, which, however, he refused to name to him. Balavignus, as a physician, further deposed that a person infected by such poison coming in contact with another while in a state of perspiration, infection would be the almost inevitable result; as might also happen from the breath of an infected person. This fact he believed to be correct, and was confirmed in his opinion by the attestation of many experienced physicians. He also declared that none of his

community could exculpate themselves from this accusation, as the plot was communicated to all; and that all were guilty of the above charges. Balavignus was conveyed over the lake from Chillon to Clarens, to point out the well into which he confessed having thrown the powder. On landing, he was conducted to the spot; and, having seen the well, acknowledged that to be the place, saying, "This is the well into which I put the poison." The well was examined in his presence, and the linen cloth in which the poison had been wrapped was found in the waste-pipe by a notary-public named Heinrich Gerhard, in the presence of many persons, and was shewn to the said Jew. He acknowledged this to be the linen which had contained the poison, which he described as being of two colours, red and black, but said that he had thrown it into the open well. The linen cloth was taken away and is preserved.

Balavignus, in conclusion, attests the truth of all and every thing as above related. He believes this poison to contain a portion of the basilisk, because he had heard, and felt assured, that the above poison could not be prepared without it.

II. Banditono, a Jew of Neustadt, was, on the fifteenth day of September, subjected for a short time to the torture. After a long interval, he confessed having cast a quantity of poison, about the size of a large nut, given him by Musseus, a Jew, at Tour near Vivey, into the well of Carutet, in order to poison those who drank of it.

The following day, Banditono, voluntarily and without torture, attested the truth of the aforesaid deposition ; and also confessed that the Rabbi Jacob von Pasche, who came from Toledo and had settled at Chamberi, sent him, at Pilliex, by a Jewish servant, some poison about the size of a large nut, together with a letter, directing him to throw the powder into the wells on pain of excommunication. He had therefore thrown the poison, which was sewn up in a leathern bag, into the well of Cercliti de Roch ; further, also, that he saw many other letters in the hands of the servant addressed to different Jews ; that he had also seen the said servant deliver one, on the outside of the upper gate, to Samuletus, the Jew, at Neustadt. He stated, also, that the Jew Massolet had informed him that he had put poison into the well near the bridge at Vivey.

III. The said Manssiono, Jew of Neustadt, was put upon the rack on the fifteenth day of the same month, but refused to admit the above charge, protesting his entire ignorance of the whole matter ; but the day following, he, voluntarily and without any torture, confessed, in the presence of many persons, that he came from Mancheolo one day in last Whitsunweek, in company with a Jew named Provenzal, and, on reaching the well of Chabloz Crüz between Vyona and Mura, the latter said, “ You must put some of the poison which I will give you into that well, or woe betide you ! ” He therefore took a portion of the powder about the big-

ness of a nut, and did as he was directed. He believed that the Jews in the neighbourhood of Evian had convened a council among themselves relative to this plot, before Whitsuntide. He further said that Balavignus had informed him of his having poisoned the Well de la Conerayde below Mustruez. He also affirmed his conviction of the culpability of the Jews in this affair, stating that they were fully acquainted with all the particulars, and guilty of the alleged crime.

On the third day of the October following, Manssiono was brought before the commissioners, and did not in the least vary from his former deposition, or deny having put the poison into the said wells.

The above-named Jews, prior to their execution, solemnly swore by their Law to the truth of their several depositions, and declared that all Jews whatsoever, from seven years old and upwards, could not be exempted from the charge of guilt, as all of them were acquainted with the plot, and more or less participators in the crime.

[The seven other examinations scarcely differ from the above, except in the names of the accused, and afford but little variety. We will, therefore, only add a characteristic passage at the conclusion of this document. The whole speaks for itself.]

There still remain numerous proofs and accusations against the above-mentioned Jews: also against Jews and Christians in different parts of the county of Savoy, who have already received the punishment due to their

heinous crime; which, however, I have not at hand, and cannot therefore send you. I must add that all the Jews of Neustadt were burnt according to the just sentence of the law. At Augst, I was present when three Christians were flayed on account of being accessory to the plot of poisoning. Very many Christians were arrested for this crime in various places in this country, especially at Evian, Gebenne, Krusilien and Hochstett, who, at last and in their dying moments, were brought to confess and acknowledge that they had received the poison from the Jews. Of these Christians some have been quartered; others flayed and afterwards hanged. Certain commissioners have been appointed by the magistrates to enforce judgment against all the Jews; and I believe that none will escape.

III.

Extracts from "A Booke or Counseill against the Disease
commonly called the Sweate or Sweatyng Sicknesse,"
made by John Caius, Doctour in Phisicke.—
Imprinted at London. A. D. 1552.

"HETHERTO I haue shewed the beginning, name, nature & signes of this disease: now I will declare the causes, which be ii: infection, & impure spirites in bodies corrupt by repletion. Infection, by th' aire receiuing euel qualities, distempring not only y^e hete, but the hole substance thereof, in putrifieng the same, & that generally ii waies. By the time of the yere vnnatural, and by the nature and site of the soile & region . whereunto maye be put the particular accidentes of this same. By the time of the yeare vnnaturall, as if winter be hot & drie, somer hot & moist (a fit time for sweates) the spring colde and drye, the fall hot & moist. To this mai be ioyned the euel disposition by constellation, whiche hath a great power & dominion in al erthly thinges. By the site & nature of the soile & region, many wayes. First and specially, by euel mistes & exhalations drawn out of the grounde by the sunne in the heate of the yeare, as chanced

among the Grekes in the siege of Troy, whereby died firste dogges & mules, after, men in great numbere: & here also in England in this M.D.L.I. yeare, the cause of this pestilent sweate, but of dyuers nature. Whiche miste in the countrie wher it began, was sene flie from toune to toune, with suche a stincke in morninges & euenings, that men could scarcely abide it. Then by dampes out of the earth, as out of Galenes Barathrum, or the poetes auernum, or aornum, the dampes wherof be such, that thei kil y^e birdes flieng ouer them. Of like dampes, I heard in the north country in cole pits, wherby the laboring men be streight killed, except before the houre of coming therof (which thei know by y^e flame of their candle) thei auoid the ground. Thirdly by putrefaction or rot in groundes aftre great flouddes, in carions & in dead men. After great fluddes, as happened in y^e time of Gallien the Emperor at Rome, in Achaia & Libia, wher the seas sodeinly did ouerflow y^e cities nigh to y^e same. And in the xi yeare of Pelagius, when al the flouddes throughe al Italye didde rage, but chieflie Tibris at Rome, whiche in many places was as highe as the walles of the citie.

In carions or dead bodies, as fortunèd here in Englande upon the sea banckes in the tyme of King Alured or Alfrede (as some Chroniclers write) but in the time of Ethelred after Sabellicus, by occasion of drowned Locustes cast up by the Sea, which by a wynde were driuen oute of Fraunce thether. This locust is a flie in bignes of a manne's thumbe, in colour broune, in shape

somewhat like a greshopper, hauing vi fiete, so many wynges, two tiethe, & an hedde like a horse, and therefore called in Italy Caualleto, where ouer y^e citie of Padoa, in the yere M.D.XIII. (as I remembre,) I, with manye more did see a swarme of them, whose passage ouer the citie, did laste two hours, in breadth inestimable to euery man there. Here by example to note infection by deadde menne in Warres . either in rotting aboue the ground, as chaunced in Athenes by them of Ethiopia, or else in beyng buried ouerly as happened at Bulloigne, in the yere M.D.XIV. the yeare aftre King Henrye theight had conquered the same, or by long continuance of an hoste in one place, it is more playne by dayly experience, then it neadeth to be shewed.

Therefore I wil now go to the fourth especial cause of infection, the pent aier, breaking out of the ground in yearthquakes, as chaunced at Venice in the firste yeare of Andrea Dandulo, then Duke, the xxiv day of Januarye, and xx hour after their computacion. By which infection mani died, & many wer borne before their time. The v cause is close & unstirred aire & therefore putrified or currupt, out of old welles, holes in y^e ground made for grain, wherof many I did se in & about Pesaro in Italy, by opening them aftre a great space, as both those countrimen do confesse & also by example is declared, for y^t manye in opening them unwarely be killed. Out of caues and tombes also, as chaunced first in the country of Babilonia, proceding

aftre into Grece, and so to Rome, by occasion that y^e souldiers of themperour Marcus Antoninus, upon hope of money, brake up a golden coffine of Auidius Cassius, spieng a little hole therin, in the temple of Apollo in Seleucia, as Ammianus Marcellinus writeth. To these mai be ioyned the particular causes of infection, which I cal the accidentes of the place, augmenting the same. As nigh to dwelling places, merishe & muddy groundes, puddles or donghilles, sinckes or canales, easing places or carions, deadde ditches or rotten groundes, close aier in houses or ualleis, with such like. Thus muche for the firste cause.

The second cause of this Englyshe Ephemera, I said were thimpure spirites in bodies corrupt by repletion. Repletion I cal here, abundance of humores euel & maliciouse, from long time by little and little gathered by euel diete, remaining in the bodye, coming either by to moche meate, or by euel meate in qualitie, as infected frutes, meates of euel juse or nutriment: or both ioyntly. To such spirites when the aire infective cometh consonant, then be thei distempered, corrupted, sore handled, & oppressed, then nature is forced & the disease engendred. But while I doe declare these impure spirites to be one cause, I must remoue your myndes from spirites to humours, for that the spirites be fedde of the finest partes therof, & aftre bringe you againe to spirites where I toke you. And for so muche as I haue not yet forgotten to whome I write, in this declaration I will leaue apart al learned & subtil reasons, as here

void & vnmiete & only vse suche as be most euident to whom I write, & easiest to be understanden of the same: and at ones therwith shew also why it haunteth us Englishmen more then other nations. Therefore I passe ouer the vngentle sauoure or smell of the sweate, grosenes, colour, and other qualities of the same, the quantitie, the daunger in stopping, the maner in coming furthe redily, or hardly, hot or cold, the notes in the excrementes, the state longer or sorer, with suche others, which mai be tokens of corrupt humours & spirites, & onli wil stand vpon IIII reasons declaring y^e same swet by gret repletion to be in vs not otherwise for al y^e euel aire apt to this disease, more then other nations. For as herafre I wil shew, & Galen confirmeth, our bodies cannot suffre any thing or hurt by corrupt & infectiue causes, except ther be in them a certein mater prepared apt & like to receiue it, els if one were sick, al shuld be sick, if in this countri, in al countries wher the infection came, which thing we se doth not chance. For touching the first reason, we se this sweting sicknes or pestilent Ephemera to be oft in England, but neuer entreth Scotland, (except the borders) albeit thei both be jointly within the compas of on sea. The same beginning here, hath assailed Brabant & the costes nigh to it, but neuer passed Germany, where ones it was in like facion as here, with great mortalitie, in the yere M.D.XXIX. Cause wherof none other there is naturall, then the euell diet of these thre countrys whiche destroy more meates and drynckes withoute al ordre, conueni-

ent time, reason, or necessitie, then either Scotlande, or all other countries vnder the sunne, to the greate annoiance of their owne bodies and wittes, hinderance of them which haue nede, and great dearth and scarcitie in their common welthes. Wherefore if Esculapius the inuentour of Phisike, y^e sauer of men from death, & restorer to life, should returne again into this world, he could not saue these sortes of men, hauing so moche sweatyng stuffe, so many euill humoures laid by in store, from this displeasante, feareful, & pestilent disease: except thei would learne a new lesson, & folowe a new trade. For otherwise, neither the auoidyng of this countrie (the seconde reason) nor fleying into others, (a commune refuge in other diseases) wyll preserue us Englishe men, as in this laste sweate is by experience well proued in Cales, Antwerpe, and other places of Brabant, wher only our contrimen ware sicke and none others, except one or ii. others of thenglishe diete, which is also to be noted. (Fol. 13 to 17.)

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The thirde and laste reason is, y^t they which had thys sweat sore with perille or death, were either men of welthe, ease & welfare, or of the poorer sorte such as wer idle persones, good ale drinkers, and Tavernhaunters. For these, by y^e great welfare of the one sorte, and large drinkyng of thother, heped up in their bodies moche euill matter: by their ease and idlenes, coulde not waste and consume it. A confirmation of this is, that the laborouse and thinne dieted

people, either had it not, because they dyd eate but litle to make the matter : or with no greate grefe and danger, because they laboured out moche therof. Wherefore upon small cause, necessarily must folowe a small effecte. All these reasones go to this ende, that persones of all countries of moderate and good diete, escape thys Englishe Ephemera, and those be onely vexed therewith, whiche be of immoderate and euill diete. But why? for the euill humores and corrupte aier alone? No. for then the pestilence and not the swet should rise. For what then? for y^e impure spirites corrupte in theimselues and by the infectiue aier. Why so? for that of impure and corrupte humores, whether thei be blode or others, can rise none other then impure spirites. For euery thyng is such as that wherof it commeth. Now, that of the beste and fineste of the blode, yea in corrupte bodies (whyche beste is nought) these spirites be ingendred and fedde I before expressed. Therfor who wyl haue them pure and cleane, and himselfe free from sweat, muste kepe a pure and cleane diete, and then he shall be sure. (Fol. 20 to 21.)

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Who that lustethe to lyue in quiete suretie, out of the sodaine danger of this Englishe Ephemera, he aboue all thynges, of litle and good muste eate & spare not: the last parte wherof wyl please well (I doubt not) us Englishe men: the firste I thinke neuer a deale. Yet it must please them that intende to lyue without the

reche of this disease. So doynge they shall easely escape it. For of that is good, can be engendred no euill : of that is litle, can be gathered no great store. Therefore helthful must he nedes be and free from this disease, that vsethe this kinde of liuyng and maner in dietyng. An example hereof may the wise man Socrates be, which by this sorte of diete escaped a sore pestilence in Athenes, neuer fleyng ne kepyng close him selfe from the same. Truly who will lyue accordyng to nature and not to lust, may with this diete be well contented. For nature is pleased with a litle, nor seketh other then that the mind voide of cares and feares may be in quiete merily, and the body voide of grefe, maye be in life swetly, as Lucretius writeth. Here at large to ronne out vntill my breth wer spent, as vpon a common place, against y^e intemperance or excessive diete of Englande, thincommodities & displeasures of the same many waies: and contrarie, in commendation of meane diete and temperance (called of Plato sophrosyne, for that it conserueth wisdom) and the thousande commodities thereof, both for helthe, welthe, witte and longe life, well I might, & lose my laboure: such be our Englishe facions rather then reasones. But for that I purpose neither to wright a longe worke but a shorte counseill, nor to wery the reders with that they luste not to here, I will lette that passe, and moue them that desire further to knowe my mynde therin, to remember that I sayd before, of litle & good eate and spare not, wherby they shall easely

perceiue my meanyng. I therefore go furth with my diete, wherin my counsell is, that the meates be helthfull, and holsomly kylled, swetly saued, and wel prepared in rostyng, sethyng, baking, & so furth. The bread of swet corne, wel leuened, & so baked. The drinke of swete malte and good water kyndly brued, without other drosse now a daies used. No wine in all the tyme of sweatyng, excepte to suche whose sicknese require it for medicin, for fere of inflamyng & openyng, nor except y^e halfe be wel soden water. In other tymes old, pure & smal. Wishing for the better execution hereof & ouersight of good and helthsome victalles, ther wer appointed certein masters of helth in euery citie and toune, as there is in Italie, whiche for the good order in all thynges, maye be in al places an example. The meates I would to be veale, muttone, kidde, olde lambe, chikyn, capone, henne, cocke, pertriche, phesane, felfare, smal birdes, pigeon, yong pecockes, whose fleshe by a certeine natural & secrete propertie neuer putrefie, as hath bene proued. Conies, porke of meane age, neither fatte nor leane, the skynne taken awaye, roste & eaten colde. Tartes of prunes, gelies of veale & capone. Yong befe in this case a little poudered is not to be dispraised, nor new egges & good milke. Butter in a mornyng with sage and rewe fastyng in the sweatyng time is a good preseruatiue, beside that it nourisheth. Crabbes, craueses, picrel, perche ruffe, gogion, lampreis out of grauelly riuers, smeltes, dace, barbell, gornerd, whityng, soles,

flunders, plaice, millers thumbes, minues w^h such others, sodde in water & vinegre w^h rosemary, time, sage, & hole maces, & serued hote. Yea swete salte fishe & linge, for the saltes sake wastynge y^e humores therof, which in many freshe fishes remaine, maye be allowed well watered to them that haue non other & wel lyke it. Nor all fishes, no more then al fleshes be so euill as they be taken for : as is wel declared in physik, & approued by the olde and wise romaines moche in their fisshes, lusty chartu-sianes neuer in fleshes, & helthful poore people more in fishe than fleshe. But we are nowe a daies so vnwisely fine, and womanly delicate, that we may in no wise touch a fische. The olde manly hardnes, stoute courage, and peynfulnes of Englande is vtterly driuen awaye, in the stede wherof, men now a daies receiue womanlines & become nice, not able to with-stande a blaste of wynde, or resiste a poore fische. And children be so brought up, that if they be not all daie by the fire with a toste and butire, and in their furies, they be streight sicke.

Sauces to metes I appoint firste aboue all thynges good appetite, and next Oliues, capers, juse of le-mones, Barberies, Pomegranetes, Orenge and Sorel, veriuse & vineigre, iuse of unripe Grapes, thepes or Goseberies. After mete, quinces, or marmalade, Pom-granates, Orenge sliced eaten with Suger, Succate of the pilles or barks therof, and of pomecitres, olde apples and peres, Brunnes, Reisons Dates and Nuttes.

Figges also, so they be taken before diner, els no frutes of that yere, nor rawe herbes or rotes in sallattes, for that in suche times they be suspected to be partakers also of the enfected aire. (Fol. 21 to 24.)

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I remytte you to the discretion of a learned manne in phisike, who maye judge what is to be done, & how, according to the present estate of youre bodies, nature, custome, & proprety, age, strength, delyghte & qualitie, tyme of the yeare, with other circumstaunces, & thereafter to geue the quantitie, & make diuersitie of hys medicine. Otherwise loke not to receiue by this boke that good which I entēd, but that euel which by your owne folly you vndiscretelye bring. For good counseil may be abused. And for me to write of euery particular estate and case, whiche be so manye as there be menne, were so great almost a busines, as to numbre the sandes in the sea. Therefore seke you out a good Phisicien and knowen to haue skille, and at the leaste be so good to your bodies, as you are to your hosen or shoes, for the wel making or mending wherof, I doubtē not but you wil diligently searche out who is knowen to be the best hosier or shoemaker in the place where you dwelle: and flie the vnlearned as a pestilence in a comune wealth. As simple women, carpenters, pewterers, brasiers, sopeballe-sellers, pulters, hostellers, painters, apotecaries (otherwise then for their drogges.) auaunters themselves to come from Pole, Constantinople, Italie,

Almaine, Spaine, Fraunce, Grece and Turkie, Jude, Egipt or Jury : from y^e seruice of Emperoures, kinges & quienes, promising helpe of al diseases, yea vncurable, with one or twoo drinckes, by waters sixe monethes in continuall distillinge, by Aurum potabile, or quintessence, by drynckes of great and hygh prices, as though thei were made of the sunne, moone, or sterres, by blesynges and Blowinges, Hipocriticall prayenges, and foolysh smokynges of shirtes Smockes and kerchieffes, wyth suche others theire phantasies, and mockeryes, meaninge nothinge els but to abuse your light belieue, and scorne you behind your backes with their medicines (so filthie, that I am ashamed to name them) for your single wit and simple belief, in trusting them most, whiche you know not at al, and understand least: like to them whiche thinke, farre foules haue faire fethers, althoughe thei be neuer so euel faouored & foule : as thoughe there coulde not be so conning an Englishman, as a foolish running stranger, (of others I speake not) or so perfect helth by honest learning, as by deceitfull ignorance. For in the erreure of these vnlearned reasteth the losse of youre honest estimation, diere bloudde, precious spirites, and swiete lyfe, the thyng of most estimation and price in this worlde, next vnto the immortal soule.

For consuming of euel matter within, and for making our bodies lustye, galiard, & helthful, I do not a litle commende exercise, whiche in vs Englishe men I allowe quick, and liuishe : as to runne after

houndes and haukes, to shote, wrastle, play at Tennes and weapons, tosse the winde balle, skirmishe at base (an exercise for a gentlemanne, muche vsed among the Italianes) and vaughting vpon an horse. Bowling, a good exercise for women: castinge of the barre and camping, I accompt rather a laming of legges, then an exercise. Yet I vtterly reprove them not, if the hurt may be auoyded. For these a conueniente tyme is, before meate: due measure, reasonable sweatinge, in al times of the year, sauing in the sweatinge tyme. In the whiche I allow rather quietnesse then exercise, for opening the body, in suche persons specially as be liberally & freely brought up. Others, except sitting artificers, haue their exercises by daily labours in their occupations, to whom nothing niedeth but solace onely, a thing conuenient for euery bodye that lusteth to live in helth. For els as non other thing, so not healthe canne be longe durable.

Thus I speake of solace, that I meane not Idlenesse, wisshing alwayes no man to be idle, but to be occupied in some honest kinde of thing necessary in a common welth. For I accompt them not worthie meate and drink in a commonwelth, y^t be not good for some purpose or seruice therin, but take them rather as burdennes vnprofitable and heauye to the yearth, men borne to fille a nombre only, and wast the frutes which therthe doeth geue, willing soner to fiede the Lacedemonians old & croked asse, whiche labored for the liuing so long as it coulde for age, then suche an idle

Englisse manne. If the honestye and profite of honeste labour and exercise, conseruation of healtie, preseruation from sicknesse, maintenaunce of lyfe, aduancement, safety from shamefull deathes, defence from beggerye, dyspleasures by idlenesse, shamefulle diseases by the same, hatefulle vices, and punishmente of the immortalle soule canne not moue vs to reasonable laboure and exercise, and to be profitable membres of the commune welthe, let at the least shame moue vs, seyng that other country menne, of nought, by their owne witte, diligence, labour and actiuitie, can picke oute of a cast bone, a wrethen strawe, a lyghte fether, or an hard stone, an honeste luyng: Nor ye shall euer heare theym say, alas master, I haue non occupation, I must either begge or steale. For they can finde other meanes betwene these two. And for so muche as in the case that nowe is, miserable persons are to be relieued in a common welth, I would wisse for not fauouring the idle, the discretion of Marc. Cicero the romaine were vsed in healping them: who wolde compassion should be shewed vpon them whome necessitie compelled to do or make a faute: & no compassion vpon them, in whome a faulte made necessitie. A faulte maketh necessitie, in this case of begging, in them, whyche might laboure and serue & wil not for idlenes; and therefore not to be pitied, but rather to be punished. Necessitie maketh a fault in them, whiche wold labor and serue, but cannot for age, impotency, or sickenes, and therefore to be pitied and

relieued. But to auoyde punishmente and to shew the waye to amendmente, I woulde again wishe, y^t for so much as we be so euel disposed of ourselues to our own profites and comodities without help, this old law were renued, which forbiddeth the nedy & impotent parentes, to be releued of those their welthi chyldren, that by theym or their meanes were not broughte vppe, eyther in good learning and Science, or honeste occupation. For so is a man withoute science, as a realme withoute a kyng. (Fol. 27 to 30.)

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Al these thinges duely obserued, and well executed, whiche before I haue for preservation mencioned, if more ouer we can sette aparte al affections, as fretting cares and thoughtes, dolefull or sorowfull imaginations, vaine feares, folysh loues, gnawing hates, and geue oure selues to lyue quietly, frendlie & merily one with an outhr, as men were wont to do in the old world, when this Countrie was called merye Englande, and euery man to medle in his own matters, thinking them sufficient, as thei do in Italie, and auoyde malyce and dissencion, the destruction of commune wealthes, and priuate houses: I doubte not but we shall preserue our selues, both from this sweatinge sycknesse, and other diseases also not here purposed to be spoken of. (Fol. 31.)

FINIS.







