

CONSIDERATIONS  
 ON THE  
*Nature, Causes, Cure,  
 and Prevention*  
 OF  
 PESTILENCES;

BEING  
 A Collection of PAPERS,  
 Published on that Subject  
 BY  
 The FREE-THINKER.

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To the Honourable

*Sir Hans Sloane, Bart.*

President of the Royal College  
of **PHYSICIANS.**

*S I R,*



Notwithstanding, the  
Author of the fol-  
lowing Papers has  
not the Honour  
of being personally  
known to You, and  
has given You no Intimation of his  
Intention; yet, he is perswaded,

A 2

You

iv *DEDICATION.*

You will excuse the Liberty he takes of inscribing them to You: Since he could not address a Work of this Nature to any other Person, with so great Propriety; in Regard either to the Publick, or to his own Reputation.

As You preside over the College of Physicians, with the Approbation of the whole Faculty; I have, indeed, thought it a Duty (though not one of the Profession) to lay before You my Inquiries into a Subject, that has, for some Time, alarmed the People; the most dreadful of *Epidemick* Distempers. And I am the more strongly induced to submit my Attempts, on this Occasion, to Your impartial Examination, when I consider; that, beside Your Experience in Physick, Your Curiosity has led You to search into the Powers of Nature in General; and, thereby,  
to

*DEDICATION.* v

to know, That Pestilences are neither to be accounted for, nor remedied, by the common Notions and Methods of Practitioners.

YOUR known Candour is such, that, If I have been mistaken in any of my Assertions, or Guesses; You will make favourable Allowances for the Failings of a disinterested Writer, engaged in an Undertaking of so much Intricacy. On the other hand, such is Your Integrity, that if I have, with Reason, contradicted some received Notions; You will, with the Authority of Your Approbation, countenance the Truth from a Stranger; more especially in an Argument, that determines not only of the Health, but of the Trade and Liberty of our Countreymen.

To

## vi DEDICATION.

To these Considerations I might add, that You are blest with such ample Circumstances, that You are placed far above the Necessity of either defending, or conniving at, any lucrative Errours; and can afford to wish there were not One Distemper in the Nation.

*I am,*

*With great Esteem and Respect,*

S I R,

*Your most Humble and*

*most Obedient Servant,*

October 9.  
1721.

**THE FREE-THINKER.**



## P R E F A C E.

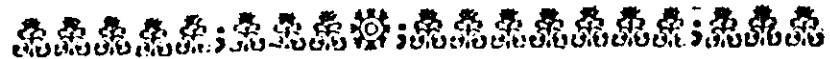
**S**OME of my late Readers, thinking the Half-Sheets, I published concerning Pestilences, might prove of Service to the Publick, have prevailed upon me to reprint them in the Form, wherein they now appear. To them I have added Two other Papers; to make the Collection more compleat: and have preserved the Date to each Paper; that the Reader may see how early I went against the Opinions, commonly received; and be the better able to judge, whether the later Intelligences from France destroy any of the Notions I have advanced.

*As in all the other Free-Thinkers, so in this Particular Set, I have no farther Attachment to any Thing, I have delivered, than so far as it shall appear to be True: Only, in a Matter of so great Consequence, as the Right or the Wrong judging of*

viii P R E F A C E.

of Pestilences may be to the whole Nation, I wish the more Learned may neither lightly reject, nor lightly approve of what Discoveries, I have endeavoured to make; not forgetting, that in most Ages, the greatest and most useful Truths have, at first, been treated, by the Generality, as idle Fancies.

Since the Discontinuance of this Undertaking, I have collected some Facts, and made some farther Observations, that to me seem to illustrate and confirm the Notions, I have ventured to publish on this Subject; which, if there should be Occasion, I shall think my self obliged, hereafter, to communicate to the World.



E R R A T A.

- Page 28. Line 2. *shuting*; read, *shutting*;
- P. 44. l. 2. *Inflamation*; r. *Inflammation*.
- P. 47. l. last but one, *Carcases*; r. *Carcasses*.
- P. 53. l. 20. *stragering*; r. *staggering*.
- P. 68. l. 25. *preceeding*; r. *preceding*.
- P. 111. l. last but one, *advantageous*; r. *advantagious*.
- P. 135. l. 17. *agreably*; r. *agreeably*.
- N. B. Page 87. To the Date, *March 31*; add the Year 1711.

The

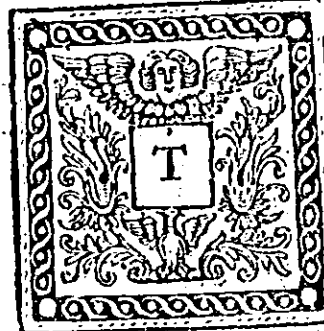


The Free-Thinker.

CONSIDERATIONS on the Nature, Causes, Cure, and Prevention of PESTILENCES.

*Helleborum frustra, cum jam cutis agra  
(tumebit,  
Poscentes videas. Venienti occurrere morbo.*  
PERS.

Friday, January 6. 1720. Numb. CCXCII.



HE King has successfully employed his powerful Mediation to preserve Europe from the Scourge of War: Sweden has, in some Measure, felt the Plague of Famine: And the Stroke of Pestilence has grievously afflicted the South of France. If we except

cept the late unnatural Rebellion, quelled almost in the Attempt; *England* has not been visited, within the Memory of many Men, by any of these Destroyers. But, the contagious Sickness lurking still in *France*; we, as well as the Nations more adjacent, are not yet delivered from Fear. Wherefore, in Conjunction (but not to interfere) with other Writers, I shall lay together the Observations rising to me on this Occasion: Not out of an Intention to make my Countrymen secure, nor to slacken their Vigilancy against the Infection; but, to recommend a constant right Disposition, and Manner of Living (amongst other Precautions) to such of my Readers, as are not inattentive to my Lectures. And, This I the rather undertake; because, if the present, or any future Malignity, should be wasted over, we may be fortified, at all Times, with a proper Habit of Mind and Body, either to resist, or to endure, so great a Calamity; and likewise, that our Apprehensions may not be too gloomy, at a Season, when the Nature of Things (as far as hitherto appears) affords Reasons to believe, this Island may escape the threatening Contagion.

THAT

THAT true Fortitude, arising from a happy Disposition of Mind and Body, is very serviceable in every Season of reigning Distempers, and particularly in Times of Pestilence, has been asserted by the most judicious Physicians; those, I mean, who have written, from their own Experience, on this Subject: And History has preserved a memorable Instance of the Truth of this Assertion, in *Socrates*. A manly, temperate, well regulated Spirit, was the distinguishing Character of this celebrated Philosopher. He was moderate in all his Desires; beheld, without a Wish, the rich Merchandizes exposed to Sale; and admired to see Superfluities become Necessities. At the same Time, he was a strenuous Asserter of the *Athenian* Liberties; and behaved Himself gallantly in the Wars, for the Defence of his Country. This his Disciples, *Xenophon* and *Plato*, Both testify. The Former was saved by him in Battle; and (if we may believe some Historians) born off from the Field on his Master's Shoulders.

When He flourished, *Athenis* was, several Times, afflicted with the Plague of Pestilence; from which he is the only Citizen, noted to have always escaped,



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without the least Infection; notwithstanding he lived, and went Abroad daily, even in the Midst of the dreadful Contagion, described by *Thucydides*: And the Antients ascribe this continual Security, to his preserving a due Temperament through his whole Constitution, by the Moderation of his Passions, with an Exactness of Diet and Exercise.

Another Singularity, very remarkable in the Conduct of *Socrates*, was, that he resided constantly within the City; seldom departing from the Gates, unless called forth to meet the Enemy, as a Soldier. The other Philosophers, indeed, travelled into Foreign Countries; where this Patriot thought, he had no Business: His only Concern being to maintain, with Constancy and Patience, the Station, assigned to him by his *Dæmon* (as he expressed himself) or Angel; in Reality, his own *Genius*: Which, on all Occasions, dictated what it was proper for him to choose, and what to avoid.

To add more Authority to these peculiar *Preservatives* of *Socrates*, who was blessed with a sound Mind, in a sound Body; *In the Vastness of that Pestilence*  
(says

#### ON PESTILENCES. 5

(says Gellius of him) which, in the Peloponnesian War, first wasted the very Common-Wealth of the Athenians; He is said, by the Rules of Temperance and Moderation, to have kept clear of the Taint of Voluptuousness, and to have preserved entire the Healthfulness of his Body; so as not to have been liable to a Calamity, common to All.

To these Habits, He, every Day, subjoined Bodily Exercise: Which the Physicians, likewise, record as a Preservative against infectious Distempers, of what Sort soever. The Kind of daily Exercise, He used, was Danceing; an Exercise adapted, beyond any other, to the Behaviour and Methods of a City-Life. This he not only practised Himself; but, in his Conversations, maintained it to be of excellent Use for preserving Health, and keeping up a good Habit of Body.

It has, indeed, been objected, that this Exercise carries an Air of Levity, unbecoming the Dignity of a Philosopher. But, we are to consider, that it was never so esteemed by the politest Nations of the East; from whom the Greeks learned this Art, amongst others. Danceing was, by Them, suited to all the great

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Characters, whether Sacred, Philosophical, or Military: Neither was it unpractised, even in religious Rites among the Jews, as may be seen in the Two last *Psalms*: And we find *David* danced before the *Ark*; and (notwithstanding the Derision of *Michal*) thought, he acted not below his Sacred and Royal Character.

The Philosophers, in their Dances, figured the Courses of the Planets, by the Turnings and Windings of the Motions: And, to them, the Musick also corresponded; so that the Lessons on their Instruments conveyed Instructions of Philosophy to their Disciples. Hence the *Pindarick*, and other *Lyrick* Numbers were originally derived; the *Strophe* marking a Turn from *East* to *West*; and the *Antistrophe* from *West* to *East*; according to the diurnal Motions of the Planets. Hence it will not seem strange, that *Socrates* should learn to play upon the Harp; saying, He was not ashamed to understand any Art, of which he was ignorant.

Since I have mentioned Musick and Danceing as healthful Recreations; I may here observe, that they have been prescribed as Methods of *Cure*, as well  
as

## ON PESTILENCES. 7

as of *Prevention*. Thus, when an *Evil Spirit* troubled *Saul*, it is written, that *David* took an Harp, and played with his Hand: So *Saul* was refreshed, and was well, and the *Evil Spirit* departed from him. In this Passage the *Septuagint* Version uses the Verb *ἐπιπνέειν* (which implies a Suffocation, or Difficulty of Breathing) to express what our Translators have interpreted *Troubled*. Now, in *Oppressions of the Spirits*, that Difficulty or Streightness of Breathing, which seems to have a Tendency towards *Suffocation*, is an ordinary Symptom, when this Indisposition is at the Height: And, it is well known to diligent Observers, that in this great Disorder and Oppression of the Spirits, the Powers of Musick may give immediate Relief.

Afterwards, when *Saul* grew jealous of *David*; and *David* played with his Hand, as at other Times; the Musick rather increased the Rage of *Saul*; in somuch, that he cast a Javelin at him, intending to kill him. Thus *Pindar* says of *Evil Spirits*, that they are tormented and disquieted, when they hear the Melody of the Muses.

The noted *Practice*, in *Apulia*, for the Cure of Persons stung by the *Tarantula*, is by Dancing to Musick: wherein, more Efficacy is, undoubtedly, to be ascribed to the perpetual Dancing, encouraged by the Sound of the Instrument, than to any pretended Charms, that may unaccountably expel the Poison. Hence, in the burning Season of the Year, (when this venomous Insect rages most) the People are allowed a Month of Freedom from every Care and Labour; in which they are privileged by Publick Authority, that they may perform their Dances in the Cool of the Evening; as necessary Recreations for the Establishment of their Health.

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Friday, January 13. Numb. CCXCIV.

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**P**LUTARCH remarks, that *Homer* says, the Ancients employed Musick as a Remedy; and, that the Pestilence, wherewith *Apollo* afflicted the Confederate Army of the *Greeks* before the Walls of *Troy*, ceased upon the Use  
of

of this Remedy. The same Author, citing *Pratinas*, says, it is by him recorded; That *Thaletas* of *Crete*, being sent for by the *Lacedemonians* (according to the Directions of the *Pythian Oracle*) cured the Pestilence, then raging in *Sparta*, by Musick. The ancient Writers of the best Note, concur to celebrate the Powers of Harmony, in composing the Spirits, and introducing a Cheerfulness of Disposition; whereby Men are enabled to resist, and even to recover from, the most infectious Malignities.

Indeed, what Habits and Methods soever have, by Experience, been found to be of sufficient Force to temper and strengthen the Constitution of the Mind and Body, are recommended by the Physicians, who practised in pestilential Seasons, as proper to fortify Men against Contagions: And, on the other Hand, whatever Usages or Irregularities have been known to enfeeble or disorder either the Rational, or the Animal Faculties; those They advise us to avoid with the utmost Care.

THE first Thing, they advise in a Time of Pestilence, is to change the Air,  
if

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if possible, by Travelling; by Reason of the Danger, they justly presume, the Generality of the People might be in, whilst in the Air, which is continually breathed, they draw in the Seeds of Infection, whereby all Persons of broken Constitutions, as well as they who are not exact in the Management of their Health, must be constantly exposed; while Men of a sound Health, and of Regularity, may be secure.

They likewise judged Travelling to be an Exercise very proper to preserve the Body in its full Vigour; and therefore they recommend it, either by Land, or by Sea. This Observation may be improved by directing Men in the Choice of their Course; which should be to travel into Northern Countries, unless those Parts being already infected, or any other peculiar Reason, should forbid it: Since, by the Testimony of all Writers, Pestilences are said to come from the more Southern Climates, and rarely to remain long in the Northern Regions.

Some Places, in every Country, may be more secured than others from contagious Diseases, by their Situation. Thus, the

## ON PESTILENCES. II

the Situations, lying along great Rivers, have, in this Island, been freest from Contagions. We are informed, that the Village of *Chelsea* escaped the Sickness, which raged in the Reign of *James the First*: On which Account, *Sir Theodore de Mayern* (Physician to that King) is said to have chosen a Seat there (known to this Day) which stands on the Side of the *Thames*. And, it is reported, that the Houses on *London-Bridge* were exempted in the same Manner, during the last great Mortality, in the Time of *Charles the Second*.

In that Sickness, it was observed, the narrow Lanes and Alleys of the City were most infected: Wherefore, after the dreadful Fire, which happened in the ensuing Year, Care was taken, in rebuilding the City, to make it more open in many Places; that it might not be so liable to any future Infections: And these Openings had been yet more spacious, and in greater Number, had not the Iniquity of the Management of so publick a Concern, rendered the prudent Designs, then proposed, in a great Measure ineffectual. But, what was not accomplished within the City, has been carried on with better Success in the Increase of the

the Buildings contiguous to it; where the wide Streets, and large Squares, (the one, in many Places, regularly opening into the other) promote a free Intercourse of Air, and prevent the Stagnation of an Element, that (like Water) requires a continual Motion and Current, to keep it wholesome and pure.

And, indeed, all Contrivances of this Kind are so necessary for the Health, as likewise for the Ease and Diversion of a vast Concourse of People; that it merits the Attention and Encouragement of the Publick to supply great Cities with Air, as plentifully as with Water. Wherefore, They ought to be regarded as no Friends to their Fellow Citizens, who, upon the Account of any private Interests, attempt to lessen the free Spaces of Air, or to crowd them up with Buildings, on any Pretence. Amongst these Conveniences, which are (as it were) dedicated to the Health of the Town, the *PARK* is the Principal: How ungenerous then, how pernicious is the Selfishness of Men, who catch at every Opportunity to make Encroachments on this delightful Plat of Ground! The Wisdom of the *Romans* made such Places sacred; that no Subject might presume to pervert them to private Uses.

TO the *Preservatives*, already mentioned, might be added several gentle Exercises, recommended by the most judicious Authours: One of which is Riding in Wheel-Carriages; and another is easily Walking in the open Air; the one and the other, before the Heat of the Day: Neither, in their Writings, is the moderate Exercise of the Lungs omitted, by Singing, and Reading aloud.

There are likewise certain Things to be studiously avoided, in Times of Epidemical Sickneses. Among these are the Fatigues of over-violent Motion of any Kind: In the next Place, we are to keep free from *Indigestions*, by hastening Meals too closely one upon another; whereby Nature is disturbed in her first Operations; and such a Confusion is often introduced, as is never to be regulated, without Abstinence from a Loss of Appetite, or some other great Disorder in the Health, not to be remedied, without submitting to the Discipline of a skilful Physician.

Farther; the suddain Chilling, and the immoderate Heating of the Body, are alike to be avoided; the one and the other Extreme being equally prejudicial to that

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that even Temperature, which is most Proof against Infection. Designing, next *Friday*, to pursue my Subject; I must nevertheless admonish my Disciples here, that amongst all the Precautions given by the most experienced Writers, they insist upon nothing more earnestly, than great Moderation in the Passion of Love.

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*Friday, January 20. Numb. CCXCVI.*

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**A**S the Observations, in the Two former Papers, are drawn chiefly from ancient Writers; so likewise are most of the Advices, I this Day communicate to my Readers, owing to the Experience of Men, who flourished in Ages and Climates removed from Us; Who, living upon the *Continent*, had more Opportunities of improving their Skill in *Epidemical* Diseases, than We have; whom the Ocean happily secures against the Frequency of foreign Contagions.

To

## ON PESTILENCES. 15

To proceed: When any Country is visited by a Pestilence, every Person should consider timely, whether he labours under an unusual *Heaviness* in his Limbs, or his Body; the which he cannot, at the same Time, account for rationally, by any *Change* in his Method of Living: And, if he feels any such unaccountable *Pressure*; let him not rise in the Morning, till it goes off, and he perceives himself light again, as one discharged of a Burden. By thus strictly attending to every sensible *Alteration* in the State of their Health, have many Persons immediately dismissed the *Infection* through the *Pores*, before it has kindled into a Flame. It was chiefly by this Method (as soon as it was known) that most Men recovered from the memorable *Sickness*, which more than once afflicted this Nation, long ago; and of which the Lord *Verulam* gives the following Account, in his History of *Henry the Seventh*.

“ About this Time, in *Autumne*, towards the End of *September*, there began and rained in the Citie, and other Parts of the Kingdom, a *Disease* then new: which, of the Accidents and Manner thereof, they called the  
“ *Sweat-*

" *Sweating-Sickness*. This Disease had  
 " a swift Course, both in the sicke Bo-  
 " dy and the *Time* and *Period* of the last-  
 " ing thereof: for they that were taken  
 " with it, upon Four and Twenty Hours  
 " escaping, were thought almost assured.  
 " And, as to the Time of the Malice  
 " and Raigne of the Disease, etc it  
 " ceased; It began about the One and  
 " Twentieth of *September*, and cleared  
 " up before the End of *October*; Infor-  
 " much as it was no Hindrance to the  
 " King's Coronation; which was the  
 " last of *October*: nor (which was  
 " more) to the holding of the *Par-*  
 " *liament*, which began but Seven Days  
 " after. It was a *Pestilent Fever*; but  
 " (as it seemeth) not seated in the Veynes  
 " or Humors, for that there followed no  
 " *Carbuncle*, no purple or livide Spots,  
 " or the like; the Masse of the Bodie  
 " being not tainted; only a maligne *Va-*  
 " *pour* flew to the Heart, and seased the  
 " vital *Spirits*; which stirred Nature to  
 " strive to send it forth by an extreme  
 " Sweat. And it appeared, by Experi-  
 " ence, that this Disease was rather a  
 " Surprize of Nature, than obstinate to  
 " Remedies, if it were in Time looked  
 " unto. For, if the *Patient* were kept  
 " in an equal Temper; both for Clothes,  
 " Fire

" Fire, and Drinke, moderately warme,  
 " with temperate *Cordials*, whereby Na-  
 " ture's Worke were neither irritated by  
 " Heat, nor turned back by Cold, he  
 " commonly recovered. But infinite  
 " Persons died suddainly of it; before  
 " the Manner of the Cure and Atten-  
 " dance was knowne. It was conceiv-  
 " ed not to be an *Epidemicke* Disease;  
 " but to proceed from a Malignitie  
 " in the Constitution of the Aire; ga-  
 " thered by Predispositions of Seasons:  
 " And the speedy Cessation declared as  
 " much."

Some Years after, when this Distemper  
 returned; those, who were taken with  
 it, were immediately laid (even without  
 putting off their Cloaths) between warm  
 Blankets, to sweat out the Malignity;  
 by which Treatment, all, on whom it  
 was carefully practised in Time, were  
 preserved.

From these Observations, it is easy to  
 conclude, That, in a Time of Pestilence,  
 we should be cautious of exposing to the  
 Air any Parts of the Body, which are  
 usually kept warm with Cloaths: Indeed,  
 no Alteration should be made in insensi-  
 ble *Transpiration*, neither by any Kinds  
 C of

of *Batheing*, nor by other Means; especially after *Meals*.

All *Evacuation* by Purging Medicines is likewise to be avoided; since it debilitates, and may divert Nature from her Way either of resisting, or discharging the *Malignity*: And therefore, if from any *opening Diet*, accidentally taken, any such *Alteration* appears, it ought rather to be checked, than encouraged: And, consequently, Persons, who happen to abound over-much in *Humours*, should rather choose, in such a Season, to diminish them by *Abstinence*.

A moderate *Meal*, once in the Day, is thought to be most advantagious; never exceeding that Quantity of Food, which may be readily digested: But, *Sleeping*, after Dinner, is not to be indulged. As to the Use of *Wine*, it is recommended, every other Day; and good *Water*, as the safest Liquor for ordinary Drinking, in the intermediate Days: This Transition from Wine to Water, by turns, with temperate Eating, being supposed most effectual to supply sufficient Spirits, and to keep the Body clean from all Superfluities, which minister Fuel to Diseases.

The

The Drinking of Wine, without Excess; may be more requisite for *Us*, than for the Inhabitants of warmer and dryer Climates: and, this Opinion I am the more induced to favour, from the Information of a Person, whose Business it was to be frequently with the *Physicians*, particularly appointed to visit the Citizens, in our last Pestilence. By his Testimony, the *Antidote*, they constantly used in the Morning, before they attended their Patients, was a Draught of *Canary*; which they repeated more than once in the Day; and kept their Spirits up, even to Hilarity.

The Observations, here delivered, are declared to be of general Use against contagious Sickneses of every Kind; but chiefly against those, which are born along by the *Southerly* Winds.

NOW; though a Pestilence may be presumed to proceed, originally, from intense Heat, which (opening the *Pores* of the Earth) raises noxious Vapours above-ground; which *Exhalations*, mixing with the Air, may infect Cloaths, or any spongy Substances: Yet, it being, also, frequently conveyed as a hovering Cloud of Moisture; it has been the

C 2

Practice



20 CONSIDERATIONS

Practice of the Countries most infested, to kindle *Fires* publickly through their Cities, to purify the Air: Not apprehending any Danger, even in the warmest Climates, from this additional Heat; but perswaded, this was the most effectual Way to destroy, or disperse those thick, clammy, pernicious Vapours, that floated in the Air.

They likewise burned sweet-smelling *Woods* and *Spices*; which, though of no peculiar Efficacy to remove the Cause of the Infection; yet were (at least) thought grateful to the Scent, and cheering to the Spirits. Thus did the Divine *Hippocrates* (as he is stiled) destroy the Pestilence; directing the *Athenians* to kindle Fires in all Parts of the City, to dispel the noisome Steams, which tainted the Air: And, on this Occasion, he not only required the Use of ordinary Fuel, but likewise ordered *Garlands* of the sweetest Flowers to be cast into the Fires, and the most odoriferous *Oyntments* to be poured upon them; that the Inhabitants might, by these Means, breathe an Air, refreshing and purified from the Contagion.

And, indeed, the City of *London*, was never absolutely freed from Distempers, that

ON PESTILENCES: 21

that seemed to bear some Affinity to the great Sickness, which reigned in the Year *Sixteen Hundred and Sixty Five*, until the Year after; when so considerable a Part of it was laid in Ashes: From which Time, the Pestilence, observed (in our Histories) to visit us at least once in *Forty* Years, has not returned within a Term upward of *Fifty* Years.

WE were informed, by Letters from *Paris*, when the Infection, which alarms us and others, first raged in *Marseilles*; That there was an Intention of burning the whole City: But, that Design, for what Reasons I know not, was not executed. In all Appearance, the timely Execution of it had been most advisable for the Security of the Nation in general; and might have saved Multitudes, by preventing the Contagion from spreading farther into the Country. Surely, the Losses of the Inhabitants of *Marseilles* might have been repaired by a Publick Contribution: So that, I can suggest but Two Reasons, which might probably divert them from executing what was proposed. The one may, possibly, be their Bigotry, in depending on *St. Roche*, and on superstitious Processions; whereby, instead of being

being relieved, the whole Body of the People came to be infected. The other may be a Belief in some *Empiricks*, who might delude them with vain Hopes of Safety, by magnifying the pretended Efficacy of their *Antidotes*. But, whatever were the true Reasons of this Omission; the Nations lying contiguous to the *South of France*, are in perpetual Danger of the travelling Mischief; which is now too widely diffused, to be cut off in its Progress, by reducing a single Town into Ashes:

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*Multa autem terras habere mortifera, vel ex hoc intelligo; quod tot Venena nascuntur, non manu sparsa, sed sponte: Solo scilicet habente, ut boni, ita mali, semina.*  
SENEC.

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Friday, January 27. Numb. CCXCVIII.

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**P**LINY (in his *Natural History*) writes, that *Hippocrates* foretold a Pestilence coming from the *Illyria*. This has induced me to translate his Account

count of the Seasons, for a whole Year, in his *Pestilential State* [of the Weather;] that, by comparing them with our foregoing, present, and succeeding Seasons (allowing still for the Difference of Climates) my Disciples may perceive, what reasonable Hopes we have of escaping the Sickness, threatening us from Abroad.

The *PESTILENTIAL STATE*.

**T**HE Year, Southerly, showery; no Breath of Air, throughout: And, after Droughts in the Seasons a little higher up in the Year, during the Southern Blasts (about *Arcturus*) much Rain. The Autumn, dark, misty; Rains in Abundance. The Winter, Southerly, moist, mild. Long after the Turn of the Sun, near the Equinox, backward Winter-Weather: And now, at the Equinox, North-Winds, Snows; not a long Time. The Spring again, Southerly, windless: Many Showers throughout, to the Dog-Days. The Summer, serene, hot; great Suffocations; and the Anniversary Winds blew sparing, intermitting: And again, about *Arcturus*, much Rain, with North-Winds. Thus, the whole Year being Southerly, moist, and soft; they passed the Winter healthily, the Consumptive only excepted.

HA-

HAVING given the *Register* of this great Physician; I shall, in the next Place, record Two living Testimonies concerning *Pestilential Vapours*. The one is by a Gentleman, who being at Sea, off of *Tripoli*, saw a livid, thick Cloud, hanging over the infected Town; within the Shadow of which the Distemper raged; while the Sky, at a Distance, was serene and blue, on every Side, and the Air free from the Infection. The other is by a Gentleman, who was told by a great General, who had served long in *Hungary*; that, finding by Experience, when a black Cloud settled over the Camp, the Men were affected in the Head, and soon after with Eruptions in the Body, of which they died; it was their Practice, when they observed such a Cloud hanging over them (how advantagious soever they were posted) to decamp, and remove Three or Four Days March from the Ground; and to keep a continual Firing of Cannon, for some Time, in their New Camp: By which means, they generally preserved the Troops.

An Author, of good Authority on this Subject, relates; that a misty Kind of Cloud passing over *Germany*, by a slow Progress; the Cattle, that came within

within the Skirts of it (where-ever it passed) sickened; while those, without, were not in any wise affected. Most of my Readers may recollect a sickly Constitution of Air, not unlike this; since we suffered under it, no longer ago, than in the Reign of the late Queen: Nevertheless, as it falls in with my Design, I shall give some Account of it here.

The South-West Wind rising, near the *Summer-Solstice*, brought with it an unusual thick *Mist*, and Clouds, which streamed down in Rain. Upon the first Appearance of this *Mist*, one or more were taken violently ill, in almost every Family throughout this great and populous City; who, nevertheless, recovered in a Day or Two, upon the Clearing up of the Weather. At that Time; our governing Politicians had turned the Attention of All, who confided in their Artifices, upon the Fortrefs of *Dunkirk*; into which the *French* King admitted some *English* Troops to assist those Statesmen in making the Nation believe, the Town was our own. This vain Assurance being then uppermost in the Imaginations of the People; They readily gave the Distemper, I have mentioned, the Name of the *Dunkirk-Fever*; notwithstanding it came

came from the South-West; though, at the same Time, it did indeed extend its Influence as far as that Town. And, in this Opinion I am the more confirmed by the Testimonies of several of our judicious Countrymen, who had lived in the *West-Indies*, and more especially in *Jamaica*; and, who then, immediately knowing the Sicknes, pronounced it Common in those Parts. Wherefore it is not unlikely, that the Seeds of that Distemper (ignorantly called the *Dunkirk-Feaver*) were waisted from the *West-Indies* to this Island; where (having lost much of their Malignity through the Distance) meeting with no favourable Disposition in the Air to cherish them, our Northern Climate deadened the Blast, and rescued us from the fatal Influence thereof in its full Force. I have chosen to dwell a little upon this particular Instance; because it has been the only Sicknes of a Pestilential Kind, that has made any Attempts upon us, so as to be generally taken Notice of, since the *Revolution*; and because (being yet fresh in our Memories) it may serve farther to confirm and explain, what has been authentically testified concerning *Pestilential Vapours*, from hot Countries.

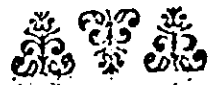
AN-

ANCIENT Historians deliver of *Empedocles*, That he shut out the Pestilence from his Country, by closing an Opening in a Mountain, that gave a Passage to the Southerly Winds, which were noysome and unhealthy. And *Plutarch*, in his Treatise against *Colotes*, (who had dedicated a Book to King *Ptolemy*, full of Aspersions upon the Philosophers, as Persons of little Service to Mankind) has the following Passage, speaking of this *Sicilian* Philosopher: *Now, Empedocles convicted the Principal Men, among his Citizens, of misapplying and dissipating the Publick Treasure: And he, also, delivered his Country from Barrenness and the Pestilence; having walled up the Clefts of the Mountain, through which the Southerly Wind got over into the Plain: Two vast Calamities, for the Resolution and Wisdom of one Man to remove!*

And here, I shall insert another Passage from *Plutarch*, which falls in with my present Purpose. *It may, perhaps (says he) be most adviseable to quit an House where the Air stagnates, or which is dark, or exposed to the Severity of the Winter, or unhealthy. But, if any one has a Liking to the Place, by being accustomed to it; he may, by transposing the Window-Lights,*

Lights, and altering the Stairs, by opening certain Doors, and shutting others, make the Dwelling more light, more airy, and more healthy. In like Manner have some bettered the Situation of Cities, by altering the Position of them. Thus, they say, that my Native City, which lay open to the West Wind, and received the Evening Sun reclining upon Parnassus, was turned to the East by Chæron.

Now, the Name of Plutarch's City was Chæroneæ; and very probably taken from that Chæron, who made this happy Alteration; which was esteemed of more Benefit to the Inhabitants than any they had received from the Founder of it. A Conjecture, I mention, because it is the Way of this grave Writer to insinuate, transitorily, in an *Etymology*, Notions worthy the Reader's Attention: And, in this Passage, I can hardly be perswaded, but that Plutarch means to intimate the delightful and wholesome Position of the Place of his Nativity, in the Name Chæron; which signifies cheerful, or rejoicing, in Health.



THE

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## The Free-Thinker.

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*Atque ea vis omnis morborum, pestilitasque,  
Aut extrinsecus, ut nubes nebulæque, superne  
Per cælum veniunt; aut ipsa sæpe coorta  
De terra surgunt; ubi putrorem humida  
nacta est,  
Intempestivis pluviisque & solibus icta.*  
LUCRET.

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Friday, February 3. Numb. CCC.

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**P**ESTILENTIAL *Exhalations* may arise from Lakes and Morasses, or from damp Vaults and Caves; since the impure Waters in the One, and the foul Vapours in the Other, by stagnating long, corrupt and grow offensive: And, when the putrid Seeds of Matter, cherished in these Nurseries, are called forth by extraordinary Heats; or, when  
(by

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(by the same Cause) any noisome *Steams*, pent up in close *Caverns*, gain an open Passage through the Earth; then the *Air*, receiving them, grows infectious, and labours with their Weight. By this Means, the Air it self, now overcharged, is made to stagnate, for a Time; till the continued Heat, attenuating the rising *Steams*, make them light enough to be put in Motion, and to drive along with the Current of the burning *Southerly Gales*.

The unwholsome Vapours thus set afloat, and blended with the Air; all Sorts of Animals, take in the Infection (wherever it moves) whether they breathe, or eat, or drink. The clammy *Particles* settle in the Feathers of Birds, in the Hair, or Fur, of Beasts; and lodge in the Apparel of Men, and spongy Furniture of Houses. The Humours of the Body, receiving the subtil Poison, are immediately changed, more or less, according to the Power of the Malignity, and the Inability of the Person to resist it: Any depraved Juices give an additional Strength to the Enemy, and join in a Confederacy to destroy the yet untainted Forces of Life; till, at last, a general Corruption wastes the whole *Constitution*.

## ON PESTILENCES. 31

*tion*. And, when once the Mortality grows rife, the very Putrefaction of the Dead helps to render the Air yet more malignant, and universally to spread the prevailing Mischief.

After this Manner does a *Pestilence* often pass from the Place, that gave it Birth, into foreign Countries; since it may be either driven by the *Winds*, or perhaps be communicated by *Commerce*. It sometimes languishes, and seems almost extinguished; and then breaks out afresh; or, shifting its Ground, rises in other Places; according as the more vigorous Seeds of the Disease take their Course, (by any Conveyance) and meet with Subjects proper to encourage their Malignity. The contagious Matter is often checked by *Frosts*; and, if not wholly quelled, thrives again in the *Spring*; and growing stronger in the *Summer*, it comes to full Maturity at the *Vintage*, laying waste whole Towns and Provinces, in the sickly *Autumnal* Season.

As these *Exhalations* come not without Humidity, and cause a Stagnation of Air, where-ever they abound; they are dissipated by strong, dry, Winds: But, there is no certain Method of destroying the

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the Seeds, harbouring in Cloaths, and other Goods apt to receive them, but by the Force of *Fire*.

Fires, in Abundance, not only dry the Air, but likewise draw it forcibly into *CURRENTS*; and, for this Reason, they may be so disposed as at least to secure the Persons, who attend on the Sick. Thus *Acron*, the Physician, famous for his Success against a great Pestilence in *Athens*, kindled Fires near the Sick; for (says *Plutarch*) he benefitted not a few by this Method. And, indeed; I see no Reason why the Pestilent *Atmosphere*, which is supposed to surround the *Infected* and to communicate the Contagion to the *Sound*, should not be altered by Fires. Possibly it may be objected; That the additional Heat of Fires may heighten a Distemper, which is supposed to be spread and kept alive by *Heat*, and to be checked by *Cold*. But then, it must be considered; That it is not Heat alone, which increases the Contagion; nor Cold, alone, which destroys it; even in *Our Air*: Whereof every One may be satisfied, who consults the *Bills of Mortality*, for the Year *Sixteen Hundred Sixty Five*. By them it appears, that the Pestilence, then reigning, proceeded in the Method of

*Epidemical*

ON PESTILENCES. 33

*Epidemical Diseases*, as set down by *Hippocrates*; allowing for the Difference of our Climate.

“ Towards the Close of the Year  
 “ MDCLXIV (says Dr. *HODGES*,  
 “ in his *History* of that Plague) began  
 “ the Prologue of the future Tragedy:  
 “ For, at that Time, only one Family was  
 “ infected in the City of *Westminster*;  
 “ as was sufficiently proved by the sud-  
 “ den Death of Two or Three, accom-  
 “ panied with corresponding Symptoms.  
 “ Hereupon, some of the Inhabitants,  
 “ alarmed, removed into *London*, to a-  
 “ void the Contagion; who carried with  
 “ them the fruitful Seminary of the Pest.  
 “ And, by this Means, the as yet infant  
 “ Disease (nursed in One or Two Fami-  
 “ lies) unwarily scattered the poisonous  
 “ Taint; and, for want of confining the  
 “ Sick in the Beginning, became insu-  
 “ perable soon after, and attacked the  
 “ whole City.”

BUT, a Collection of the *Weekly Bills*, then published, being now become very rare, I here insert an *Extract*, so far as relates to the Pestilence, taken from a Printed Set, lent me by a Gentleman.

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Anno

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Anno 1664. Died of the Plague:  
 From the 20th of December, to the 27th 1  
 The following Six Weeks ——— 0  
 From the 7th of February, to the 14th 1  
 The following Nine Weeks ——— 0

Anno 1665.  
 From the 18th of April, to the 25th — 2  
 The following Week ——— 0  
 From the 2d of May, to the 9th ——— 9  
 From the 9th of May, to the 16th ——— 3  
 From the 16th of May, to the 23d — 14  
 From the 23d of May, to the 30th — 17  
 From the 30th of May, to the 6th }  
 of June ————— } 43  
 From the 6th of June, to the 13th — 112  
 From the 13th of June, to the 20th — 168  
 From the 20th of June, to the 27th — 267  
 From the 27th of June, to the 4th of }  
 July ————— } 470  
 From the 4th of July, to the 11th — 725  
 From the 11th of July, to the 18th — 1089  
 From the 18th of July, to the 25th — 1843  
 From the 25th of July, to the 1st of }  
 August ————— } 2010  
 From the 1st of August, to the 8th — 2817  
 From the 8th of August, to the 15th 3880  
 From the 15th of August, to the 22d 4237  
 From the 22d of August, to the 29th 6102  
 From the 29th of August, to the 5th }  
 of September ————— } 6988  
 From

ON PESTILENCES. 35

From the 5th of September, to the 12th, 6544  
 From the 12th of September, to the }  
 19th ————— } 7165  
 From the 19th of September, to the }  
 26th ————— } 5533  
 From the 26th of September, to the }  
 3d of October ————— } 4929  
 From the 3d of October, to the 10th, 4327  
 From the 10th of October, to the 17th, 2665  
 From the 17th of October, to the 24th, 1421  
 From the 24th of October, to the 31st, 1031  
 From the 31st of October, to the }  
 7th of November ————— } 1414  
 From the 7th of November, to the }  
 14th ————— } 1050  
 From the 14th of November, to the 21st, 652  
 From the 21st of November, to the 28th, 333  
 From the 28th of November, to the }  
 5th of December ————— } 210  
 From the 5th of December, to the 12th, 243  
 From the 12th of December, to the 19th, 281  
 And farther the Collection, now lying  
 before me, does not go.

From this Register, it may be observed;  
 That the Week, wherein most died of this  
 Plague, was in the Middle of September;  
 which, in our Climate, is not usually so  
 hot a Month, as either July or August:  
 And yet, there is a Difference of One  
 Thousand between this Week and the  
 highest

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*highest Week in August*: And, between the first Week in *August*, and *This* in *September*, the Difference is 4348; which first Week also, in *August*, exceeds by several *Hundreds*, the hot Season in *July*, commonly called the *Dog-Days*.

And yet, *Dr. Hodges* makes the Number much greater, than the *Bills of Mortality*, then published. For, he says, in one Place; *That once Eight Thousand died in a Week*: And in another; *That, about the Beginning of September, the Disease was at the Height; in the Course of which Month, much more than Twelve Thousand died in a Week*. And, possibly, these different Accounts may be reconciled; since, in another Page, he says, *That more than Four Thousand expired in one Night*: Which granted, if we begin to reckon the Week differently from the Method used in the *Bills*; there might die *above Twelve Thousand*, in the Space of *Seven Days*: As may be seen, by the Computation of the Second and Third Week, in *September*.

The same Physician, though he has not, after the Example of *Hippocrates*, transmitted to us an exact Register of the Seasons, during the Course of the Pesti-

ON PESTILENCES. 37

Pestilence; has however informed us of the Temperature of *Two* Seasons.

“ If the Temperature of the Weather  
 “ (says He) be considered; I know not  
 “ which was more equal and healthful,  
 “ the Spring or the Summer Season:  
 “ Since, the milder Winds blowing,  
 “ chastened the Air; preventing its pu-  
 “ trefactive Stagnation, and dissipating  
 “ and discussing the more occult pesti-  
 “ lential Seeds, how subtile soever:  
 “ And the gentle, moderate Heat, not  
 “ only hindred the Activity of vehement  
 “ and irregular Fermentations; but did,  
 “ likewise, exactly preserve the Juices in  
 “ the human Body, that require puri-  
 “ fying, in a due State and Degree.”

Whence we may infer, that the *Summer*, wherein the Mortality spread and increased, was not accused of being over-hot, nor yet destitute of refreshing Breezes.

And afterwards, he notes; “ That  
 “ there was a very great Plenty of *horary*  
 “ Fruits, especially of *Cherries* and *Grapes*;  
 “ which being sold at the cheapest Rates,  
 “ many eat of them most intemperately:  
 “ which, it is hardly to be doubted, fur-  
 “ nished

“ nished Fuel, proper to inflame the Pe-  
“ stilence.”

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Friday, February 10. Numb. CCCII.

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**D**R. HODGES was One of the  
Four Physicians, appointed to vi-  
sit the Sick in the last great  
Plague of London; and has written the  
most fully upon the Subject. By what I  
have already cited out of his Book, it  
appears; That the Season, wherein the  
Sickness raged most, was not intempe-  
rately hot; and that the Air was not per-  
ceived to stagnate in the *Summer*. I pro-  
ceed, now, in my Enquiry concerning this  
Sickness, when it came to a Height: And,  
in the same Treatise, I find the following  
Passage.

“ At length; that Nothing might be  
“ left untried in this dreadful Hurry of  
“ Affairs; the *Governours*, who were ap-  
“ pointed to preside over these Concerns  
“ (the Court removing, in the mean time,  
“ to *Oxford*) came to a Resolution, at  
“ all Events, to have Fires made in eve-  
“ ry

“ ry Street, during Three Days succes-  
“ sively. While these Things were in  
“ Agitation, We *Physicians* vehemently  
“ accused the Proceedings, and these Ex-  
“ periments; and, we warmly urged,  
“ since the Air was altogether pure and  
“ untainted, that this Method of purg-  
“ ing it would prove as unserviceable, as  
“ it would be expensive; having a great-  
“ er Regard (not unwittingly) to the  
“ most desired Health of the City, than  
“ to the Authority of the *Governours*, or  
“ even to the Practice (however approved  
“ in other Respects) of our Master *Hip-  
“ pocrates*. But, notwithstanding our  
“ Protestations to the contrary; Fires  
“ were kindled in every Place. But  
“ alas! the Controversy, on this Occa-  
“ sion, was soon decided: For, the Three  
“ Days were scarce yet expired; when  
“ the sad Heavens did not only mourn the  
“ innumerable Funerals; but, they wept  
“ over the fatal Mistake in such profuse  
“ Showers, as extinguished the Fires.  
“ I leave every Man to the Liberty of  
“ his own Opinion, as to these Fires,  
“ whether they might be looked upon  
“ as the *Prelude* of the following *Con-  
“ flagration*, or of the Increase of the  
“ *Funeral Piles*: But, whether the un-  
“ paralleled Mortality of that Night  
“ came

“ came from the suffocating Quality of  
 “ the Coals, or from the rainy *Constitu-*  
 “ *tion* of Air, ever fatal; certain it is,  
 “ that above Four Thousand died, before  
 “ Morning. Hence, let Posterity, in-  
 “ structed by our Misfortune, act more  
 “ advisedly; nor let them, after the  
 “ Manner of *Empiricks*, pretend to ap-  
 “ ply a Method of Cure, not yet tried,  
 “ to any, or to an unlike, Cause.

Now, this *fatal Night* must have been about the Middle of *September*, between the *Twelfth* and *Nineteenth* Days; just when the Pestilence was at the Height. And here, it is observable, That this Author does not once surmise, that these Fires did any Mischief, by *heating the Air*: But, that the Smoak of the *Coal-Fires* might *suffocate* the Sick; unless the Rage of the Distemper were to be imputed to the *excessive Showers*, which fell at that Time. To which Purpose, he has another Passage, as follows.

“ The utmost Diligence ought to be  
 “ used to weaken and destroy the Efficacy of the pestilential Poison: Which  
 “ can only be done by proper *Fumiga-*  
 “ *tions*. We learned from *Hippocrates* (the  
 “ Oracle of the Art of Healing) the  
 “ Kind-

“ Kindling of Fires in the Streets and  
 “ publick Ways; which I suppose to  
 “ have profited sometimes, not (as some  
 “ say) by absorbing the pestiferous *Hu-*  
 “ *midity*; but rather, by sending forth  
 “ plentifully, on all Sides, a *Nitrous*  
 “ *Smoak*; whence comes a sudden Trans-  
 “ formation of the pestilent *Effluvia*.  
 “ Wherefore, I think it were best to make  
 “ the Fires with odoriferous and resinous  
 “ Woods, which cast forth a clear and  
 “ oily Flame; such as *Juniper, Fir, Oak,*  
 “ *Ash, Elm, Hasel, &c*; and not with  
 “ *Coals*, which put forth an impure, fe-  
 “ tid, and suffocating *Sulphur*.”

Whilst I am considering the Remarks and the Opinions of Writers on this Subject; I cannot omit observing, That some have imagined there is a *Distinction* to be made, as to the *Usefulness* of *Fires*; which (say they) may be allowed, as proper to *prevent*; but, of no Use, if not highly improper, for *remedying* a Pestilence. And yet, *Galen* commends *Hippocrates* for *remedying*, or *curing* the Pestilence, come (for so *ἰσχυρῶς* signifies here) into *Greece* from *Aethiopia*; and not for *preventing* its Arrival. And, indeed, it seems difficult to conceive; how these Aromatick Fires should be more serviceable in *pre-*  
*venting,*

venting, than in *destroying* a Pestilence: Neither does it appear, why Fire, near the Sick, may not draw towards it the Steams, by which the Infection is thought to be conveyed; and thus, in a great Measure, if not totally, weaken its Force, and divert its Drift.

Moreover; I do not find, that Experience taught *Hodges* any other Methods of curing his Patients, but by throwing off the *Malignity* either by the *Pores*; or by the *Tumours* and *Eruptions*; or, lastly, by *external Applications* to the *Skin*: As appears, not only from his *Histories* of such as recovered; but likewise from the Method whereby he saved himself: For, he *was twice Ill; but was soon cured by the Help of the Antidotes, he always kept by him*: As may be seen by his own Account; which I transcribe.

“ For the Space of Six Months, as  
 “ soon as I rose, early in the Morning,  
 “ I swallowed the Quantity of a Nutmeg  
 “ of the *Antipestilential Electuary*: Then,  
 “ as soon as I had ordered my private  
 “ Concerns, I came out into my Hall;  
 “ where a very great Crowd of Citizens  
 “ waited for my Appearance. If the  
 “ Number of the Watchmen, of the Sick  
 “ (their

“ (their Ulcers not quite healed) and of  
 “ those, who ministred to them; Lastly,  
 “ if the whole Concourse, that came  
 “ daily, were to be considered; my pri-  
 “ vate Dwelling would hardly have been  
 “ distinguished from an *Hospital*. There,  
 “ it was my Custom to spend Two, and  
 “ often Three Hours, to inform my self  
 “ of the Condition of the Infected; of  
 “ which I desired to have a full Account,  
 “ that I might be more accurate in pre-  
 “ paring Remedies, suitable to the va-  
 “ rious Indications.

“ When the Company was dismissed,  
 “ I breakfasted: For, I did not think it  
 “ adviseable to go abroad fasting, while  
 “ the *Pestilential Constitution* raged. Then,  
 “ till Dinner-Time, I visited the Sick, in  
 “ their Houses: But, upon entering their  
 “ Chambers, I took care to correct the  
 “ Badness of the Air, and to corroborate  
 “ my Spirits, by casting a Preparation of  
 “ Perfumes on a Shovel-full of glowing  
 “ Coals; and I likewise kept *Lozenges* in  
 “ my Mouth, all the while, I examined  
 “ them.

“ *N. B.* They were in the Wrong,  
 “ who carried very hot Medicines in their  
 “ Mouth; namely, *Myrrh*, the Roots of  
 “ *Zer-*

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“ *Zedoary, Angelica, Ginger, &c.* Whence  
“ often happens an Inflammation of the  
“ *Tonsills*, not without great Prejudice to  
“ the Lungs.

“ Moreover ; while I took my Rounds  
“ from House to House, it was no unad-  
“ vised Precaution in me, never to en-  
“ ter the Chambers, and to approach too  
“ near to the Beds, either in a Sweat, or  
“ out of Breath. I, likewise, put on a  
“ Composure of Mind ; admonished by  
“ the Experiences of others, whose Bo-  
“ dies suffered from the Affections of  
“ their Minds.

“ After some Hours Visitation of the  
“ Sick, I betook my self Home ; be-  
“ ginning my Dinner with a Glafs of  
“ *Sack*, which whetted my Stomach, re-  
“ freshed my Spirits, and dissipated the light  
“ Attacks of the Pestilence. The Meat,  
“ set upon my Table, was such as I  
“ thought most proper to restore my  
“ Forces ; easy of Digestion, counting it  
“ Roasted more wholesome than Boiled ;  
“ with Sauce, not so much adapted to  
“ the Palate, as to the Nature of the  
“ Disease : And, indeed, in this mourn-  
“ ful Time of the City, Plenty and Va-  
“ riety were banished. I very seldom ended  
“ my Dinner without Wine. “ As

ON PESTILENCES. 45

“ As soon as I rose from Table, my  
“ Duty to the Publick required I should  
“ give Answers, and Prescriptions, to  
“ such as waited to see me. This done ;  
“ I visited those, who kept their Bed, till  
“ *Eight* or *Nine*, in the Evening. The  
“ Task of the Day being finished, I laid  
“ aside (as much as possible) all medical  
“ Cares ; and, assembling my Friends on  
“ every Side, my Custom was, instead of  
“ *Supping*, to drink *Sack* to a Pitch of  
“ Cheerfulness : Which procured me a  
“ gentle Sleep, and a very kindly Perspi-  
“ ration. Moreover, at any time in the  
“ Day, when I suspected my self to be  
“ wounded by the Pestilence, from such  
“ Symptoms as a Giddness in my Head,  
“ a Loathing at my Stomach, or a sud-  
“ dain Failure of my Forces ; I drank a  
“ moderate Quantity of Wine : Whereby  
“ the pestiferous Taint was easily thrown  
“ off by Sweat, through the open Pores  
“ of the Skin.

And here, I shall insert what he says,  
in another Place, in Praise of *Canary*.

“ Gratitude obliges me to celebrate  
“ the Praises of the Generous Spanish  
“ Wine ; as justly deserving the Prefer-  
“ ence amongst *Antidotes* ; whether it be  
“ taken

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“ taken pure, and uncompounded, or be  
 “ impregnated with *Wormwood, Ange-*  
 “ *lica, &c.* For, hitherto, has Nothing  
 “ been found more friendly to fortify  
 “ the Nerves and the Spirits.

“ And, here, give me Leave to make  
 “ a Judgment of this Wine. Let it,  
 “ then, be a Wine of Maturity; that is, of  
 “ a middle Age; not new, and upon the  
 “ Musle, nor palled through Time. Let it  
 “ be of one Kind; not mixed, nor enfeebled.  
 “ Let it be mild; neat: Not eager; not  
 “ adulterated. Let it be Wine of a very  
 “ strong Body; of an equal and brisk, not  
 “ poor and languid, Taste. Let it be of  
 “ a simple, and most agreeable Smell, like  
 “ that of fresh Walnuts. Let it be of the  
 “ lightest sort; sparkling, as it is poured  
 “ out; flying up into the Nostrils, and (as  
 “ it were) eagerly kissing the Lips of the  
 “ Drinker: swiftly evaporating over the  
 “ Fire; and leaving no Dregs behind it.

“ It is certain, That a very great  
 “ Quantity of this Kind of Wine was  
 “ drank, in that fatal Time, as well by  
 “ Persons in Health, as by the Infected;  
 “ with good Success alike to All, ex-  
 “ cepting such as gave Themselves up  
 “ to Intemperance. Many drank Wine  
 “ medi-

ON PESTILENCES. 47

“ medicated with various *Alexipharmick*  
 “ Herbs.

Upon the whole, it is evident; that  
 this Physician thought, the most effectual  
 Way of discharging the Infection was  
 by the Pores: For this End he chiefly re-  
 commends *Canary*; and his *Antidotes*  
 were intended for the same Purpose; as  
 may be seen by the Kinds of *Electuaries*,  
 he has mentioned; which (in a better  
 Manner prepared) any *Apothecary* can  
 furnish to those, who like them.

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Friday, February 17. Numb. CCCIV.

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**D**R. HODGES has, in one Place,  
 recorded an Observation, relat-  
 ing to the State of the *Weather*,  
 preceding the *Plague of London*; as fol-  
 lows:

“ The *Autumn*, in the foregoing Year,  
 “ being more than ordinarily wet; a  
 “ very great Mortality raged every where,  
 “ among the Cattle: Whose Carcases be-  
 “ ing sold, at the meanest Price, to the  
 “ com-

## 48 CONSIDERATIONS

“ common People, furnished a most abundant Supply of putrid Humours. Hence (as was the Opinion of very Many) came our Calamity: Hence, likewise, some of the more Sagacious took an Opportunity to derive the Original of the late Pestilence: Since, it being often superadded to an ill Habit of Body, This opened a most ample Scope for Suspicion, that the Eating of the Flesh of Animals, dead of the Plague, might infect Men with a Taint of the same Malignity.

Whereupon, it is observable, that the Pestilence, in *Homer*, began amongst the Cattle, and afterwards seized on Men. And, indeed, as this Poet keeps close to Nature in his Descriptions, and as he lived in a Country, where the Pestilence frequently rages; we may suppose his Account to be just; since He, as well as any other curious Observer, had Opportunities of knowing the Rise and Progress of Pestilences, in those Parts.

To proceed with my Author: After this *wet Autumn*, from whence (he says) the Mortality among the Cattle proceeded; “ a very severe Frost began in *December*; “ which continued Three entire Months: “ Bound

## ON PESTILENCES. 49

“ Bound up by the Rigour whereof, the “ deadly Force of the Contagion was en- “ feebled, and laid asleep: So that, in “ that Season, very few died, out of the “ Number of the Sick.

After this, mentioning the Case of a young Man, in the middle of the *Christ- mass-Holidays*, whose *Fever* he pronounced to be *Pestilential*; and who, notwithstanding, recovered; he says, the Reason of inserting this Case was, to shew (if I may here contract his Meaning) that the Frost did remarkably restrain the Progress of the Contagion, and the Violence of the Distemper.

Now, *these Three Frosty Months* ended with *March*, (according to *Dr. Sydenham*) when it thawed suddenly; the preceding *Winter* being extremely Cold, and the Frost continuing without any Intermif- sion, till *Spring*. And, in the *Bills of Mortality*, there is no mention of the *Plague*, till after the middle of *April*: And then, there are but *Two* set down, for the remaining Part of that Month.

To return to *Hodges*: “ During the “ Months of *May* and *June*, the Times were “ doubtful: The Pestilence exercised its “ Power

E

" Power one while more cruelly, another  
 " while more mildly, by Turns; now inva-  
 " ding these, then other Parishes, by Leaps,  
 " as it were in a running Fight. As of-  
 " ten as the Number of Funerals was di-  
 " minished, so often we conceived cer-  
 " tain Hopes, that the Plague would  
 " soon be extinguished: And again, in  
 " Proportion, as the Burials increased;  
 " the Minds of all were dejected, as if  
 " they despaired of the whole *Metropolis*.  
 " It is certain, this Affair balanced so  
 " long, that by these seeming Truces, the  
 " Evil became the greater; since the Peo-  
 " ple were kept between Hope and Fear,  
 " concerning the Event.

This *Fluctuation* appears, by the  
*Weekly Bills*, to begin in *April*; and to  
 continue till the Third Week in *May*:  
 From which Time, the Burials encreased  
 continually unto the Second Week in  
*September*; which Week fell, *Four Hun-*  
*dred and Forty Four*, in the Burials; and  
 was exceeded, in the subsequent Week,  
 by *Six Hundred and Twenty One*.

The same Writer proceeds to say;  
 " Posterity will scarcely believe, how  
 " precipitantly the fearful Citizens sought  
 " the Country, departing in Troops; so  
 " that

" that it seemed, as if *London* had even  
 " gone out of its self: Just as in the  
 " Time of the Fire; when all the Gates  
 " and the Highways were too narrow  
 " for the flying People. Notwithstand-  
 " ing that, by the Departure of the  
 " Flower and Majority of the Citizens,  
 " so much of the Fuel was carried off;  
 " yet the Pestilence remained: Which, at  
 " length, seemed (like the *Parthians*) to  
 " counterfeit a Flight, that it might the  
 " sooner obtain a Victory. For, its for-  
 " mer Clemency broke out into an un-  
 " bridled Rage; and the Contagion did  
 " not creep, as before, by slow and gen-  
 " tle Steps; but, doubling its Forces,  
 " made an open March, with speedy  
 " Paces. So that the City was, in a  
 " little Time, infected in all Parts.

And, afterwards, he continues: " It  
 " is incredible, how the Contagion, dif-  
 " fused among People of a mean Con-  
 " dition, rioted on a suddain: Hence,  
 " it was commonly called the *Poor's*  
 " *Plague*; of whom a *Holocaust*, almost  
 " immense, was sacrificed to the *Grave*.  
 " But, notwithstanding the City was de-  
 " ferted by the wealthy Citizens, and al-  
 " most deprived of other Inhabitants;  
 " yet the common People, otherwise  
 " greatly



“ greatly distressed, were not afflicted  
 “ with a Scarcity of Corn: For, the Publick  
 “ Supplies, and the affluent Benevolence  
 “ of the Rich, did not only relieve the  
 “ Poverty of the Necessitous; but, so  
 “ great was the Munificence, that their  
 “ Wants were plentifully supplied: Where-  
 “ fore, I shall, in another Place, assign a  
 “ more manifest Cause of so remarkable  
 “ a Devastation.

The Causes he assigns were, *Surfeiting on Fruits*, and *Eating the Flesh* of the Cattle, which died of the Sicknes, in the *Autumn* before. Then he goes on: “ In the Months of *August* and *September*, “ the Contagion changed its former slow “ and languid Pace; and having (as it “ were) got an intire Power, it demolish- “ ed the Town: In the Course of which “ Months, Three, Four, Five, and even “ Eight Thousand, died in a Week.

These *Weeks* appear, by the *Bills*, to be, from the *Eighth* of *August*, to the *Tenth* of *October*: Which Time of Mortality He describes in the following Manner.

“ In most Houses lay either dead Bo-  
 “ dies to be carried out, in the Evening;  
 “ or Persons languishing, as it were, o-  
 “ ver

“ ver the Brink of the Grave. In this  
 “ Bed-Chamber might be heard the deep  
 “ Groans of Men expiring; in that, the  
 “ menacing and confused Clamours of  
 “ the Delirious: Not far off, Relations  
 “ and Friends, sincerely mourning the  
 “ Departure of others, and their own  
 “ approaching Fate. Death was the  
 “ Midwife to some Women in Labour:  
 “ And, tender Births passed from the  
 “ Womb into the unabortive Tomb. Whom  
 “ would it not grieve, to see the Candi-  
 “ dates for Life sucking, with Delight  
 “ and Eagerness, at the Breasts of their  
 “ deceased Mothers? Or, the Bridal-Bed  
 “ changed, that very Night, into a Se-  
 “ pulcher; and the first Embraces dissol-  
 “ ved by Death? In the Streets might  
 “ be seen Persons, seized with the Sick-  
 “ ness, staggering like drunken Men;  
 “ Here, lay some *Dozing*, and almost  
 “ half-Dead; in a heavy Drowziness,  
 “ not to be shaken off, but by the shrill  
 “ Sound of the *last Trumpet*: There, o-  
 “ thers were met, fatigued with excessive  
 “ Vomiting; as if they had drunk Poi-  
 “ son: In the middle of the Market,  
 “ Persons, in full Health, fell down on  
 “ a suddain; as if the Contagion was  
 “ there exposed to sale. Not much un-  
 “ like was it in the *Three-Days Consta-*  
 “ *gration* of the City:— “ Some

“ Some *Divines*, while they were in-  
 “ tent on Exercising their Priestly Office,  
 “ were enrolled in the Register of the  
 “ Blessed. Some *Physicians* (in Num-  
 “ ber about Eight or Nine; amongst whom  
 “ he honourably mentions Doctor *Conyers*)  
 “ found no Relief from the Antidotes  
 “ and Assistance, which they gave to o-  
 “ thers. The *Soldiers* made no Defence,  
 “ nor found Shelter; who, notwithstand-  
 “ ing They encamped without the City,  
 “ to avoid the Ambushes of the Disease,  
 “ were nevertheless not sufficiently able  
 “ to repell the Insults of the Contagion.  
 “ Many burdened with Years, very  
 “ many of a more settled Age, and in  
 “ the youthfull Vigour of Life, but of  
 “ the *Female Sex*, more especially, a  
 “ far greater Number, died: and, of *In-*  
 “ *fant*s, very few escaped. It was not  
 “ uncommon to see an Inheritance pass  
 “ Successively to Three Heirs, within  
 “ the Space of Four Days. The *Bearers*  
 “ were not sufficient to inter the Dead:  
 “ With continual Tolling, the Bells  
 “ were, at first, hoarse; and, in a little  
 “ Time, silent: Soon, the Church-yards  
 “ did not contain the dead Bodies; where-  
 “ fore, new and larger Places were set  
 “ apart for that Use: Instead of Graves,  
 “ great Pits were opened; into which  
 “ Thirty

“ Thirty or Forty Coffins might be let  
 “ down at once. It very often happen-  
 “ ed, that the Persons hired, one Even-  
 “ ing, to carry out others to these com-  
 “ mon Graves; were Themselves, the  
 “ following Night, cast into the same.  
 “ Even the Relation of this Calamity  
 “ melts me into Tears. And, in this  
 “ Time, we were in Doubt as to the fi-  
 “ nal Event; for the City was almost ex-  
 “ hausted with continual Funerals; and,  
 “ as yet, we had no Relief to our Evils;  
 “ nor, as yet, was the Plague at its *Cri-*  
 “ *sis*; the unbridled Rage whereof had  
 “ not, hitherto, abated.” Which being  
 “ fresh in his Memory, when he wrote this  
 “ Treatise, he describes in this Place; and  
 “ then pursues his Subject. “ As the City,  
 “ I say, was afterwards burnt, without  
 “ any Distinction; in like Manner, did  
 “ this *Plague* spare no Order, Age, or Sex.

That They, to whom the Care of the  
 Publick is entrusted, may be diligent  
 in the Performance of their Duty, if  
 ever we should be visited with the like  
 Calamity; I shall close my Paper with  
 one Citation more from this Author.  
 “ Nor, ought we to pass over in Silence,  
 “ one very amazing Assistance, beneficial  
 “ to every Order of the Citizens, which  
 “ was

“ was owing to the extraordinary Care  
 “ of the Magistrates; namely, the Keep-  
 “ ing of the Market Open, as usual;  
 “ and supplying it with Provisions of  
 “ every Kind: So that Meats and Drinks  
 “ were hardly cheaper, at any other Time.  
 “ Whereby *Famine*, generally accounted  
 “ the *Mistress* bearing Rule in so many  
 “ Pestilences, and the *Attendant* of some,  
 “ was driven far away: Which Circum-  
 “ stance very much asswaged the Atro-  
 “ city of the Plague.”

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Friday, February 24. Numb. CCCVI.

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I Am very sensible, that the Generali-  
 ty of my Readers begin to be tired  
 with my Quotations from *Hodges*;  
 and that some may be apt to think them,  
 not only tedious, but trifling. Neverthe-  
 less, I flatter my self, that I shall be ac-  
 quitted (considering the Importance of  
 the Subject) by the more Knowing and  
 Attentive; when they shall hereafter see  
 the farther Uses, I make of this Author:  
 To whom I now return.

“ Neither

“ Neither must it be omitted in this  
 “ Narration, That this grievous Malig-  
 “ nity invaded the adjacent Towns, on  
 “ every Side: For, the Citizens, flocking  
 “ into the neighbouring Country Places,  
 “ carried with them the Contagion, in all  
 “ its Force. From that Time, the Pesti-  
 “ lence, which at first crept only from  
 “ Street to Street, did, soon after, wander  
 “ through Counties far remote; so that  
 “ scarce any Place was indemnified. In  
 “ the mean Time, the Places nearest to  
 “ the *Thames* were more cruelly infested;  
 “ perhaps not so much from the Moisture  
 “ of the Air, as from the unguarded In-  
 “ tercourse and Commerce. Moreover,  
 “ some Towns and Villages, remarkable  
 “ for a good Situation, and for the Whole-  
 “ someness of the Air, did partake of the  
 “ publick Calamity. Such was the Rise,  
 “ and such the Progress of the late *Lon-  
 “ don Plague.*”

From this Passage, and other Intimati-  
 ons to the same Purpose, dispersed  
 through this Physician's Account of the  
 Pestilence; we may transiently remark,  
 how studiously he endeavours to confirm  
 his Readers in an Opinion, which many  
 of his Profession have propagated, since  
 the Age of *Hippocrates*. He is far from  
 being

being the only *Doctor*, who would not have us so much as suspect the Air to be infectious when a Pestilence spreads over a whole Country; but believe, that the Malignity cannot be conveyed any other Way, than by Persons and in Goods: And in order to explain and establish this favourite modern Notion, they inculcate to us the *Doctrine of Contagion*; which may very well be allowed; and yet the Air may also be infected, notwithstanding all they advance to the contrary in their Writings. Wherefore, in the Course of these Lectures, I shall endeavour to consider this Position with Impartiality; to discover how far it may appear reasonable from the Nature of Things. In the mean Time, I am obliged to proceed in transcribing, from my Author, the most considerable Facts and Circumstances, which he mentions, as attending the *Year of the Plague*.

“ The more grievous Season of the  
 “ Year, and the Height of the Distemper,  
 “ being now over; the Plague declined,  
 “ and went off, by slow Degrees; in the  
 “ same Manner as it increased and pro-  
 “ ceeded. Hitherto, although the Num-  
 “ ber of the Sick was hardly diminished;  
 “ yet, the vehement Malice of the Disease  
 “ seemed

“ seemed somewhat appeased: Very Few,  
 “ at least, died; and even They, from no  
 “ small Errors. Thus, the Malignity of  
 “ the Plague abating; the former Fear  
 “ was, on a suddain, cast out of the  
 “ Minds of All: Whether this was ow-  
 “ ing to the appeasing of the Deity by  
 “ more solemn Prayers; or, to the ready  
 “ Compliance of the Sickly, who cheer-  
 “ fully took the Remedies, which had  
 “ been, a Thousand Times, experienced;  
 “ or, to the *Nurses*, who became more  
 “ wary and more faithful in the Dis-  
 “ charge of their Office. Certain it is, that  
 “ (beyond all Expectation) Hopes now  
 “ dawned, of recovering the usual Heal-  
 “ thiness; as in the unexpected Period  
 “ of the Conflagration.”

But, here we may observe; That, on the *Bills of Mortality*, the Burials decreased faster, than they increased. In the Week, succeeding that, wherein the Pestilence was at the Height, the Burials were diminished, by *One Thousand, Six Hundred, Thirty Two*: In the two following Weeks they still decreased, above *Six Hundred*: In the next, *One Thousand, Six Hundred, Sixty Two*: In that which followed; *Twelve Hundred, Forty Four*; which Week ended on the 24th of *October*:  
 which

which Space of Time exceeds one Month, but a few Days. Whereas the Progress of the Increase, from about the same Number (which we meet with in the Week from the 11th to the 18th of *July*) to the Highest, took up, at least, Two Months. In the Three following Weeks, from the 24th of *October* to the 14th of *November*; there appears, on the *Bills*, a *Fluctuation* in the *Decrease*; such as was before noticed, in the *Increase*, to begin about the Middle of *April*, and to end in the Third Week of *May*: which *Hodges* has not observed; who thus goes on, in his Account.

“ Nevertheless, the Fuel failing, the  
 “ Pestilence did not (as was the com-  
 “ mon Rumour) thereupon cease; but  
 “ (according to the Nature of the Dis-  
 “ temper) the *End* of it was like to the  
 “ *Beginning*; being *Milder*, and thereby  
 “ consistent with it self, in *Both*. Nor  
 “ was it less wonderful, that as the  
 “ Plague increased, all other Diseases  
 “ degenerated into it; so, the Pestilen-  
 “ tial Tokens declining, it put on the  
 “ Mask of of divers Maladies: Whence,  
 “ *Inflammations, Head-Aches, Quinsseys,*  
 “ *Dysenteries, Small-Pox, Measles, slow*  
 “ *and Heetick Fevers*; in all which it  
 “ still predominated. “ About

“ About the Close of the Year, name-  
 “ ly towards the Middle of *November*,  
 “ the People grew more healthful: and,  
 “ so remarkable was the Change of Af-  
 “ fairs, that the Fear of the Citizens be-  
 “ ing appeased, very Many (though there  
 “ were still many Funerals every Day) who  
 “ had consulted their Safety by Flight,  
 “ coming now to themselves, returned bold-  
 “ ly into the City: And, in *December* they  
 “ flocked in as hastily, as they had before  
 “ withdrawn themselves. The Habitations  
 “ therefore, which ere while were filled  
 “ with the Dead, were now replenished  
 “ with the Living: The Shops, that had  
 “ been shut, for the Space of Six  
 “ Months, were opened with great  
 “ Cheerfulness; and the People (again  
 “ busied in their Occupations and Com-  
 “ merce) mixed, as formerly, one with  
 “ another. Nay (what is almost incredi-  
 “ ble) some *Londoners*, who before had  
 “ not the Courage, from afar to salute  
 “ their Relations and Acquaintance,  
 “ coming from the City, were not afraid  
 “ (so little Apprehension of Danger was  
 “ there on a sudden) to go into the  
 “ very Bed-chambers, wherein many  
 “ had lately expired. So great at last  
 “ was their Eagerness and Confidence,  
 “ that very many did not scruple to lie  
 “ in

“ in the Beds of the Deceased, before  
 “ they were even cold, and purified from  
 “ the Stench of the Diseased; as if there  
 “ was quite an End of the most fatal Con-  
 “ tagion. Marriages were every where  
 “ briskly contracted: and, to repair the  
 “ Loss of this dreadful Mortality, al-  
 “ most all the Women (and even some,  
 “ who were accounted barren) became  
 “ pregnant: In so much that, within a  
 “ few Months, there were hardly any  
 “ Traces remaining of so great a De-  
 “ struction; notwithstanding the Plague  
 “ consumed (if we may credit some Cal-  
 “ culations) about *One Hundred Thousand*.  
 “ And thus ended this Year, notorious  
 “ for its Slaughter.

“ But, in the next *Spring*, some re-  
 “ maining Seeds of the Pestilence sprouted  
 “ up; which were, with no great Diffi-  
 “ culty, rooted out by the Forces of  
 “ Physick: Till, at length, all things re-  
 “ turned to their wonted State; and the  
 “ Citizens enjoyed a perfect Health.



The

# The Free-Thinker.

*Friday, March 3. Numb. CCCVIII.*

*A TABLE, shewing the Increase and  
 Decrease of several Distempers, from  
 Week to Week, in the Plague-Year, 1665.*

PLAGUE	17	13	8	80	29	30	20	18	4	12	0	1	23	13	19	4
Child-bed	3	4	4	9	73	35	34	14	14	18	2	11	14	11	23	1
Chrisoms	12	12	12	75	34	32	14	20	1	10	1	1	10	13	23	4
Consumption	80	22	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	6	15	19	1			
Convulsion	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fever	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flox and Small Pox	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gripping in the Guts	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Impossthume	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infants	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Purples	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Quinly	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spotted Fever	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Surfeit	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teeth	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Worms	37	15	18	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

PLAGUE

PLAGUE	SEPT.				OCT.				
	1 <sup>W.</sup>	2 <sup>W.</sup>	3 <sup>W.</sup>	4 <sup>W.</sup>	1 <sup>W.</sup>	2 <sup>W.</sup>	3 <sup>W.</sup>	4 <sup>W.</sup>	
PLAGUE	6988	6544	7165	5533	4929	4327	2665	1421	1031
Child-bed	38	39	42	42	14	11	21	12	11
Chriſoms	28	20	18	11	7	9	27	6	8
Conſumption	106	129	134	99	103	98	77	59	67
Convulſion	81	71	64	63	60	53	51	25	27
Fever	364	332	309	268	201	199	95	82	75
Flox and Small Pox	2	8	5	4	3	5	5	0	1
Gripping in the Guts	43	45	51	35	28	22	14	13	12
Impoſthume	10	6	11	8	4	7	10	6	1
Infants	26	10	16	9	18	14	14	3	8
Purples	7	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0
Quinſy	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Spotted Fever	157	97	101	65	63	60	35	28	13
Surfeit	69	45	49	36	24	30	29	17	13
Teeth	138	128	121	112	92	73	37	41	14
Worms	25	15	15	12	13	11	10	8	2

PLAGUE	JUN.				JUL.				AUG.				
	1 <sup>W.</sup>	2 <sup>W.</sup>	3 <sup>W.</sup>	4 <sup>W.</sup>	1 <sup>W.</sup>	2 <sup>W.</sup>	3 <sup>W.</sup>	4 <sup>W.</sup>	1 <sup>W.</sup>	2 <sup>W.</sup>	3 <sup>W.</sup>	4 <sup>W.</sup>	
PLAGUE	43	112	168	267	470	725	1089	1843	2010	2817	3880	4237	6102
Child-bed	4	9	7	7	10	10	10	19	16	25	23	28	40
Chriſoms	9	8	10	14	6	10	16	21	24	22	15	9	19
Conſumption	63	98	103	83	76	116	104	136	131	130	174	126	145
Convulſion	31	38	28	31	26	41	38	52	63	58	88	89	93
Fever	43	54	48	48	78	79	104	164	194	314	353	348	383
Flox and Small Pox	20	12	8	23	20	20	11	16	18	11	10	11	5
Gripping in the Guts	27	23	25	34	33	33	35	40	56	70	74	79	65
Impoſthume	3	4	5	3	7	3	9	6	7	16	18	8	13
Infants	12	9	8	11	9	7	12	10	15	13	21	22	17
Purples	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	2	0	5	3
Quinſy	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	3	6	5	2
Spotted Fever	16	11	23	12	33	32	60	114	139	174	190	166	156
Surfeit	9	24	18	14	36	34	47	103	80	85	87	74	99
Teeth	25	25	19	32	60	42	54	67	82	90	113	111	133
Worms	1	1	12	4	9	5	10	9	11	18	18	20	23

PLAGUE	1414	1050	652	333	210	243	281
Child-bed	13	14	5	6	8	10	2
Chrisoms	6	5	3	9	6	4	5
Consumption	61	49	43	29	61	35	62
Convulsion	36	30	13	11	12	17	20
Fever	81	61	59	34	18	27	45
Flox and Small Pox	2	0	1	3	0	2	4
Griping in the Guts	13	7	10	8	4	8	5
Impoſthume	2	1	3	5	0	1	1
Infants	12	4	9	10	6	7	3
Purples	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Quinſy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spotted Fever	3	15	4	5	3	5	6
Surfeit	13	9	2	3	1	3	7
Teeth	47	28	33	16	20	14	20
Worms	5	7	1	3	3	4	1

This

This *Table* begins with the Second Week in *May*; and is drawn out from the Printed *Bills of Mortality*, heretofore mentioned. I have laboured to make it, not only Exact, but Perspicuous; that the Curious may, without Trouble, see at a View the *Increase, Decrease, and Fluctuation* of such Distempers, as seem to hold some Affinity with, or to be influenced by, the Pestilence, then reigning. For the greater Punctuality, I must observe; that, in the Second Week of *August*, the *Bills* say; *Spotted Fever* and *Purples*, 190: In the First Week of *September*; *Small-Pox*, 2: In the Fourth Week of *October*, and in the Third Week of *November*; *Small-Pox*, 1; instead of *Flox* and *Small-Pox*. Lastly; this little *Draught* may appear, to Persons of Reflection, to be somewhat more, than a Labour of meer Curiosity.

LET us now enquire into the *Origin* of this *London Plague*; on which I have dwelled the longer, because it was not only *severe*, but the *last*, that visited this Nation, and happened, likewise, within the Memory of many, now living: Of which, therefore, we may possibly obtain a true Account. In Order to this, let us first see what Light the following



short Passage out of Dr. *Hodges* gives us in our Enquiry. "As to the *Origin* of "our Pestilence; I doubt not to affirm, "upon the Authority of undeniable Testimonies, That it first came into this "Island by *Contagion*; since it was imported from *Holland* by Means of "Merchandizes brought hither, out of that Country, where it had made great "Havock, in the foregoing Year. And, "if any one is desirous to trace it farther, "and discover the first Rise of this Pestilence; I would have him know, (if "any Credit may be given to common "Fame) that the Seeds of the Plague "were brought into *Holland* from the "Turkish Dominions, in Cotton, the surest "Preserver of the *Pestilential Fuel*:"

This indeed was, and is, the *common Fame*. But a curious Person (who was a practising Physician many Years before that calamitous Time) was fully persuaded, that this *Plague* derived its Original from *Poland*: which he also used to affirm concerning Two preceding Pestilences; the one in the Reign of *James*, the other, of *Charles*, the *First*. And, his Observation upon the Progress and Spreading of the Distemper (in 1665) from *East* to *West*, through the Country, seems to

to confirm this Opinion. Wherefore, Dr. *Hodges*, when he says, *The Plague, reigned over whole Counties*, may mean only the *Neighbouring*; where it might be propagated, by the Numbers of infected Persons, who suddenly left the City; or else, such *distant* Counties, as lay *Westward* from *London*. And, agreeable to this, he says; *The Towns upon the Thames were more severely handled*; since the Navigation, up the River, is *Westward*.

If this Distemper was *imported* from *Holland*, how comes it to pass, that the *Ship*, and the Time of its *Arrival*, should remain unknown; both which are pretended to be well known, upon the late Infection, supposed to be brought into *Marseilles*? Again; our Author dates the first Notice of the *Plague* from a *Family at Westminster*; from whence the *Infection was carried into the City*: Which plainly shews, the *Beginnings* of this Sickness to be then unknown: And all, that he has said about it, amounts (in all Appearance) to no more, than Rumour and Conjecture.

Upon comparing these different Observations; I can hardly doubt, but the *Forerunners* of this Distemper were al-

ready come into the Island, when *there was a very great Mortality amongst the Cattle; from a very wet Autumn*, before the beginning Infection mentioned at *Westminster*. The *Summer-Heats* (we may naturally suppose) first raised the *noxious Steams*; which, from that Time, moved onwards, according as the Current of Air drove: And thus the *Autumn* was the most likely Season for the Pestilential Vapours, so wafted, to fall upon Us. And, *this Autumn* is said to have been *very wet*: And, elsewhere, the *Doctor* says; "It is acknowledged by all, That the Force of Putrefaction arises from the Prevalency of Humidity: whence Swarms of *Worms*, and other Insects; evidently foreshewing the speedy Coming of a Pestilence."

And, immediately afterward: "This is notoriously manifest in Marshy Countries; where, because of putrid and hurtful *Exhalations*, pernicious Diseases yearly rage."

And in the next Page: "This we have ratified and confirmed by frequent Observation, in the *Western Tracts of Africa*, lying under the *Equator*: In which Parts, the *Rain* is impregnated with so *putrefactive* and *caustick* a Quality,

"lity, that it immediately stains not only the *Cloaths*, but the *Skin*; and burns in *Spots*, which I may call *pestiferous Brands*. Since then, this is the State of Things; let no Man wonder, that a *Pestilence* should exert its Rage after great *Earthquakes*; whereby a *poisonous Spirit* is usually exploded: And likewise, a *Nitre* (of an impure, and sometimes deadly *Tincture*) does, of its own Accord, as in meeting with an *Acid*, attempt to break forth at any Passage, that is offered; and frequently leaves behind it (whatever Way it escapes) the Traces of its Malignity: Infomuch that, the little *subterraneous Animals*, as *Mice, Moles, Serpents, Rabbits, Foxes, &c.* having Presentiments of the future Evil, forsake their Holes and Caverns, and come up into the open Air; warily withdrawing themselves from Danger; and, consequently, *presaging* an immediate Pestilence: Hence the sudden Dying of *Fish*; hence likewise *Birds*, upon the Approaches of a Pestilence, consult their Safety, by a timely Flight."

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Friday, March 10. Numb. CCCX.

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BESIDE the Observation concerning the *Plague*, in 1665, passing through *England*, by a Progress from *East to West*; I find concurring Remarks in *Hodges* (who, nevertheless, is often inconsistent in his Reasonings) to confirm us in the Opinion, that this Sickness came Originally from *Poland*; since that Country is well known to be very subject to the *Scurvy*.

“ Moreover (says He) the prone and intimate Union of the *Pestilence* with the *Scurvy*, and with other Distempers procreated by a *saline Mineral*, declares its Kindred. And, that They are begotten together, as *Twins*, evidently appears, as well from the mutual Confederacy, as from the like, and as it were *connate*, Propagation of the Contagion; although the *Pestilence* predominated over other Distempers.

And,

And, in another Place :

“ The Friendship between the *Pestilence* and the *Scurvy* is not slight and precarious, but firm and perpetual; whose more intimate *Coalescency* (as of sworn Fellow-Soldiers) shews they are both undoubtedly of *saline* Race. For, whether we recollect the forementioned *Transplantation*; namely, that the pestilent *Impurity* was transported from the *Turkish* Dominions into *Holland*, where these confederate Affections began: Or, whether any one observes, how *Epidemick* the *Scorbutick* Ailment was, long before, amongst us; it will not seem in the least strange to him, that both these Diseases should be *Domestick*, and rage far and wide, as if they entered into a Conspiracy against Mankind. Wherefore, from their prone *Coalition*, it is sufficiently obvious, of what Disposition they are: Such as is the united *Heat* of Flames mixing together; such, if not more vehement, is the Itching in *saline Particles* of an exact *Fellowship* and *Conformity*.

“ Of *Salts* though there be different Kinds, and the Distinction very great; yet, whenever They meet, they are immediately

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“ mediately *soldered* by so close a Con-  
 “ junction, and so mutually blend, that  
 “ no Art is, afterwards, able to separate  
 “ them: For which Reason, *these Distem-*  
 “ *pers* maintained so obstinate an Alli-  
 “ ance, that the *late Plague* was, every  
 “ where, called the *Outlandish Scurvy*;  
 “ whose Beginnings gathered Strength to  
 “ make a very swift Progress, from the  
 “ new Accession of a *Familiar*, and *kin-*  
 “ *dred Fuel*, already prepared.

Then, to make out this *strict Affinity*;  
he thus goes on:

“ As to the *Pestilential Spots*; the *Scarf-*  
 “ *Skin*, in some of the Diseased, was so  
 “ full of Spots, that scarce any Part of  
 “ the Body could be found free from  
 “ *Marks*.

“ If the Appearances and the Condi-  
 “ tions of the *Spots*; in *either Distemper*,  
 “ be considered; I do not well know  
 “ what *Difference* to observe in them:  
 “ For, as to their *Size* and *Figure*, the  
 “ *Pestilential Spots* came out, now broad,  
 “ now smaller; even as in the simple  
 “ *Scurvy*: As to the *Duration*, it was  
 “ usual for *These* and for *Those* sud-  
 “ denly to disappear, and to come out  
 “ again;

## ON PESTILENCES. 75

“ again; and sometimes to abide fixed,  
 “ above Two or Three Days: Moreover,  
 “ the *Scorbutick Spots* were taken for  
 “ deadly *pestilential Tokens*, by some ig-  
 “ norant Women, and certain *Sciolists*. As  
 “ to the *Colour*, the minute pestilential  
 “ *Eruptions*, just as in the *Scurvy*, were  
 “ found to be *Florid*; exactly resembling  
 “ fresh *Flea-Bites*: Sometimes to be *Dark*,  
 “ and inclining to *Livid*; in a certain  
 “ Boy, *Purpleish*; whose Body seemed  
 “ painted, as it were, all over with *Vio-*  
 “ *let Flowers*: And, in some Persons  
 “ *Black*; which are to be very warily  
 “ distinguished from *Blasts*.

Then, mentioning some other concur-  
ring Symptoms in Favour of *this Doc-*  
*trine*; he concludes his Observations  
with this short Paragraph.

“ The *Pestilence*, to repay the like Fa-  
 “ vour of Union and Friendship to the  
 “ *Scurvy*, hath imprinted *her Likeness* on  
 “ very many of the Sick, who before  
 “ were wholly free from the *Scurvy*:  
 “ Nor truly, is it any Wonder, after so  
 “ great a *Conturbation* and Degeneracy  
 “ of the *Blood* and other *Juices*, and af-  
 “ ter the *Exhalation*, or *Suffocation* of the  
 “ most *subtil Particles* and of the *Spirits*;  
 “ that

“ that a *Scorbutick Disposition* should be  
 “ introduced ; hardly to be removed by  
 “ any, though the most generous, *Medi-*  
 “ *cines*.

THUS, to support the *common Fame* of this Pestilence coming from *Turkey* into *Holland* ; and to make his *Hypothesis* of the Pestilential Taint, proceeding from *Salt*, credible ; the Doctor is obliged to strike an indissoluble League (during its Residence amongst the *Dutch*) between the *Plague* and *Scurvy* : Only because, he had, in Fact, observed the Resemblance of this peculiar *Pestilence* to that *other Distemper*, of *Northern* Original. “ In *Holland* (says He) where the  
 “ *Scurvy* reigns above all other Indispo-  
 “ sitions, the *pestilential Poison* obtained  
 “ the Name of *Scorbutick*.

Now, if (differing from this Writer) we allow this Pestilence to be of *Polish* Extraction ; we need make no farther Question about its being so nearly related to the *Scurvy* : And, indeed, all the remarkable Observations, in his Book, will be agreeable to this Opinion of its *Origin*.

*Poland*

*Poland* (for Instance) is sufficiently stored with Pestilential *Magazines*, and with large *Morasses* ; whence these impure *Exhalations* may arise. The *Southern* Parts of the Country are hot enough, in the Summer, to raise the Seeds of the Infection : And the *Northern*, which lie nearest us, and through which we will suppose it passed, may very rationally be presumed to associate the *Scurvy* to it, if it be necessary ; without ever going into *Holland* to gather up this additional Distemper, to its Assistance : Though, it be not unlikely, that this Pestilence did pass through some Parts of the *Netherlands*, before it came into *England*.

Let us, then, suppose, the *lightest* of these *pestiferous Exhalations* to be wafted hither, by the *Easterly* Current of Air ; and to fall upon our Herbage and Pasture, wrapped up in that *Humidity*, which prevailed here, in the forementioned *Autumn*. This will fully account for the Cattle being first infected ; by which Means their Flesh came to be sold cheap in the Markets : “ Whence (as the  
 “ Doctor says) came the Calamity of our  
 “ Land ; as was the Opinion of most  
 “ People : Thence likewise, some of the  
 “ more

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“ more penetrating Persons deduced the  
“ Origin of the late Plague.

Immediately after, he gives his own  
Opinion; “ That such *Food*, though cor-  
“ rupted and rotten, exciting likewise  
“ Symptoms agreeing with the Pesti-  
“ lence, was not sufficient to occasion  
“ the *Publick Slaughter*; since *That* (name-  
“ ly the bad Diet) sprung from a *private*  
“ and *particular Cause*, which can not  
“ possibly produce an *Universal Effect*.

And yet, notwithstanding this Deter-  
mination; a Parcel of Goods, or an in-  
fected Person may (in his Opinion) pro-  
duce a general Mortality, by *Contagion*;  
and prove *Causes* sufficiently *Universal* to  
spread the Pestilence thorough a large  
City, and over the neighbouring Counties.

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*Friday, March 17. Numb. CCCXII.*

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**A**fter this Paper, I shall have very  
little Occasion to make use of  
Dr. *Hodges*, to explain what I  
have farther to deliver concerning *Pesti-*  
“ *lences*

## ON PESTILENCES, 79

*lences* in General, and the last *London*  
*Plague* in Particular. To proceed, then,  
with observing upon his Notions: He  
goes on to reason thus.

“ Hence, it is manifest, That a vicious  
“ Method of *Diet* can no more breed a  
“ *Pestilence*, than a good and commend-  
“ able one can tame and extinguish it:  
“ Wherefore (without being more par-  
“ ticular) I am of Opinion, that a Glut-  
“ tony of Things *hard of Digestion*, and  
“ *full of bad Juices*, and an *extraordi-*  
“ *nary Corruption*, springing from Them;  
“ may perhaps cause *Pestilent Fevers*,  
“ and *Endemial Diseases*; but, by no  
“ means, a *Pestilential Mortality*.

Here, He supposes (as did very many  
others) either that the Cattle were not  
infected with a Pestilential Taint; or else,  
that the Flesh of Cattle, so tainted, could  
not infect Men, who eat of it. And  
therefore he proceeds:

“ Hitherto, a Suspicion has prevailed,  
“ that the *Pest of Cattle* is transferra-  
“ ble to Mankind. Now to discuss the  
“ Difficulty on this Point; that the  
“ *Pest of Cattle*, flowing from a *Com-*  
“ *mon* (namely, a *contaminated Nitro-*  
“ *aerial*)

“ *aerial*) *Source*, not differing from *that*  
 “ *of Men* in *Kind*, but in *Degree*, may  
 “ be transmitted to *Mortals*; is not a  
 “ Question: Since the more impotent  
 “ and milder *Vapour* usually blasts the  
 “ tender *Herbage*; while the more pow-  
 “ erful *Poison* infects and destroys firmer  
 “ Bodies. Moreover, because of the *Pores*  
 “ of the *Skin*, unlike to those in *Brutes*,  
 “ and a Variety in *Constitutions*, as well  
 “ as the Vigour of our *Spirits*; I cannot  
 “ be induced to believe, that the *Pest* of  
 “ *Cattle* from a *private Cause* (scattering  
 “ *Contagion*, though never so much) can  
 “ obtain a Power of infecting *Us*.

“ The following *Histories* are not of the  
 “ least Weight with Me: As, that, with-  
 “ in the Space of a few Years, a great  
 “ Mortality among the *Horses* raging e-  
 “ very where; a certain *Farrier*, in order  
 “ to discover the Cause of so prevailing  
 “ an Evil, undertook the *Dissection* of a  
 “ *Carkass*: Whereupon, *Spots* being found  
 “ scattered, here and there, through the  
 “ *Lungs*, and other *Entrails*; the Master  
 “ and all his Household soon died of the  
 “ same *Pest*; which, in the mean time,  
 “ spread not without the House, nor was  
 “ of a longer Date than the Family.  
 “ Moreover, that (in the *late Plague*)

“ a

“ a certain Citizen, (having finished his  
 “ Business in *London*, to seek a safe Re-  
 “ treat in the Country,) perceived his  
 “ Horse languishing on a sudden, and  
 “ ready to fall under him: Opening,  
 “ therefore, his Jaws, that he might more  
 “ diligently examine his Mouth and  
 “ Tongue, and search out the Cause of  
 “ so unexpected a Sickneſs; the poor  
 “ Man unwarily drew in the most *fœtid*  
 “ Breath of the Horse: Whereupon, im-  
 “ mediately he began to sicken; and died  
 “ within Two Days.

“ But, these and the like Instances  
 “ seem to prove nothing more, than that  
 “ malignant *Exhalations* or *Vapours*, by  
 “ stirring up the *Sediment* of the *Hu-*  
 “ *mours*, may provoke irregular and pu-  
 “ trefactive *Fermentations*; by which the  
 “ *Juices* and the *Liquors* may be cor-  
 “ rupted, according to the Force and  
 “ Prevalency of the *Cacochymy*, the Va-  
 “ riety of the *Poison*, and the different  
 “ Sorts of the *Putrescency*. But, the  
 “ forementioned *Transplantation* of the  
 “ *Pest* is not to be granted, unless there  
 “ be an abundant Predisposition of the  
 “ Humours; since the *Cause* thereof is  
 “ not *General*.

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Here,

Here, one Notion is intimated; that a Pestilence cannot be *transplanted* from other Animals to Men: And yet, in our Author's Opinion, it may be *conveyed* by any Animals; otherwise, what can be the Meaning of this short Paragraph; "That  
 " all Occasion of propagating the *Pest*  
 " might be cut off; the Magistrates did  
 " not unadvisedly command, *Dogs, Cats,*  
 " and likewise *Pigeons,* to be killed:  
 " Least, perchance, these Animals wan-  
 " dering here and there, in all Places,  
 " and Birds flying about on all Sides,  
 " should carry with them the *pestilential*  
 " *Seed,* and become Conveyers of the  
 " *Contagion.*

AS to *Endemial, Epidemical,* and *Pestilential* Diseases; that we may know the Distinction between them, I shall translate some Passages from *Galen*: Who was himself a *Greek* Physician, and a great *Admirer* of *Hippocrates*, rather than an *Imitator* of him, in his Practice: And who certainly knew the *Acceptation*, in which the Physicians received the Terms, delivered by their *Master.*

*We are to remember (says Galen) that some Distempers seize on many in common; which indeed, are called COMMON.*  
 And

And immediately, he subjoins: *Of the Common some are Endemial, others Epidemical: And, of the Later, the most Grievous (which, a little before, he terms the most Malignant) are called Pestilential.*

Thus, in another Place, he explains *Hippocrates*; who (says He) *teaches, that there are many Diseases, which happen at one Time; these, when they prove Destructive, they name the Pestilence: But, when Milder; they give them another Denomination, calling them Epidemical. So that, an Epidemical Distemper is that, which is rise, a certain Time, in any Country; and a Pestilence is Epidemick and Destructive. Likewise there is another Kind of Diseases, Common to many, which are proper to a Region; and they are termed Endemial. And to all these are opposed the Segregate [or peculiar] Distempers, that variously affect the Sick, and are not constituted after one Common Manner.*

AND now, to go on with my manner of endeavouring to account for our *last Plague*: After the Cattle were infected (let us suppose) with the flighter Vapours, which came first, and fell upon



the Pasturage; the Infection, by Degrees, grew stronger, from a fresh Supply of malignant Vapours, imported with the *Easterly* Run of Weather: By which additional Forces, it gathered Strength to invade Mankind; though it was very much checked by the sharp and lasting Frost, as likewise by the Northerly Air, which must divert the Course of the floating Exhalations from Us. So that, during the Frost, such a Quantity of the Infection only, as was before received, could exert its Malignity; and that, not in full Vigour, because of the Cold Season.

But then; as soon as the Weather became open, and the *Easterly* Gales, in *April* and *May*, wafted over new Stores (more or less) of these noxious Vapours; accordingly the Pestilential Efforts appeared, in the same Proportion, stronger or weaker upon Mankind: Which accounts for the *Fluctuation* in the Disease, observed in those Months.

The *Summer* now advancing, the hotter Months were more favourable to, and even improved, the Virulency of these Exhalations; and might consequently render them more propagable by *Contagion*;

*gion*; not diminishing, at least, any of their Force upon Human Bodies.

After this manner the Sickness proceeded, and reigned, and increased in Strength, till *September*: When the heavy Rains (which extinguished the *Coal-Fires* in the Streets) forcing downward at once the Malignity, lodged in the Air, occasioned the terrible Slaughter, that ensued among the People: For, it is not (methinks) so reasonable to imagine, the Smoak of those Fires should produce that fatal Effect; but rather, the precipitated Load of Infectious Vapours. Thus, when these were spent, and the Air in a great Measure, if not wholly, discharged of the *Poison*; the *Plague* (like other *Epidemick Distempers*) ceased Gradually: And its Virulency was so apparently diminished in the Way of *Contagion*; "That (says *Hodges*) People were not  
" in the least afraid to enter the Lodg-  
" ing-Rooms, wherein many had newly  
" died: Nay, so little Distrust had they,  
" that very many would go even into  
" Beds, yet warm with the impure  
" Steams of the Deceased; as if there  
" was wholly an End of the most fatal  
" Contagion.

And, indeed, it appears by the clearest Accounts, transmitted to us, of Pestilences; that their Duration is never more lasting than the pestiferous *Constitution of Air*: Unless, when some lurking Seeds of Infection remain, undestroyed by Fire, or other Means, alike effectual; in which Case, it has continued many Years: Though, not in that violent Degree, as in the Height of the malignant Season.

Thus, Dr. *Sydenham* observes of our *last Pestilence*; That, notwithstanding it vanished at the Approach of the following *Spring*; yet a *Fever* remained (though not so *Epidemical*) through the whole succeeding Year, and even till the Beginning of the Year *Sixteen Hundred, Sixty Seven*; which was just after the Burning of the City.

Hence it is, that our *Former Plagues* have lasted several Years: As, the *Plague*, beginning in 1603, continued *Eight Years*: And That in 1636 *Twelve Years*: In *Eight* of which (taking the Years one with another) there died, of the *Plague*, *Two Thousand*, and never less than *Eight Hundred*: As appears by the *Mortality-Bills* of those Years,

Friday,

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Friday, March 31. Numb. CCCXVI.

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TO carry on my Discourse, which was interrupted last Week: There were, in the Time of our last Pestilence, "Some (says Doctor *Hodges*) who arrived to such a Degree of Confidence, that (blinded with broad Day-light) they dared, instead of Arguments, to produce their Conjectures, against the *Contagiousness* of the *Pest*; whereas, in my Judgment, the *late Plague* owed its Rise and Propagation to a *Foreign Contagion*.

These might be Persons, who had taken up an *Hypothesis*, different from what this Physician espoused. Thus Mr. *GRAUNT*, in his *Observations on the Bills of Mortality*, during the *Plague* of the Year *Sixteen Hundred Thirty Six*, says; "That the *Contagion* of the *Plague* depends more upon the Disposition of the *Air*, than upon the *Effluvia* from the Bodies of Men. Which also, we prove by the sudden *Jumps*, which the

G 4

" *Plague*

“ Plague hath made; leaping in one  
 “ Week from 118 to 927; and back a-  
 “ gain, from 993 to 28; and, from  
 “ thence again, the very next Week, to  
 “ 852. The which Effects must, surely,  
 “ be rather attributed to Change of the  
 “ Air, than of the Constitution of Men’s  
 “ Bodies; otherwise, than as This de-  
 “ pends on That.

And, indeed, I had made the same Remark upon the *Fluctuation*, mentioned by *Hodges*, in the *last Plague*; though I did not then know, that the *Bills* shewed the like Variation in any of our Former Pestilences. And, why may not the moderate Breezes, with which (the Doctor says) that Summer was refreshed, be suspected of wafting over larger Quantities of the *Pestilential Exhalations*; and be, likewise, supposed to be *Easterly Winds*, which (to the Feeling) tempered the Heats of the Season? But, that I might trace the Progress of *this Pestilence*, I have enquired into the Bills of Mortality at *Amsterdam*; in which City the *Sickness* is said to have reigned *Two Years*, before it came hither. And I find, that the Number of Persons, who died *There* of the Plague, in the first of those Years, MDCLXIII, were 9752: And  
 in

in MDCLXIV, (the Year immediately preceding our Affliction) there died 24148: Which is *one Third* of the Number destroyed *Here*, by the Pestilence, in *Sixteen Hundred Sixty Five*.

It is, farther, to be observed; that in the first Week of *September*, MDCLXIV, there died in *Amsterdam*, 1041; and that in *Eighteen Weeks* before, the Burials increased, There, from 331 to the said Number 1041; and, in *Twelve Weeks* after, decreased to 330: And, in *February* following, there died every *Week*, but 118; the ordinary Number of Weekly Burials, in that City, being (so long ago) about *One Hundred*: Which is about *one Third* of the *Deaths*, usually happening (at that Time) in *London*, when the Pestilence did not reign. Hence (as well as from what was before noticed concerning a *Third* of our Number dying of the Plague in *Amsterdam*) it may, not unreasonably, be concluded; that *London* was, in those Times, near *Thrice* as Populous as *Amsterdam*; and that the Efforts of the Pestilence were, in both Cities, not very unequal.

In the same Manner, likewise, as the *Sickness* went from Us, it seems to have  
 “ passed

passed into *France*: Since, we find the Contagion spreading through several Parts of that Kingdom, in the Years (next succeeding) *Sixteen Hundred Sixty Six, Seven, Eight, and Nine.*

LET us, now, enquire a little into the *Pestilences*, which were before this Time, *registred* in our Bills of Mortality; beginning with that which happened in *Sixteen Hundred and Three*, the first Year of the Reign of King *James the First*: Since the *Weekly Bills* have been duely continued from the *Twenty Ninth* of *December*, in that Year.

Now, the *Sickness*, in that Year, grew to its Height in the Second Week of *September*: When there died, of all Diseases, 3129. And from *March* to *December* (the same Year) were buried —

	37294.
Whereof, of the Plague —	30561.
Total of the Funerals in that whole Year, —	38244.

So that, those who died of the *Plague*, were (that Year) in Proportion to those, who died, of other *Distempers*, as 30 to 37, about *Four* to *Five*.

With-

Within the same Space of Time, in *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Five* (the next *Plague-Year*) were buried — 51758  
Whereof, of the Plague — — 35417

In the Year *Sixteen Hundred Thirty Six*, from *April* to *December*, were buried —  
————— 23359  
Whereof, of the Plague — 10400

There were Weekly Bills, indeed, before, for the Years *Fifteen Hundred Ninety Two*, (which was a Year of great Mortality) *Three*, and *Four*: But these Registers have been so interrupted since, that they cannot be relied on. Wherefore, it is probable, the Plague, at that Time, was the first Occasion of keeping such *Accounts*; which, after some Disuse, were resumed in the Year *Sixteen Hundred and Three*, upon the great Sickness then reigning: And, by these Registers, the Years *MDCIII*, and *MDCLXV*, appear to have been the highest *Plague-Years*.

In the Year *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Five*, every Parish was particularized in the *Bills*: “ So that (as Mr. *Graunt* observes) this next Year of Plague caused “ the Augmentation, and Correction of “ the Bills; as the Former *Plague-Years* “ did

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“ did the very Being of Them. In the  
 “ Year *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Six*, an  
 “ Account of the *Diseases* and *Casualties*,  
 “ whereof Any died, together with the  
 “ Distinction of *Males* and *Females*, was  
 “ added to the Bills. In the Year *Sixteen*  
 “ *Hundred Thirty Six*, the Accounts of  
 “ the Burials and Christenings, in the Pa-  
 “ rishes of *Islington*, *Lambeth*, *Stepney*,  
 “ *Newington*, *Hackney*, and *Redriff*, were  
 “ added. *Covent-Garden*, being made a  
 “ Parish, was added: And, in the Year  
 “ *Sixteen Hundred and Sixty*, the Bills  
 “ were regulated after the Manner, they  
 “ now appear. And, although the Gene-  
 “ ral Yearly Bills have been set out, in  
 “ the several Varieties afore-mentioned;  
 “ yet the Original Entries, in the *Hall*  
 “ *Books*, were as exact, in the very First  
 “ Year, as to all Particulars, as now:  
 “ and the specifying of *Casualties* and  
 “ *Diseases*, was probably more.

Having extracted these Observations,  
 to shew the Design, Extent, and Autho-  
 rity of *these Bills*, to which I have had  
 Recourse; I return to compleat my Ac-  
 count of the Pestilence in the Year *Fif-*  
*teen Hundred, Ninety Two*: wherein,  
 from *March* to *December*, died — 25886  
 Whereof, of the Plague, — 11503  
 Graunt

ON PESTILENCES. 93

*Graunt* has added the Year *Fifteen*  
*Hundred Ninety Three*: wherein died  
 ————— 17844  
 Whereof, of the Plague, — 10662  
 Which is not transmitted in the *Account*  
 sent to me from the *Hall*.

*Graunt* proceeds: “ In the Year *Six-*  
 “ *teen Hundred Twenty Five*, there are  
 “ said to have died of the Plague, 35417  
 “ And of all other *Diseases* — 18848  
 “ Whereas in the Years, both before and  
 “ after the same, the ordinary Number of  
 “ Burials was between *Seven* and *Eight*  
 “ *Thousand*: So that, if we add about  
 “ 11000 (the Difference between 7 and  
 “ 18) to the 35000; the Whole will be  
 “ 46000; which bears to the Whole  
 “ 54000, as about 4 to 5; and renders  
 “ the Year *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Five*  
 “ to be as great a Plague-Year, as That  
 “ of *Sixteen Hundred and Three*; and no  
 “ Greater: So that, the Mortality of  
 “ the Two Years was Equal.

From hence this Author suspects, That  
 about *One Fourth* Part, more than are re-  
 turned as such by the Parishes, died of  
 the Plague: which he proves, by noting;  
 “ That, in the Year *Sixteen Hundred Thirty*  
 “ *Six*, there died, of the Plague, 10400;  
 “ a

“ a Fourth Part of which, is 2600. Now,  
 “ there are said, to have died of all other  
 “ Distempers, that Year, 12959; out  
 “ of which, deducting 2600, there re-  
 “ mains 10359: more than which, there  
 “ died not in several Years, next before,  
 “ and after, the said Plague.

The Plague of *Sixteen Hundred* and *Three* lasted Eight Years: In some of which, there died above 4000; in others above 2000; and, in but One, fewer than 600: Whereas, in the Year *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Four*, next preceding, and in *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Six*, next following, the great Plague-Year MDCXXV, there died, in the Former, but *Eleven*; and, in the Later, but 134, of the Plague.

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*Friday, April 7. Numb. CCCXVIII.*

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**I**T will not be foreign to observe farther on the *Weekly Bills*; that other pestilential Diseases, such as *Purple-Fevers, Small-Pox, &c.* have (many Times) forerun the *Plague*, a Year, Two, or Three:

Three: For, in *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Two*, there died but 8000; in *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Three*, 11000; in the next Year, about 12000; till in *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Five*, there died, of all Diseases, above Fifty Four Thousand. And again, we may observe, that the Distempers, which (beside the Plague) made Years *unhealthful*, in this City, were *Spotted Fevers, Small Pox, and Dysentery*; and that the *Autumn* was the most unhealthful Season.

Having, before, set down the Numbers of Persons who died of the Plague at *Amsterdam*, in the Two Years, preceding our last Pestilence; I shall to them subjoin the other Plague-Years, with the Burials, which remain upon *their Bills*. Thus then, there died (in that City) of the Plague, in the Year

MDCXXII,	————	4151.
MDCXXIII,	————	5929.
MDCXXIV,	————	11795.
MDCXXV,	————	6781.
MDCXXVI,	————	4425.
MDCXXVII,	————	3976.
MDCXXVIII,	————	4497.
MDCLV,	————	16727.

The

The Pestilence of which last Year did not at all reach our Island; although the preceding and the following Years (MDCLIV and MDCLVI) are both noted, by Mr. Graunt, to be *Sickly*; that is, Years, wherein the Burials exceed those, both of the precedent and subsequent Years; and wherein not above *Two Hundred* died of the Plague: For, such were called *Plague-Years*. But (as this Author farther observes) we may not call that a *more Sickly* Year, wherein *more die*; because, such Excess of Burials may proceed, only from Increase and Access of People to the City.

But, to neglect no Advantage which may possibly assist the Curious in discovering these dark and fatal Operations of Nature; I shall here transcribe what appears farther by other Accounts. Accordingly, I find, that in the Plague-Year MDCXXV, there died in *Leyden* 9597: And in MDCXXXV (the Year preceding our great Plague-Year) in the same City, from the Fourteenth of *July* to the Twenty Ninth of *December*, died 14381; where the greatest *Week* of Mortality (being the later End of *October*) amounted to *One Thousand, Four Hundred, Fifty Two*. This Plague increased,

increased, in *Fifteen Weeks*, from 96 to the said Number 1452; and, in *Ten Weeks* after, decreased to *One Hundred and Seven*. Answerable to the Time of *Increase* and *Decrease* beforementioned; at *Amsterdam* in MDCLV, there died in *Twenty One Weeks* (from *July* to *November*) 13287; the greatest *Week* ending on the *Twenty-Fifth* of *September*; when there died *Eight Hundred Ninety Six*. In the same Year there died at *Harlem*, in the Months of *August, September, October* and *November*, 5723.

Now, this Pestilence (which came in to *Holland* in MDCLV) seems to have been of *Polish* Extraction: Since it may be traced after this Manner. In MDCLIII, there died, in *Cracow* 17000 *Christians*, and 20,000 *Jews*: In the same Year, there died in *Dantzick*, in the last *Week* of *September*, 640; and, in *Coningsburgh*, 490. In MDCLIV, there died, in *Copenhaguen*, during several Weeks, 700 a *Week*. In MDCLV, died at *Amsterdam* and *Leyden*, as above-mentioned; and at *Deventer*, 70, 80, and 90 in a *Day*; and at *Leeuwarden*, 56 a *Day*.

Whether, This Pestilence passed Southward into *Italy*, as Ours afterwards seemed

seemed to appear in *France*; or whether the Pestilence, which visited *Naples* in the Year MDCLVI (which succeeded the great Plague-Year in *Holland*) came from *Turkey*; must remain a Question: although, That swept the People away, indeed, more like the *Turkish* or *Syrian* Pestilence: since there died, at the later End of *May*, 1300, or 1400, a Day; and, on the Sixth of *June*, there were 80000 Sick: So that the Sound were not able to help the Diseased, or to bury the Dead. And, presently after, 5000 died, in Three Days: And, in *August*, it began to cease; after it had destroyed *Three Hundred Thousand* Persons.

That Pestilence came into several other Towns of *Italy*: For (says *Graunt*) the Town of *Scala* was quite dispeopled; and, at *Minory*, there escaped but *Twenty Two*:

At *Rome* there died, the same Year, about *One Hundred* a Day, for a great while together. In MDCLVII, there died at *Genoa*, in Midsummer-Week, 1200: Afterwards, there died 1600 a Day; insomuch that, in the Beginning of *August*, they burned the Dead, for want of Hands to bury them: Which  
great

great Mortality decreased to *Five* or *Six* a Day, before *September* was out. The Total Sum of all, that died, was about *Seventy Thousand*.

AND now, by the several *Transcripts*, I have made from our *Bills of Mortality*, the Exactness of that Observation (mentioned in a \* Former Paper, from Authors well versed in *English* History) appears; namely, that we have been visited, by the Pestilence, *Four Times* within the last *Century*, at Intervals of Time, less than *Forty Years*, between each Mortality. Wherefore, since this Observation is true in Fact, and consequently in the Reason of Things; we are not to give Credit to those Persons, who affirm it to be a mere Fancy, without Foundation either in Reason or Experience. To what good Purpose the patronizing of this Mistake may serve, I know not: But, certainly it can never deliver the People from Subjection to vain Fears, boldly to assert an Opinion, which (upon Examination) they will find contradicted by the most Authentick Proofs.

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\* N<sup>o</sup>. CCXCVI.

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# 100 CONSIDERATIONS

HAVING, in \* *February*, published an *Extract* of some *Weekly Bills*; I shall here continue them, by inserting AN ACCOMPT (sent me from the *Parish-Clerks Hall*) of the *Number of Persons, who died of the Plague Weekly; from the 19th of December 1665, to the Time when the said Distemper entirely ceased.*

1665	Anno From 19 Dec. to 26 Dit.	—	152
	26 Dit. to 2 Jan.	—	70
	2 Jan. to 9 dit.	—	89
	9 dit. to 16 dit.	—	158
	16 dit. to 23 dit.	—	79
	23 dit. to 30 dit.	—	56
	30 dit. to 6 Feb.	—	52
	6 Feb. to 13 dit.	—	59
	13 dit. to 20 dit.	—	69
	20 dit. to 27 dit.	—	42
	27 dit. to 6 March	—	28
	6 March to 13 dit.	—	29
	13 dit. to 20 dit.	—	33
1666	20 dit. to 27 dit.	—	17
	27 dit. to 3 April	—	26
	3 April to 10 dit.	—	28
	10 dit. to 17 dit.	—	40
	17 dit. to 24 dit.	—	24

\* N<sup>o</sup>. CCC!

# on PESTILENCES. 101

24 dit. to 1 May	—	40
1 May to 8 dit.	—	53
8 dit. to 15 dit.	—	58
15 dit. to 22 dit.	—	31
22 dit. to 29 dit.	—	20
29 dit. to 5 June	—	27
5 June to 12 dit.	—	31
12 dit. to 19 dit.	—	23
19 dit. to 26 dit.	—	33
26 dit. to 3 July	—	35
3 July to 10 dit.	—	33
10 dit. to 17 dit.	—	51
17 dit. to 24 dit.	—	48
24 dit. to 31 dit.	—	38
31 dit. to 7 August	—	42
7 August to 14 dit.	—	48
14 dit. to 21 dit.	—	42
21 dit. to 28 dit.	—	30

Then follows a Bill for Three Weeks, occasioned, as I suppose, by the Fire of *London*, viz.

From 28 Aug. to 18 Septem.)	} 104
wherein died of the Plague	
18 Sept. to 25 dit.	— 31
25 dit. to 2 Octob.	— 23
2 Octob. to 9 dit.	— 15
9 dit. to 16 dit.	— 24
16 dit. to 23 dit.	— 16
23 dit. to 30 dit.	— 14
H 3	30

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30 dit. to 6 Nov. — 10  
 6 Nov. to 13 dit. — 3  
 13 dit. to 20 dit. — 8  
 20 dit. to 27 dit. — 7  
 27 dit. to 4 Dec. — 2  
 4 Dec. to 11 dit. — 4  
 11 dit. to 18 dit. — 3  
 18 dit. to 25 dit. — 4  
 25 dit. to 1 Jan. — 2  
 1 Jan. to 8 dit. — 4  
 8 dit. to 15 dit. — 1  
 15 dit. to 22 dit. — 5  
 22 dit. to 29 dit. — 3  
 29 dit. to 5 Feb. — 1  
 5 dit. to 12 dit. — 1  
 12 dit. to 19 dit. — 1  
 The 6 following Weeks — None

1667 From 2 April to 9 dit. — 1  
 The 13 following Weeks — None  
 From 9 July to 16 dit. — 2  
 The 3 following Weeks — None  
 From 6 August to 13 dit. — 1  
 The next Week — None  
 From 20 August to 27 dit. — 1  
 The next Week — None  
 From 3 Sept to 10 dit. — 1  
 10 dit. to 17 dit. — 1  
 17 dit. to 24 dit. — 1  
 24 dit. to 1 Octob. — 1  
 1 Octob. to 8 dit. — 1

The

ON PESTILENCES. 103

The 4 next Weeks — None  
 From 5 Nov. to 12 dit. — 1  
 The 2 next Weeks — None  
 From 26 Nov. to 3 Dec. — 1  
 The next Week — None  
 From 10 Dec. to 17 dit. — 1  
 The 2 next Weeks — None  
 From 31 Dec. to 7 Jan. — 1  
 7 Jan. to 14 dit. — 1  
 14 dit. to 21 dit. — 1  
 21 dit. to 28 dit. — 1  
 28 dit. to 4 Feb. — 1  
 4 Feb. to 11 dit. — 1  
 11 dit. to 18 dit. — 2  
 The 5 following Weeks — None  
 1668 From 24 March to 31 — 1  
 The 2 following Weeks — None  
 From 14 April to 21 dit. — 1  
 21 dit. to 28 dit. — 1  
 The 14 following Weeks — None  
 From 4 August to 11 dit. — 1  
 11 dit. to 18 dit. — 1  
 The 5 following Weeks — None  
 From 22 Sept. to 29 dit. — 1  
 The 9 following Weeks — None  
 From 1 Dec. to 8 dit. — 1  
 And from that to the 28 } None  
 1669 Sept. 1669 — }  
 From 28 Sept. to 5 Octob. — 1  
 The next Week — None  
 From 12 Octob. to 19 dit. — 1  
 H 4 19

19 dit. to 26 dit.	—	1
In the Year	—	1670 None
1 in May, 2 in Aug.	}	1671 — 5
1 in Octob. and 1 Nov.		
In the Year	—	1672 — 5
		1673 — 5
		1674 — 3

*Abstract of the Whole.*

From 20 Dec. 1664	}	1665	68596
to 19 Dec.			
19 dit. to 18 dit.	—	1666	1998
18 dit. to 17 dit.	—	1667	— 35
17 dit. to 22 dit.	—	1668	— 14
22 dit. to 21 dit.	—	1669	— 3
21 dit. to 22 dit.	—	1670	None
22 dit. to 19 dit.	—	1671	— 5
19 dit. to 17 dit.	—	1672	— 5
17 dit. to 16 dit.	—	1673	— 5
16 dit. to 15 dit.	—	1674	— 3
15 dit. to 14 dit.	—	1675	— 1
14 dit. to 19 dit.	—	1676	— 2
19 dit. to 18 dit.	—	1677	— 2
18 dit. to 17 dit.	—	1678	— 5
		1679	— 2

There hath none died of the Plague since the Year 1679.



The

# The Free-Thinker.

Friday, April 14. Numb. CCCXX.

FROM the foregoing Register, it appears, That the Year *Sixteen Hundred Sixty Six* was, according to *Graunt's* Notion (who calls those *Plague-Years*, wherein there are above 200 Burials of the Plague) remarkably a *Plague-Year*; since the Number, in that Year, amounted to 1998: And, in the next Year (which was subsequent to the *Fire*) it fell to *Thirty-Five*.

Doctor *Sydenham* (who practised, in *London*, some Years before and several Years after MDCLXV) has marked the *Constitutions* of these Years: And, in Him, we see That there was a great Alteration in the State of *Epidemical Distempers*, in the Beginning of the Year *Sixteen Hundred Sixty Seven*; infomuch that, it fell not in his Way (through the Course of his Practice) to visit any, sick of

of the Pestilence. The Reason of this may be; That, though the *Infection* might lurk in some of the poorest Houses, which, escaping the *Flames*, were not altogether purified; yet these obscure Deaths were probably so little noticed, as not to be met with in any Writings, but in this *Weekly Register* of Mortality.

It is farther observable; That these Years, wherein *some Few* died of the Plague, were that Space of Time, employed in *Rebuilding the City*: And, that, from the Accomplishment of this great Work (in MDCLXXIX) unto this Year (being the full Term of *Forty Years*) not *One Death* has been charged, in the *Bills*, upon the Plague. And, this is the more remarkable, if we consider; That, before the Renewal of the City, there are but *Three Years* (viz. *Sixteen Hundred Twenty Nine, Thirty Three, and Thirty Five*) which are *wholly free* from that *Article* of the Plague, in all the Succession of Years, between *Sixteen Hundred Three*, and the Year *Sixteen Hundred Sixty Five*.

NOW, freely to deliver my Thoughts (which I submit to every Candid Reader,) on *this Subject*, which I have examined with my utmost Diligence and Impartiality;

tiality; The principal Causes, to which (for so many Years) our entire Freedom from Pestilential Infections are to be ascribed, seem, to me, to be, The *Ayri-ness* of the Town, through the Openness of our Streets and Squares; The Abundance of Water, distributed into all Houses, which greatly promotes Cleanliness, and carries off all Filth; A Change in the Materials of our Buildings; And an Alteration in the Air about us.

The City it self, and the vast Number of contiguous Edifices, being now built with *Brick*, (which were generally made of *Wood* and *Plastering*, before the *Fire*) there have been, proportionably, great and continual Occasions for kindling constant Fires, to bake a sufficient Supply of *Bricks*. And, these Artificial *Stones* are the least apt to harbour any damp or clammy Particles, which may float in our moist Air, and adhere obstinately to Materials, more disposed to retain them. Then, beside the peculiar *Dryness* of *Brick-Walls*, our Rooms are Wainscoated, and painted over in Oil; and our *Floors* laid with *Fir-Planks*, the most *Resinous* of all Woods.

Thus

Thus, we have at once a great Change in our Dwellings, for the better; and likewise, a Considerable Alteration in the Air, by the immense Quantities of *Fuel*, consumed to answer the Demands of Builders; who have found their Business grow prodigiously, for these *last Thirty Years*. The dry Odours, plentifully diffused from the *Brick-Kilns*, on all Sides of the Town, however offensive they may be to the Smelling; yet, are they not prejudicial to the Health of the People. Nor, were they, probably, without an immediate Effect upon the lurking Seeds of the Contagion: Since, the Number buried of the last Plague decreased, from 1998 (which was the Sum of the Year MDCLXVI, in the End whereof the *Conflagration* happened) to 35; which was the Total of the Year MDCLXVII; when these Fires were first kindled round the almost waste *Area* of the City. Thus, from 35 there was a farther Decrease to 14, in MDCLXVIII; and in *Sixty Nine*, to 3: And, the Year *Seventy* was wholly free: Which were the principal Years, wherein the City was run up anew. And afterwards, till the utter Extinction of the smothering Infection in *Seventy Nine*, the highest Number of Persons dying (in One Year) of the Plague, never exceeded *Five*.

AND

AND here, the foregoing Paragraph makes me (as it may my Readers) recollect; That the *Eastern Nations* took a particular Care to keep Fires perpetually burning, in open Places, near their Cities; whither all noisome Things were carried, to be consumed. Such a Place was the Valley, near *Jerusalem*, called *Gehennah*; where the Fire was never quenched.

Now, by what has been collected out of Authors living near our Times, and whose Observations might enable us to come at any Accounts tolerably clear, it appears; That *Holland* has been infected, before *Britain*, in the Pestilences of the last Century; and that, sometimes, even though the *Dutch* have been visited, the Sickness has not reached this Island. Again; It is probable (from what has been observed) that our Pestilences, in the last Century, came originally from *Poland*, a Country more Northern than *Turkey*; and were more *Scorbutical*, and of a longer Duration, than the Plagues proceeding from the fiery *Syrian* Exhalations. It is, likewise, certain, by our *Bills of Mortality*, that the Pestilence was totally extinguished *Forty Years* ago; and has not been known to appear among Us, since  
the

the Year *Sixteen Hundred Seventy Nine*: During which Course of Time, our *Turkey-Merchants* have imported more *Bales* of *Silk*, *Cotton*, and other like Merchandizes, suspected most of conveying Infection, than were ever before (in all Probability) brought into this Nation, in the same Number of Years.

Wherefore, upon the Whole, I see no Reason, why we should be, at present, more apprehensive of the Pestilence from our Trade, than we have been in many Years past: Since, though it be true, that there has usually been a *Great Plague-Year* within the Compass of *Forty Years*; yet, it may be likewise supposed, that we were scarce, any Year, wholly free from the Plague formerly; at least, if the State of our Country, before the Use of *Weekly Bills of Mortality*, were not different, from what it has appeared to be, since the Keeping of those *Registers*.

BUT, to return to our present Security against Infections; far greater than was long ago: The frequent Repairing, New-walling, and Furbishing of the Buildings in and about the City, is an excellent Method of preventing all noisome  
Vapours

Vapours from settling and brooding amongst us. This Neatness, which extends even to the Outsides of our Houses, is no less Healthful, than it is Ornamental; and, at the same time, affords continual Employment for a Multitude of labouring People: All which Cleanliness (which has been but lately introduced) together with the many Fires kindled round us, seem to have been, hitherto, our most powerful *Preservatives* against Pestilential Infections. For, what Magnificency soever may appear in large, old Fabricks, raised more for Ostentation than Conveniency; as to the Generality of our Inhabitants, the Fresher their small convenient Habitations are, the less liable are they to be Unwholsome.

*Industry* likewise (which is Exercise, accompanied generally with Temperance) is an excellent *Preservative*, as well as *Cleanliness*. They, Both, refresh and fortify the Spirits: Whereas, Idleness, Poverty, and Nastiness (usually Companions) weaken the Vigour of the best Constitutions, and expose a People to the Attacks of Diseases of every Kind. Thus, as we see, in *Holland* (a Country otherwise of no advantageous Situation for Healthiness) the most eminent Instances of Diligence and  
Neat-

Neatness; so likewise have they continued many Years free from either homebred or foreign Pestilences. Whereupon, we may reasonably think it no small additional Security to the Health of This Great and Populous City, that it is not infested with Swarms of *Friars* and *Nuns*; nor its new Buildings interrupted by old *Convents* and *Monasteries*, the foul Nests of Drones, with which (as appears in our ancient *Surveys*) the Town and the Suburbs were, formerly, annoyed: For, had Superstition not been banished from amongst such a Confluence of People; Laziness, Poverty, Uncleanliness, must have remained; and we have been (in all Appearance) condemned often to put up frivolous Prayers to Saints, in an infectious City.

AND now; after what has been remarked concerning the Manner, whereby a Pestilence is communicated, as well as how it lies smothered, and checked in its Fury, during Seasons, that do not favour its Propagation; I little doubt, but the Alterations mentioned, in our Way of Living, and in the Air about *London*, will appear to be better Insurances (for the future) against Pestilential Infections, than any *Moderns* have yet indicated in  
their

their Writings; whatever Skill, notwithstanding, they may pretend to, above the *Antients*, in the *Methods of Contagion*. For, it is evident, That the *Guards*, the *Lazaretto's*, the *Medicines*, and all the other Contrivances, Cares, and Practices of the *Physicians* and of the *Government*, in *France*, have had only the same Effect, as the Expedients, We and the *Dutch* used in the Time of our Pestilences; that is, (not to delude the Publick) *None at All*; or, at least, *No Effect*, that has yet been supported by any *undoubted Facts*.

To confirm this Observation, as far as it relates to our *last Plague*; I shall add One Remark, out of Mr. *Graunt's* Book, published just before that Sickneſs began. "In this Place, I think fit to intimate (says He) that, considering the present Increase of the City, from *Anno MDCXXV* to this Time, which is from *Eight* to *Thirteen*; until the Burials exceed 8400 a Week, the Mortality will not exceed That of *MDCXXV*: Which God, for ever avert! And, as far as can be certainly known; there was no Week during the last Pestilence, which did exceed this Number: Though, probably, if all, who  
I were

were buried in that prodigious Confusion. (when the Plague was at the Height) had been duly registred, the Number would have been found not much inferior. Which, as I conceive, is a strong additional Proof, that the Efforts of our Pestilences are not very unequal; and, that the Means (*occasionally* used) whether for Prevention, or Cure, have been, hitherto, ineffectual.

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*Monday, April 24. Numb. CCCXXIII.*

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**T**HE Pestilence, still lurking in *Provence*, seems to have been checked, after the same Manner as the last Plague of *London* was; by the *Cold Season*: Our Intelligences, likewise, from Thence, inform us, that the People greatly depended, for Relief, on the *North Winds*; which, probably, diverted the Course of the Exhalations, and (at least for a Time) very much abated their Influence. But, since the Ceasing of those Winds, we have heard of the Infection spreading, rather *Eastward*, on the Coast, into the Harbour of *Toulon*.

Thus,

Thus, hitherto the Sicknèss has not passed over into *Languedock*, or the *Western* Parts of *France*. Whereupon, we may observe the Ineffectualness of their *Barriers*, as to the Stopping of its Progress: Since, there can be little Question, but those Fences have been as diligently guarded on that Side, where the Pestilence has advanced up into the Country, as on the Other, whose Limits it has not transgressed. Wherefore, all their Care and Vigilancy, (since they could not obstruct the Flow of the contagious Air, in which the Exhalations are wasted from one Town to another) have been fruitless; as we have already seen such Methods, as were not destructive of these malignant Seeds, have proved in former Pestilences.

And here, it may be material in our present Inquiry, not to omit an Observation made by the Inhabitants, of *Marseilles*; That the Pestilence raged most violently, while the Gales of Wind fate in upon their Harbour: Which Gales, therefore, may likely be charged with importing the Malignity; or, however, with bringing in the Ship, on Board of which the Infection was said to be first conveyed into the Town. This Infor-



## 116 CONSIDERATIONS

mation I received from a Gentleman (residing last Summer at *Paris*) in a Conversation, that turned upon what the Sense of *Hippocrates*, and his genuine Followers, might be, with Regard to *Infection*.

For my Part, I am inclinable to suspect, that, the Prejudices of many Men carrying them strongly in Favour of an Opinion, which allows no Infection to be conveyed merely in the Air, without Persons, or Goods, wherein it may harbour; many Notices, of the Kind I have mentioned, which would tend to the clearing up of this important Point of Knowledge, are either industriously suppressed, or negligently overlooked. I call this an *Important Point*; because the whole Care of Governments, as well as of Physicians, so far as it regards both the Prevention and the Cure of this *Epidemick* Destruction, is founded upon this Article: Consequently, if their Opinion be not warranted by just Observations, the Health and Lives (and I might add Wealth) of a whole Nation will be subjected to a prevailing Notion, which has been long taken for granted; and which, having not been fully examined, may be no more than a vulgar Error.

NOW,

## ON PESTILENCES. 117

NOW, it is to be considered, Whether the Fore-runners of the *Marseillian* and many other Pestilences, the *Locusts*, may not contribute towards ascertaining the Manner, whereby Pestilential Infections are propagated. It is well known, that these devouring *Insects* drive along with the Winds from their native Climes to distant Regions, in such Numbers, as to waste the Herbage and Fruits of a whole Country, wherever they settle. Thus, immediately before the Coming of the Pestilence, they pitched upon, and covered, the Fields of *Provence*; inso-much that, the Accounts from those Parts acquaint us, that a *considerable Tax* has been levied upon the People, to pay for gathering them off the Ground. Now, if Locusts can voyage thus in the Air, it will seem much less surprizing, that the Breath, as it were, of a Pestilence should be waisted, in the like Manner, from the same Climates to as distant Countries. The Arrival of these Creatures into a foreign Land infers, at least, that the Current of Air drove the Way, they steered their Course; and, this allowed, it must be granted, that Exhalations are a much lighter Carriage, and easier driven before the Wind. Wherefore, it does not seem a much more reasonable Undertaking,

taking, to endeavour to stop the Progress of a Pestilence, than to think of excluding these Swarms of Locusts, by any Kind of *Barriers*.

Here, indeed, it may be said; That these *Guards* and *Lines* are intended only to prevent the Infection from being carried onward by Persons and Goods; and not to fence in the contagious Air. But then, it is to be remarked, that this plausible Expedient for Prevention seems to be of no Service, either to the Persons already infected, or to the sound Inhabitants of the Countries adjacent: Not to the *Former*; because They are like to suffer more, by being confined to an Air, tainted with the Malignity: Not to the *Later*; since They are supposed to live in an open Air, in no wise corrupted, nor predisposed either to receive, or to communicate the Infection; a Supposition, allowed even by Those, who magnify the Utility of these Fences, as necessary Preservatives against Contagion.

Agreeably to this Notion, I have been assured by a Gentleman, who lived at *Marlborough* when the last Pestilence reigned at *London*, that there were only *Two* Persons sick of the Plague in that Town;

Town; who *Both* brought it with them from the City. And, it is hardly to be doubted, but many Persons escaped from *London* to *Oxford*, where the *Court* then resided; and yet, none were infected There; that City remaining free from the Sickness, notwithstanding the great Concourse of People. Besides; it appears from \* *Doctor Hodges*, that the *Contagion*, supposed by Him to be communicated from *Persons* and *Goods*, was stronger, as the Disease prevailed, and rose to a Height; and that this Effect sensibly abated, with the Sickness; and was, in a few Months, disregarded, as a Matter of no Danger. Suitable to which Observation, I have heard a Gentleman quote a *Letter* (now in his Keeping) from his Father, about the End of the Year 1665, who resided at *Westminster*; wherein He particularly observes, that the *Plague* was scarce heard of, any where, but in the Borough of *Southwark*; or, at least, not among the Persons of Fashion; who were then delivered from all Apprehensions of it: And yet, we have seen, in the Bills of Mortality, the Numbers, that died of the Plague, about that Time.

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\* N<sup>o</sup>. CCCVI.

Wherefore, if the Infection is not to be restrained within other Bounds, than are determined by the Current of tainted Air; and the Contagion, when conveyed by Persons and Goods, has no more Power, than is presupposed, to spread it self; I can see no Advantage, arising from the boasted Precautions against Contagion, which have been so strongly recommended, by some Authors, to the Fears of Mankind: Especially considering, that they have turned the Attention of Men from more salutary Methods of Preservation; and brought them to depend on a Practice, which has no better Claim to their Confidence, than any Expedient, that has been unsuccessfully used for the Cure of the Disease.

This Question, then, about the Usefulness of these *Lines* and *Guards*, is to be decided purely by Observations justly made upon plain Facts. For this Reason, the Instance given by Dr. *Sydenham*, merits our Consideration: *That when the Plague raged violently almost over all Italy; it was kept out of the Confines of Tuscany, by the Care and Prudence of the Great Duke.* Now, it does not appear, that this Pestilence was at *Leghorne*, from whence the Country lies open to *Flo-*  
*rence.*

*rence.* Wherefore the Freedom of *Tuscany* from the Infection, at that Time, may very reasonably be attributed to its happy Situation; since it is encompassed by Mountains, that leave it open only towards the Sea. And thus, it might likely happen, that this Pestilence never passed those Eminences; which might prove such a Fence, as was the † *Sicilian* Mountain, after the *Opening* in it was closed: For, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that Pestilential, as well as other, Vapours may be interrupted, or diverted, in their Course, by high Mountains. But, however, not to insist upon these Circumstances; this Instance relating to *Tuscany*, is of no greater Validity, than what has been said of *Languedock* and *Provence*: Since, which ever way an Infection travels with the Current of Air, Guards and Lines are of no Hindrance to its Progress.

Indeed, considering the dreadful Consequences of a Pestilence; No People, under Apprehensions of Infection from a neighbouring Country, can be blamed for having Recourse to any Practices,

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† N<sup>o</sup>. CCXCVIII.

to which the Security of a Nation has (justly or supposedly) been, at any Time, ascribed: Since there is alledged, at least, a Shew of Success. But, as in those Pestilences, which we can better judge of, from more exact Informations, such Attempts to prevent the Infection from spreading have proved ineffectual; they ought not to be absolutely and intirely relied on: Much less ought they to be recommended and used in such a Manner, as to put a stop to other Thoughts, and discourage all other Practices, that may be proposed for the Relief of Men in, or for their Security against, so great an Evil.

It is to be hoped, the *Pestilential Exhalations*, brought into *Provence*, are, by this Time, arrived to the very Extremity of their stated Bounds; which They (like all other Natural Powers) cannot exceed: But, till the *Summer* is advanced, we must not expect to be fully resolved in knowing the utmost *Mark*, to which this Tide of Infection may flow.



The

## The Free-Thinker.

Friday, April 28. Numb. CCCXXIV.

ACCORDING to what has been said concerning *INFECTION*, and the uncontrollable Manner, whereby it is diffused; we may give a rational Account, How the Plague, when it has seized any Place, should cease, without the Destruction of all the Inhabitants: Since, if we suppose the Pestilential Malignity, which was in the Air, to be consumed; and the latent Seeds of it, where-ever dispersed, wholly destroyed; and that no fresh Matter is brought over; the Cause will be entirely removed. And thus the ancient Philosophers thought of these Things; who wondered no more at the Ceasing of a Pestilence, than of Thunder and Lightning, or any other Exhalations, that spent their Fury: all which have a shorter or longer Duration, according to the Quantity of proper Supplies; as likewise, according to the

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the Quality of the Vapours themselves; which may sometimes last many Years, if effectual Methods, for totally abolishing them, are not pursued: To which Scope the Sages of Former Times bent their Thought and Skill.

But, if it be supposed, That *Infection* is not received from the Air it self, however predisposed, without the Concurrency of something emitted from Infectious Persons; Pestilences, then, could not have been spread so universally, nor conveyed to so great a Distance, as it appears they have been communicated, immediately upon the contaminated Vapours springing out from the Places, wherein they are generated: Which Fact shews, that some Gales of Wind, or a Current in the Air, must convey these Poisons; since it happens, that their fatal Effects are, sometimes, soon felt from Regions very remote.

IN this Point, Histories are very clear. Thus, *Julius Capitolinus* speaks of a Pestilence, said to have its Birth in *Babylon*: where, from the Temple of *Apollo*, out of a little Golden Chest (which a Soldier found by Chance) a Pestilential Breath issued

## ON PESTILENCES. 125

issued forth; and, thence, spread over *Parthia*, and the *Roman* World.

But *Ammianus Marcellinus* is more particular in the Account both of the Origin and Progress of this Pestilence. “*Seleucia* (says he) being taken by the Generals of the Emperor *Verus*; the Image of *Apollo Comæus* was torn off from its *Bases*; and, being brought to *Rome*, the Presiders over Sacred Things placed it in the Temple of *Apollo Palatinus*. Now, it is said, after this very Figure was carried away, that the Soldiers (having laid the City in Ashes) searching the Temple, found a narrow Hole: which being opened, in Hopes to find something of Value; the original Taint sprung out of a certain close Place, for the Secrets of the *Chaldeans*; which Taint, pregnant with incurable Diseases, did (in the Times of the same *Verus* and *Marcus Antoninus*) pollute all Things, from the very Confines of *Persia*, even to the *Rhine* and the *Gallias*, with Contagions and Deaths.”

*Seleucia* was a City of *Assyria*; in which Country *Babylon* was likewise situated; the Walls whereof (says *Ammianus*)

*nus*) were built by *Semiramis* with *Bitumen*. " In *Assyria* (says this Author) "  
 " *Bitumen* is produced, amongst the  
 " Abundance of Berries and ordinary  
 " Fruits, near the Lake *Sofingites*. Here  
 " likewise is *Naphtha* produced, of a  
 " Pitchy, Glutinous Kind; which also is  
 " like *Bitumen*: Over which, if any  
 " small Bird shall hover a while, stopped  
 " in its Flight; it flutters; and quite ex-  
 " pires. And, when this Kind of Li-  
 " quor begins to take fire, the Wit of  
 " Man can find out no other Invention  
 " to extinguish it, but by Dust. In these  
 " Parts, likewise, is to be seen an *Open-*  
 " *ing* in the Earth; whence a deadly Va-  
 " pour arising destroys, with its noisome  
 " Stench, any Animal whatsoever, that  
 " shall stand very near to it. Which De-  
 " struction springing out of a certain deep  
 " Pit, and issuing forth from its wide  
 " Mouth, had (before it was diffused  
 " more aloft) by its Atrociousness rendered  
 " the Countries situated round it, unin-  
 " habitable. A like *Opening* to which  
 " (as some Authors affirm) appeared to  
 " be at *Hierapolis* in *Phrygia*: Whence in  
 " the same Manner, a pernicious Exha-  
 " lation rising, with a continuing obsti-  
 " nate Stench, tainted whatever came  
 " near; the *Eunuchs* only excepted:  
 " The

" The Cause of which, I leave to be  
 " accounted for by *Physical* Considera-  
 " tions."

These *Openings* in the Earth were cal-  
 led *Plutonia*; being supposed to be the  
 Gates, that led to the infernal Regions of  
*Pluto*: And, of that famous *Plutonium*,  
 at *Hierapolis*, we find the following De-  
 scription in *Strabo*.

" This *Plutonium*, under the little  
 " Brow of a Mountain hanging over, is  
 " a *Mouth* of a Dimension to receive a  
 " Man: But, it goes down very deep.  
 " A Four-square Fence lies before it, of  
 " about half an Acre in Circumference:  
 " And this is full of so cloudy and thick  
 " a Mist, that the Ground is hardly to  
 " be discerned. The Air, indeed, does  
 " not sensibly oppress such as come near  
 " the Fences, on all Sides; and it puri-  
 " fies it self from the Mist, at every new  
 " Moon; neither does it exceed its  
 " Bounds: But, immediate Death seizes  
 " every living Creature, that comes with-  
 " in them. Even Bulls, driven in, fall  
 " down; and are dragged out, dead:  
 " And We put in Sparrows, which fell,  
 " and immediately expired. But the  
 " *Eunuch-Priests* of *Cybele* goe in unhurt,  
 " even

“ even so far as to approach the *Mouth*,  
 “ and not only to look down, but to en-  
 “ ter into it a while, holding their  
 “ Breath as much as possible: For, by  
 “ their Countenances we could perceive  
 “ something of an Appearance like Suf-  
 “ focation. Whether this be, that they  
 “ are all filled with such a Spirit, or only,  
 “ they, who belong to the Temple; or  
 “ whether it be by divine Providence, as  
 “ is usual in Inspirations; or whether this  
 “ may happen by the Vertue of certain  
 “ *Antidotes*.”

*Dion* (in the Life of *Trajan*) speaking of the *Assyrian Plutonium*, which emitted fatal Exhalations, mentions This also, which he had seen at *Hierapolis*: And he made the Experiment with Birds; which (he says) it destroys, as well as other living Creatures, excepting the *Eunuchs*. And *Apuleius*, mentioning those *Eunuch Priests*, who were Proof against these Exhalations, remarks; *That they, who dare to approach nearer, are always lifting their Faces to the Skies*. Whether he judged this to be their Method of preserving themselves from the Contagion, I know not; or whether he thereby intimates rather the Violence, with which they were attacked by these noxious Va-  
 pours,

pours, so as to be forced frequently to lift up their Faces from the Steams; since he observes in the preceding Sentence, *That all Animals, which approached nearest, with their Bellies downward, and by Nature prone, are suddenly seized with the Contagion of this poisonous Breath; and, growing vertiginous, die*.

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Friday, May 5. Numb. CCCXXVI.

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**N**OW, the Vapours bred in these Caverns, by Reason of their *Density*, neither rising high, nor diffused far around, kill only Those, who approach too near to them; the *Eunuch Priests* only excepted; who, living in the Country, had found a Method of preserving Themselves from the Suffocation of the Steams. Wherefore the Pestilences, that spread over distant Countries, seem not to be derived from Exhalations of this Kind: Which rather appear to be of the like Nature with the Steams in the *Grotto* at *Puteoli*, wherein Dogs are soon stifled; though, they afterwards recover upon being brought into the o-  
 K pen

pen Air, or by being thrown to swim in the neighbouring Lake.

But, the forementioned *Blasts*, such as issued from the Temple of *Apollo*, may give us some Light into the Causes of travelling Pesticences. And, the Authority of *Ammianus Marcellinus* is the more to be credited, because he lived long in the *East*, and had great Opportunities of being informed in the Nature of those Countries, of which he writes; and likewise, because of his Curiosity, that prompted him to inquire into the Alterations and Effects of Natural Beings; which frequently appears, throughout his History: And, in the Place already cited, he gives an Account of *Naphtha* and *Bitumen*; affirming them Both to be the natural Produce of *Assyria*. And, since he has told us, with what Difficulty *Naphtha* is extinguished; let us now endeavour to learn, how apt it is to be enflamed.

*PLUTARCH* represents *Naphtha* catching the Influence of Fire at a Distance, in the same manner as Love is kindled, as it were by a Glance. And *Simplicius* says; As the Strings of an Harp continue the Sound, though they be

be far distant from one another; so does *Naphtha* receive, at a great Distance, the Form of Fire: Where, if instead of *συνήσαν*, we read (with *Valesius*) *συνήσαν*, which may be rendered, *make Unison*, we have a lively Similitude of the *Inflammability* of this oily Substance. Wherefore, the *Greeks* called it *Medea's Oil*; to which *Nicander* applies the Epithet, *Odious* or *Abominable*; probably alluding to the Enchantments and Poisons of *Medea*, who was esteemed a Sorceress.

But, to return to *Ammianus*, who gives another Meaning to this Denomination of *Medea's Oil*: Having spoken of the Veneration, the *Persians* expressed towards the *Magi*, and of the Authority of this Set of Men in *Persia*; he has the following Passage.

“ In this Country is the *Median Oil*  
 “ made: In which if an Arrow be dip-  
 “ ped, and less forcibly shot from a  
 “ slacker Bow (for an over-swift Flight  
 “ will extinguish it) it burns, wherever  
 “ it fixes: And if any one tries to wash  
 “ it off with Water, the Flame rages  
 “ more vehemently; nor is it to be aba-  
 “ ted by any other Remedy, but by  
 “ casting Dust upon it. Now, it is pre-  
 “ pared



“pared after this Manner: The Persons,  
 “skilled in these Things, *preserve* com-  
 “mon Oil, in which a certain Herb is  
 “infused, keeping it a Length of Time;  
 “which, coming to a Consistency, they  
 “harden with a Substance out of a *na-*  
 “*tural Vein*, resembling a thicker Oil:  
 “Which *Species* is produced in *Persia*;  
 “and which (as we have said) is cal-  
 “led by the Name of *Naphtha*, among  
 “the People of the Country.

To this I shall subjoin a Passage out of  
*Strabo*, in his Description of the Natural  
 Curiosities of *Babylonia*.

“In *Babylonia* there is abundance of  
 “*Bitumen*; concerning which *Eratosthe-*  
 “*nes* has written thus: That the Li-  
 “quid, which they call *Naphtha*, is produ-  
 “ced in *Susis*; and the Dry, capable of  
 “being fixed, in *Babylonia*: And of this  
 “there is a Spring, near the *Naphtha*;  
 “which, overflowing by the melting of  
 “the Snows, the Spring is filled, and  
 “empties it self into the River. And  
 “here the large Clods are concreted,  
 “convenient for their Buildings, such  
 “as are raised with baked Brick. O-  
 “thers, indeed, say, that the Liquid is  
 “the Produce of *Babylonia*. But, as it  
 “has

“has been already declared, that the  
 “principal Use of the Dry is for Build-  
 “ing; so, they also say, that the Ships  
 “they frame, are pitched over, and  
 “fastened together with this *Bitumen*.  
 “But, the Liquid, which they call *Naph-*  
 “*tha*, is of a very surprizing Nature:  
 “For, no sooner is *Naphtha* brought  
 “near to a Fire, than it catches: And, if  
 “you anoint a Body with it, and approach  
 “it to the Fire, it burns; neither is it to  
 “be quenched with Water; but burns  
 “the more, unless poured on very plenti-  
 “fully; Nevertheless, by stifling it with  
 “Mud, and Vinegar, and Alom, and  
 “Birdlime, it may be extinguished.

“Now, it is said, that *Alexander* (for  
 “Experiment sake) poured *Naphtha* upon  
 “a Boy, who was bathing, and held a  
 “Lamp to it: Whereupon the Boy was  
 “in a Blaze, and near perishing; but the  
 “By-standers, pouring on great Quanti-  
 “ties of Water, brought the Fire under,  
 “and saved him.

“*Posidonius*, indeed, says, That the  
 “Fountains of *Naphtha*, in *Babylonia*,  
 “are some of a White and some of a  
 “Black Colour: And that, of these,  
 “some are of liquid *Brimstone*; I mean

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“ those of the white Kind; which are  
“ the Sort, that attract the Flames: But,  
“ that the Black are a liquid *Bitumen*,  
“ which they burn in Lamps, instead of  
“ Oil.

AFTER what has been premised concerning this natural Production, I shall (for the Entertainment of the more curious Readers) Translate a memorable Passage out of *Plutarch*, in his Life of *Alexander* the Great.

“ No sooner did *Alexander* march in-  
“ to *Babylonia*, than the whole Country  
“ submitted to him. What he most  
“ wondered at, There, was an *Opening*  
“ of Fire, in *Ecbatana*, running conti-  
“ nually as from a Fountain; and the  
“ Stream of *Naphta*, which was in such  
“ Quantity, as to form a Lake, not far  
“ from the *Opening*: And which, in o-  
“ ther Respects, resembles *Bitumen*;  
“ only it is so easily affected by Fire,  
“ that, before it touches the Flame, it  
“ oftentimes kindles the intermediate  
“ Air, by means of the very Brightness,  
“ that shines round the Fire. Hereupon  
“ the *Barbarians* (to shew the Power and  
“ the Nature of it) lightly besprinkled  
“ the Way, leading to the King's Pavi-  
“ lion,

## ON PESTILENCES. 135

“ lion, with this Liquor: Then, placing  
“ themselves at the upper End, they  
“ applied Torches where it was bedewed;  
“ (for it was then dark) when soon kind-  
“ ling, the whole caught in an Instant;  
“ the Blaze passing to the other End, as  
“ quick as Thought: so that the Way  
“ was a continued Fire.

“ Now, there was one *Athenophanes*,  
“ an *Athenian*, of the Number of those,  
“ whose Business it was to take Care of  
“ the King's Person, as he bathed and  
“ anointed, and artfully to relax his Mind  
“ with Diversions. This Man seeing a  
“ Boy standing by *Alexander* in the Bath,  
“ of a very mean and ridiculous Coun-  
“ tenance; but, who sung agreeably, and  
“ whose Name was *Stephen*: Wilt Thou,  
“ O King, said He, have us make an  
“ Experiment of this Liquor upon *Ste-*  
“ *phen*? For, if it catch Him, and be not  
“ extinguished; I may declare to all the  
“ World, that its Power is invincible and  
“ dreadful. The Boy readily consenting  
“ to deliver himself up to the Experi-  
“ ment; he was no sooner anointed, and  
“ even touched with it, than his Body  
“ was immediately all over in so great  
“ a Flame, that *Alexander* was in the ut-  
“ most Fright and Perplexity. And, un-  
“ less

“ less there had accidentally, been many  
 “ Vessels of Water, ready at Hand for  
 “ their Bathing, their Assistance had  
 “ not prevented his being consumed;  
 “ And, even then, they were scarce  
 “ able to extinguish the Fire, all over  
 “ the Boy's Body; who was very ill af-  
 “ terwards.

“ Wherefore some (not without Rea-  
 “ son) taking this to be the true Intent  
 “ of the Fable, say; it was with *Naph-*  
 “ *tha* that *Medea* used to anoint her cele-  
 “ brated Crown and Veil: Since they did  
 “ not blaze Spontaneously, and of them-  
 “ selves; but, when any Flame was  
 “ brought near, there was so quick an  
 “ Attraction and Contact, that it was e-  
 “ ven imperceptible. For the Rays and  
 “ Streams issuing afar from the Fire,  
 “ communicate only Light and Heat to  
 “ some Bodies; but, being collected in  
 “ others of a spirituous Dryness and  
 “ sufficiently unctuous, they rage like  
 “ Wild-Fire, and soon make a thorough  
 “ Change in the Substance.

Friday,

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Friday, May 12. Numb. CCCXXVIII.

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**P**LINY, in his *Natural History*,  
 corrects the Opinion of Those,  
 who take *Naphtha* to be a Kind  
 of *Bitumen*; “ Which *Later* (says He)  
 “ is of a Nature approaching to *Sulphur*;  
 “ and is, in some Places, a *Mud*; in o-  
 “ thers an *Earth*. That, which rises out  
 “ of the *Judean Lake*, is a *Mud*; and  
 “ That, an *Earth*, which is about *Sidon*,  
 “ a maritime Town in *Syria*. Both These  
 “ are thickened, and grow into a solid Sub-  
 “ stance. Now, the *Liquid Bitumen* is  
 “ like that of *Zant*, and that imported  
 “ from *Babylon*: And there, indeed, the  
 “ *White* is produced. That, likewise,  
 “ which comes from *Apollonia*, is *Liquid*:  
 “ All which Kinds the *Greeks* call *Pissaf-*  
 “ *phaltos*; signifying a Composition of  
 “ *Pitch* and *Bitumen*. There is also an  
 “ unctuous Kind, an Oily Liquor, which  
 “ breeds in *Sicily*, and tinges the River  
 “ from a Spring near *Agrigentum*. The  
 “ Inhabitants gather it in little *Mats* of  
 “ Reeds; to which it presently adheres:  
 “ and

“ and with this they light up their Lamps,  
 “ instead of Oil. But (continues *Pliny*)  
 “ the burning Power of *Naphtha*, being  
 “ near a Kin to the Nature of Fire, is  
 “ far from being applyed to any Manner  
 “ of Use.

Thus also, in another Place, He says;  
 “ In the City *Samosata*, in the Province  
 “ of *Comagene*, there is a Pond, that  
 “ throws up a burning Mud, which they  
 “ call *Maltha*. When it touches any  
 “ Thing solid, it adheres: And more-  
 “ over, being once touched, it follows  
 “ those, who fly from it. By means of  
 “ this they defended their Walls, when  
 “ *Lucullus* besieged them; and the Sol-  
 “ dier was on Fire, under his Arms.  
 “ Moreover, it is inflamed by Water;  
 “ and we have learned, by Experiments,  
 “ that it is to be extinguished only with  
 “ Earth. Of a like Nature is *Naphtha*:  
 “ For, so it is called about *Babylonia*,  
 “ and in the *Parthian* Country *Austage-*  
 “ *na*; where it flows forth after the man-  
 “ ner of *Bitumen*. There is a near Af-  
 “ finity between this and Fires; inso-  
 “ much that, they immediately dart in-  
 “ to it, on whatever side it appears.  
 “ Thus, the Concubine was burned by  
 “ *Medea*; her Crown catching Fire, when  
 “ she

“ she had approached the Altar to sacri-  
 “ fice.

HERE, to the several Testimonies al-  
 ready cited, I shall subjoin a Passage out  
 of the *Second Book of the MACCABEES*;  
 a History of good Authority.

WHEREAS, we [the Jews at Je-  
 rusalem and in the Land of Judea] are  
 now purposed to keep the Purification of the  
 Temple, upon the Five and Twentieth Day  
 of the Month Casleu; we thought it ne-  
 cessary to certify you [the Jews that are  
 throughout Egypt] thereof, that ye also  
 might keep it, as the Feast of the Taber-  
 nacles, and of the Fire, which was given  
 us, when *Neemias* offered Sacrifice, after  
 he had builded the Temple, and the Altar.  
 For, when our Fathers were led into Persia,  
 the Priests that were then devout, took the  
 Fire of the Altar privately, and hid it in  
 a hollow Place of a Pit without Water;  
 where They kept it sure: So that the Place  
 was unknown to all Men. Now, after  
 many Years, when it pleased God, *Neemias*  
 being sent from the King of Persia, did  
 send of the Posterity of those Priests that  
 hid it, to the Fire: But, when They told  
 us, they found no Fire, but Thick Water;  
 then

*then, commanded he them to draw it up, and to bring it: And, when the Sacrifices were laid on; Neemias commanded the Priests to sprinkle the Wood, and the Things, laid thereupon, with the Water. When this was done; and the Time came that the Sun shone, which afore was hid in the Cloud; there was a great Fire kindled: So that, every Man marvelled.*

*Now, when the Sacrifice was consumed; Neemias commanded the Water, that was left, to be poured on the great Stones. When this was done, there was kindled a Flame; but it was consumed by the Light, that shined from the Altar. So, when this matter was known; it was told to the King of Persia, that in the Place where the Priests, that were led away, had hid the Fire, there appeared Water; and, that Neemias had purified the Sacrifices therewith. Then the King, inclosing the Place, made it Holy, after he had tried the matter. And, the King took many Gifts; and bestowed thereof on those, whom he would gratify. And Neemias called this Thing Naphthar; which is as much as to say, a Cleansing: But, many Men call it Nephthi.*

THESE

THESE *Eastern* Countries, which by Nature abound in this Inflammable Liquor, are scarce ever wholly free from the Pestilence: And yet, notwithstanding this Calamity is so frequent and common, the People never attempt to prevent the spreading of the Infection by any of the *European*, or rather *Italian*, Contrivances. This Neglect of theirs (if it be a Neglect) has, indeed, been imputed to their Stupidity: And this Imputation would be just, if it could be made appear, That They, whose Familiarity with this Distemper gives them continual Opportunities of informing themselves of the Nature and the most proper Treatment of the Malady, know much less of Either, than the *Europeans*; whom it visits perhaps, once or twice within the Memory of Man. Wherefore, it may be worth the While, a little to consider; whether this Negligence of theirs proceeds from Ignorance or Knowledge: and whether we *Europeans*, by deviating from the Practice of these *Eastern* Nations, are not only Busy to no Purpose; but likewise, whether we do not Thereby heighten and prolong this Foreign Malignity, when it comes amongst us. And we shall be the better enabled to determine this Question;

on; if we can once find out the Cause of this fatal *Epidemick*: Towards the Discovery of which, the following Considerations, it is to be hoped, may conduce.

FIRST then; The Cause, we enquire after, must be the Produce of the Countries already mentioned; since the Infection is imported from those Parts into *Europe*: And farther, it ought to be of such a Nature, as to be capable of being born in the Air; and of diffusing it self to distant Nations (within a shorter or longer Term of Time) according to the certain Accounts delivered in Histories of the best Authority. This Cause must, likewise, be of a *Natural*, not *Artificial*, Original: Wherefore, it is foreign to our Enquiry to charge the Blame of Pestilences, that spread so universally and suddenly, on *Volatile Salts*; or on any other artificial *Compositions* or *Extractions*, which do not appear subsisting in *Nature*.

Again; This Cause must be capable of lodging in the Air; sometimes perceptible to the Eye, and sometimes to the Smell; and often (as was the Case of our last Plague) imperceptible to any of our Senses;

Senses; of which Dr. *Hodges* is very positive, during That Summer while the Malignity was rising to its Height: Though, he mentions \* Rains, which descended, when it was at the Height, in such Quantities, as to extinguish the Coal-Fires in the Streets; † from which Time the Pestilence abated, and its Contagiousness was no longer dreaded.

When there is a very strong Smell perceptible in the Air, it may probably be supposed, that *Natural Sulphur* is, at that Time, exhaled, and kindled; the Fumes of which will, also, be buoyant in the Air; and may rise high, and be visible; \*\* as in the Case of the Pestilence, hanging over *Tripoli*, like a Cloud pregnant with the Materials of Thunder and Lightning: But, *sulphurous* Matter seems rather to become perceptible to our Senses, upon the breaking out of the *Pestilential* Exhalations, and near to the Place, where they were engendered; than to be wafted along with those deadly Vapours into remote Countries. And, besides; the

\* N<sup>o</sup>. CCCII.† N<sup>o</sup>. CCCXII.\*\* N<sup>o</sup>. CCXCVIII.

## 144 CONSIDERATIONS

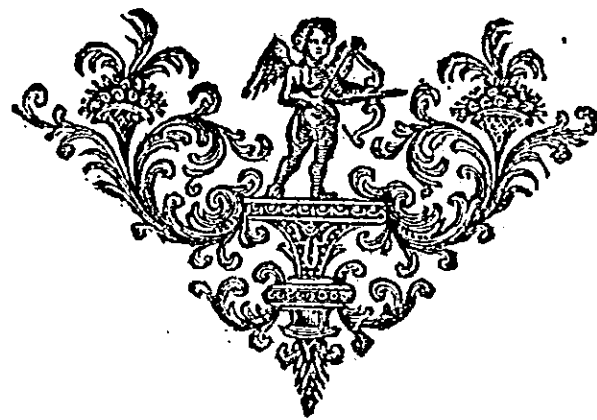
Countries abounding in *Natural Sulphur* (as the *Southern Part of Italy*) are no otherwise subject to Pestilences, than as they happen to have them imported from other Parts.

So that *sulphurous* Exhalations, though they may be often concomitant with the *Pestilential* at their Rise, and may be kindled by them; yet, are they not thereupon to be supposed the ordinary Causes of Pestilences; at least, not of Those, that are communicated to the remotest Regions; especially, when none of our Senses inform us of their Presence in the Air. Much less Reason is there to suspect any *saline Bodies*; and far less, any *Metallick Fumes*, in our present Enquiry; because they are not portable, in Air, to such vast Distances. *Salts*, indeed, may be driven by brisk Gales of Wind from the Sea, and spread over the adjacent Land in great Quantities; but then, the Fall of them is visible; since the Ground is often seen covered therewith. And, surely, *Mercurial Fumes* are most unlikely to be conveyed far in such gentle Streams of Air, as bring the Pestilence.

And

## ON PESTILENCES. 145

And here (were the least Shew of Probability in the Notion) I might, on this Occasion, reject the *Nitro-ærial Salts*, which Dr. *Hodges* charges with the Pestilence; as justly as Dr. *Mayo* (and some of his Contemporaries) makes *this Salt* the Cause of *Muscular Motion*, by its *Explosions*; which Effects, when they shall appear, we may then allow *Nitro-ærial Salt* to exist out of the Imagination.



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## The Free-Thinker.

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Friday, May 19. Numb. CCCXXX.

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**T**HE peculiar Properties of *Naphtha* answer to the several Qualities observable, and requisite, in *Pestilential Exhalations*. In the first Place, *Naphtha* is a *Natural* Produce in those *Eastern* Countries, from whence *Pestilences* come, according to the most authentick Testimonies. Then, it is of such a Nature, as to be easily raised, in hot and calm Weather, high into the Air, from the Pits and Lakes, in which it resembles a thick Water; and thus, wrapped in moist Steams, it is as easily wafted in a gentle Flow of Air, and carried, with all its fiery Force, from Country to Country: Unless, it be scattered by strong and dry Winds, that dissipate the Humidity, wherein it is lodged; or, by blowing contrary, repel its Progress: Or unless, it meet with Fire in its Passage, to consume its inflammable Particles, like those

those in any other Fuel: Or except, it come into *Northern* Regions at a Season, wherein they abound in Wet; and so its Flammability be wholly damped by the Continuance of cold Rains: Or lastly, except it should, in its Drift, abide over a dry Soil; where the surrounding Moisture (which is necessary to a *Pestilential* State of Air) being absorbed, it is disabled from spreading, or prolonging its Contagiousness.

But, if none of these Hindrances put a stop to, or destroy, the Influence of Exhalations of this Kind; when they once take Possession of a Country, they may pass, like Wild-Fire, from one Person to another, by Contagion, till their Forces are spent: Or, they may lie unactive in Houses, Cloysters, Furniture, Clothes, and even in the Bodies of Men, during a cold Season; and afterwards break out with Violence, when the Heat of the Sun shall put them into Motion.

Farther; This *Liquid Fire* is of so subtle a Nature, that it may penetrate all the minute Passages of the Body, or be drawn in with our Breath, or taken down with our common Nourishment: After which, this Liquor may remain, a long

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Time,



Time, unaccended in the Humours; till some Accident gives it an Occasion to exert its burning Power, here and there, in Men, or other Animals. But, when the warm Weather comes on, the Particles, or minute Drops of it, are daily kindled more and more; catching, though swiftly, yet successively, as in a Train of Gun-powder: In which Circumstance, the whole Current of Air must be impregnated with them, in larger or smaller Quantities; and when the whole floating Collection of them happens to be discharged out of the Air, the Universality of the Contagion immediately ceases: Nevertheless, the remaining infectious Particles, that happen to lurk dispersed up and down, in any City or Country, may lie preserved and unextinguished, in the Moisture, wherein they were conveyed; and may, every now and then, prove fatal to Persons, who are so unfortunate as to have them harbour in their Places of Abode, or Resort.

Thus, the Sprinklings of these Exhalations, alighting in certain Places, may remain dormant and unaccended through a Course of Time; as we have seen a considerable Quantity of *Naphtha* lay unactive, about *Seventy* Years, in a Pit, during

during the whole Time of the *Jewish* Captivity. And, by our *Bills of Mortality*, One may be inclined to believe, that these, or some such, liquid and fiery Seeds of Infection, found proper lurking Places, at least from the Year 1603 to 1679; since through all that Interval, there were but *Four Years*, wholly free from the Pestilence. It is not improbable, indeed, that there came a fresh Supply of these Materials in the great *Plague-Years*, which still introduced a new Contagiousness in the Air; and which likewise ceased, upon their being spent. It seems also probable, that Pestilential Exhalations have been wafted hither (as they were before, in the same Century) more than once, within these last *Forty Years*; but were prevented from infecting the City, by the \* Alterations, which have been mentioned as our greatest Security.

And thus, some few Years past, a contagious, fiery Distemper spread among our Cattle; as it had been before rife among the same Animals, in *Italy*, and in *Holland*: Not unlike That, which preceded our *last Plague*. And, in the Reign of the late Queen, the Sun was,

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\* N<sup>o</sup>. CCCXX.

in the Heat of Summer, overcast with a Swarm of Insects, hovering over the City like a Cloud; which have, at other Times, been observed to be the Fore-runners of Pestilences; and which (according to † Doctor *Hodges*) do certainly foreshew the speedy Approach of a Pestilence.

NOW, if any One does but reflect, with Impartiality and Attention, upon the Term of Years since our *last Plague*; and, at the same Time, consider, in how many Wars the *British* Troops have been engaged in *France, Flanders, Germany, and Spain*; and that our Grand Fleet, in King *William's* Reign, triumphed in the *Mediterranean* under the Command of the Earl of *Orford*, and lately, under Sir *George Bing*; and that a Squadron has continued, throughout the Summer Months, in the *Baltick*; it cannot well be imagined, but we should have been infected during this Course of Time, as well as formerly, if a spreading Contagion could be brought over in Persons, Ships, Clothes, or other Appurtenances. Here, also, let it be remembred; that our

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† No. CCCVIII.

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Merchants have, during all this Term of Years, imported Bales of *Cotton* and of other Goods, supposed by the *Italians* (and Those, who take up their Opinion) to harbour and convey Pestilences; and, that these Merchandizes, by reason of the vastly larger Extent of our Commerce, have been brought in far greater Quantities, than in the Times when our Country was frequently ravaged by the Pestilence. Moreover; these Bales of Goods have been constantly opened in private Warehouses, without exposing them to the Air, or using any other Precautions, that are practised at *Marseilles*, and other maritime Towns, where they are always under Apprehensions of an Infection: And yet, this unguarded Manner of Trade was never formerly suspected of exposing us to Pestilential IncurSIONS: For, even the Story, in \* *Dr. Hodges*, charges our last Plague upon Bales of *Cotton*, that were brought from *Turkey*, not immediately into *England*, but first into *Holland*; from whence the Malignity was supposed to come hither, by Contagion, and in Packs of Merchandize: Of which, however, no Man then, or

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No. CCCVIII.

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since, has given the least satisfactory Account: And therefore (if what has been already offered in these Papers be duly weighed) that Story will be acknowledged to be a Rumour, without any known Foundation.

And here, the Difference is remarkable, between the Two Accounts given † by *Capitolinus* and *Ammianus*, of the Origin of the Pestilence under the Emperor *Verus*. The Former derives the Infection from a small *Chest*; which seems to be parallel to the Bales of *Cotton*, to which the Inhabitants of *Marseilles* attribute their present Calamity: The Later, from a *Vault* under the Temple; where, likely the Chest might be repositied. Nevertheless, these Historians may be reconciled, by only supposing, the finding of the *Golden Chest* might be the Occasion of Opening the Vault, or *Close Place*, whence the pent Steams issued forth, and infested Mankind. And this Account agrees with the Superstition of ancient Times; when Altars, and Temples, were raised to appease the angry Deities, in those very Places, which were supposed

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† N<sup>o</sup>. CCCXXIV.

to be, as it were, the Sources of any Calamity, which the People apprehended was poured out upon them, by Divine Vengeance. Accordingly, it is reasonable to suppose, there was a Temple erected to *APOLLO* (which was the Name given to the *Sun*, when considered as a *Destroying Divinity*) near a Fountain, or Lake, of that *flammeous Liquor*, from whence the People perceived not only strange, but fatal Effects to arise, when it was exposed to the unclouded Rays of the Sun.

NOW, if *Naphtha* (or any natural Substance of the like Properties, such as is *Maltha*) be the Cause of these *Eastern Pestilences*; it is possible, we may find out some Relief, or Security against their Malignity, more universal and more effectual, than continual *Quarantines*, *Lines*, *Guards*, severe *Penalties*, and cruel *Punishments* upon Transgressors: All which tend to the unspeakable Damage of Commerce, the utter Destruction of Liberty, and every other Enjoyment of Life. Thus Men might be freed from living in constant Fear of one another, and from being under the Apprehensions of receiving Infection from their Companions and dearest Friends; from whose Presence

Presence (by having Recourse to the fore-mentioned Expedients) they must be forced by Violence, upon the first suspicion of Danger; even though they should be willing to venture their Lives in kind Offices to their sick Relations, their Wives, or their Children. Which Regulations must be acknowledged to be very unreasonable Hardships, if we suppose; That *Contagion* cannot be diffusive, when the Air is not stored with Pestilential Exhalations; and, that while the Air is contaminated, all those Methods, which have been practiced in *France*, make a Pestilence more rife among the People; or, at least, do not in any wise contribute towards the Prevention of its Progress, nor towards the Cure of such Persons, as happen to be infected.

THE Cure then of an Infection, proceeding from the forementioned Cause, must be the Extinction of these fiery Particles, communicated to the Bowels, by the Air, or any other Vehicle. Now, the Methods of extinguishing *Naphtha* are related by *Strabo* and *Plutarch*; who Both allow, that this Liquor, when inflamed, may be quenched by Great Quantities of Water; as appeared by the  
Expe-

Experiment made upon *Stephen*, in the Presence of *Alexander*. Agreeable hereunto is the Advice of one of the most judicious among the *Greek* Physicians: which I shall faithfully translate from the very Words of the Author. *Now, if the Patient* [ill of the Pestilence] *be in a burning Heat, and the Flame reach even to his Breast; it would not be improper to apply cooling Things to his Breast, and to give him cold Drink: But not giving it little by little; since that will make him burn the more; but all at once, and so plentifully, as to quench the Flame.* Whereupon, we may remark, that this Physician could have thought of nothing more suitable to extinguish that Liquid Fire, to which the Kind of Pestilence, that comes from *Syria* and the *East*, may be imputed; than what he has here prescribed for the Cure of this grand Symptom of the Pestilence, *its intolerably burning Heat.*

*Friday,*

Friday, May 26. Numb. CCCXXXII.

**T**HE forementioned Advice of the *Greek* Physician makes me recollect Two well-attested Instances of a Man and his Wife, who, in the last Plague of *London*, attributed their Recovery to the drinking of Water plentifully. They were intrusted with the Care of a Gentleman's House within the Liberties of *Westminster*, who had removed his Family into the Country. The Woman sickened, first, of the Plague; and, burning intolerably, desired she might have a Pitcher of *Lamb's Conduit-Water*; which the Husband soon brought: When she had drenched her self sufficiently with it, she found her inward Heat relieved; but thereupon, burning outwardly in her Skin, she desired to have cool Air let within the Bed-Cloths; and by these plain Refreshments was delivered both from the Torment and Malignity of the Disease. The Man sickening afterwards, was eased and cured in the same Manner.

BUT,

BUT, beside the quenching Power of large Quantities of Water; *Strabo* says, That *Naphtha* may, likewise, be extinguished with *Vinegar*: Which, also, has been used medicinally in Pestilences; though but in spare Quantities, because plentiful Doses of it have been observed to be unsafe. Moreover, *Vinegar* is prejudicial to the Stomach, if taken simply, and with those peculiar Properties unsubdued, which are supposed to be of Service in Pestilential Distempers. This granted, it is an idle Attempt to render *Vinegar* more agreeable to the Stomach, by the Infusion of bitter, or other hot Plants and Drugs; since, by *correcting* (that is, weakening or destroying) its genuine Qualities, it can have little, or no, Efficacy, as *Vinegar*: And the Heat of the Ingredients may, probably, make it a mischievous Preparation. But then; *Vinegar*, unadulterated with Drugs, may be successfully used to extinguish or destroy the Seeds of Infection, that may be lodged in Ships, Houses, Cloths, or Furniture; as well as for the *Immersion* of Persons suspected of the Plague.

*Ammianus* is positive in asserting, that *Naphtha* can be extinguished only by *Dust*; that is, by powdered Earth; And,  
This,

This, among other Things, is enumerated by *Strabo*. Whereupon, I shall here insert Two or Three Passages, out of the fore-cited Physician, concerning the Uses of Earths. *Every Kind of Earth* (says He) *dries; and That, which is unmixed with other Substances, dries without Corrosion: And, if any fiery Quality be blended with it, this may be taken away by washing it.* — Of the medicinal Earths, the Lemnian (which is called Scaled) is drying, and moderately astringent: It has the Force of a present Antidote against deadly Poisons; and cures malignant Ulcers, in Vinegar or Wine. — But, the Samian Earth is much gentler than the Lemnian; as being glutinous and viscous: Wherefore, This is to be used where there is Occasion to mitigate and mollify. — The Armenian (which they likewise call Bolc) dries extremely; whence it comes to be very serviceable in Dysenteries, Diarrhæa's, Spitting of Blood, Consumptions, Difficulty of Breathing from too great Moisture, moist Ulcers, and in pestilential Ails: And, it is drank in thin Wine, diluted with Water; or, if there be a Fever, in Water. And here, I am apt to imagine, that the fine Earths of our own Country, carefully cleansed by Washing, may be as properly apply'd to some, if not all, of the fore-mentioned

tioned Purposes, as the Earths of *Lemnos*, *Samos*, or *Armenia*.

The last Extinguisher of *Naphtha*, mentioned by *Strabo*, is *Birdlime*: The medicinal Use whereof is taught by the same Physician. *Birdlime* (he says) *beats with Vehemence; and it, likewise, draws forth Humours forcibly out of the Depths of the Body; and evaporates them by the Pores.*

BUT, whether these Citations may prove of any real Service, or of none, in pestilential Cases; yet, sure I am, that it must be very material to know the Methods used by the *European Merchants*, residing in *Syria*, to secure themselves from Infection in a Country, that is yearly infested with a Pestilence, in the hot Season. Now, their Custom is (at that Time) to repair immediately to the Mountains; where they pitch their Tents in a free Air, open to the Winds, and consequently not subject to stagnate. There is likewise a farther Advantage in flying for Refuge to these Eminences; in that, they are dry, and not proper to harbour any infectious Exhalations, that may ascend. This Practice of theirs has been remarkably attended with such constant

stant Success; that the *Turks*, observing them to return in Health and Safety from their Summer Encampments, have of late imitated their Conduct; and found the like Benefit from it: Which manner of Precaution appears to be as reasonable, as it is successful: Since great Quantities of the pestilential Vapours can scarcely be supposed to mount so very high, and much less to settle in so open, dry, and cool an Air.

This Method of timely avoiding the Calamity, might have been easily pursued in the South Parts of *France*; where they are not destitute of the Refuge of Mountains. But, it seems as if the Prejudices, in Favour of the *Italian* Way of barring out a Pestilence, were rivetted in the Minds of the Magistrates and the People, by those, whose Duty it was to enquire with greater Diligence and Impartiality into the Nature of these Cases. Thus, probably, they were diverted from attending to this almost obvious Means of Safety; which they might easily have known, considering their Commerce with *Turkey*: And thus the poor Inhabitants were brought to depend on Drugs and compounded Medicines; which have never proved effectual against any Pestilence.

Hence

Hence we Weekly hear of the lamentable Condition of the People of *Toulon*, *Aix*, and other neighbouring Places, who are doomed to undergo the fruitless, or rather pernicious, Rigours imposed upon *Marseilles*. They are to be subjected to Quarantines, Lines, Guards, and Famine; to be pent up in their Dwellings; and prohibited from drawing a Breath of Air, at their Windows, or even on the Tops of their Houses. Hence we see the Pestilence redoubling its Fury: And there is Reason to fear, that every scattered Seed of Infection will be kindled in such a Quantity of stagnated Air, as the Heat of the Weather advances.

WHEREFORE; if it should be our Misfortune to be visited by the present, or any future Pestilence, let the wrong Treatment of these injured Wretches be a timely and a lasting Warning to Us, not to admit of the cruel Abuses practised upon Them; who, not accustomed to the Freedom of *Britons*, have the more patiently born the Restraints, to which they were condemned. And, I the more earnestly press these Considerations upon my Readers, and offer them, with all due Submission, to those who now are, or may hereafter be, our Legislators; be-

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cause,

cause, it has been Here publicly affirmed, That the present unhappy Plague in *France* might, by keeping careful Guard, be confined within the Walls of *Marseilles*; so that none of the adjacent Villages should suffer any Thing by it; unless some Persons, finding Means to escape, should carry the Infection along with them.

Since the Time, wherein this Opinion was advanced amongst us, it is well known, That the *French* have kept careful Guard, with the strictest Severity, and with great Expence: And to what Purpose? Do we find Now, that They have been able, with all these specious Limitations, to restrain the Infection within any determined Bounds? Or, can they yet so much as guess at its Confines? If the constant Tenour of all the publick Intelligences deserves Credit, these Facts merit, at least, our serious Attention. Indeed, it appears, that neither the Progress of this Pestilence has been hindered, nor the Malignity of it cured, by any of the Means hitherto used by either the Magistrates, or the Physicians: Inasmuch that, they Now express their utter Despair. And, it seems, at last, evident to them, That the Air does diffuse the Seeds of Infection, which way soever its

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Current tends; notwithstanding the strict Prohibition of Intercourse with the Places infected.

Having, therefore a severe Warning from the deplorable Condition of the *Provensals*, let us beware of imitating their Practices, on the like Occasion; which, since they have proved ineffectual, it would be very inhuman to repeat; especially when, knowing their Fate, we cannot plead the Excuse of Ignorance.

If ever, then, we should have Reason to entertain the least Suspicion of a Pestilence beginning in or near this populous City; (a Supposition of the utmost Horror and Compassion!) Let Us, and let our Posterity, reject the Advice of shutting up People in *Lazaretto's* and Hospitals, as well as of immuring them in their own Dwellings: Nor yet, ought the Inhabitants to be debarred, by Lines and Guards, from flying to their proper Places of Refuge. On the contrary; let the Persons infected be removed immediately into the most open Air; and, if the Weather be not too rigorous, to the very Summits of the highest Ground about the City. There let them abide, encamped with Fires round them, at convenient Distances.



Neither let us imagine, that the Sick of this Distemper will suffer any Prejudice by remaining in Tents on dry Ground, in the hot Months. At least, let the Windows of all Houses be kept open, within the City and its Suburbs. Indeed, all Persons, whose Circumstances will allow it, should (so far from being restrained) be encouraged to remove into the Country, and to expose themselves to the freshest Air, during such a Season: And, let such, as are unable to defray the Expence, be provided with Tents and Necessaries, at the Cost of the Publick. Moreover, let fresh Water be plentifully conveyed to those Airy Encampments; for which there are many spacious Heaths and rising Grounds, at proper Distances from *London*. Lastly, let no Man be allowed to administer such Medicines to the Sick, as have ever failed of curing, upon the Experience of former Ages, and the late dear-bought Knowledge of the present: For, this would be only to repeat the Sufferings of the *French*, as well as of those past Times, wherein the specious Prescriptions of *Formal* Practitioners were found to be Insignificant, not to say Hurtful, and even Destructive.



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## The Free-Thinker.

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*Friday, June 2.* Numb. CCCXXXIV.

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**T**HERE yet remain, unmentioned, Two Sorts of Natural Substances, which are supposed to have been the Causes of Pestilences; One, the *putrid Bodies* of dead Men, or other Creatures; the Other, *Insects*, and diminutive Animals, hardly (if at all) perceptible by our Senses.

This later Opinion seems to be but a meer Conjecture; And even *Hodges* rejects it, as follows. “ Touching the  
 “ celebrated *Kircher’s Doctrine of an a-*  
 “ *nimated Production of Worms*; I inge-  
 “ nuously confess, that by the best As-  
 “ sistance of a Microscope, I have not  
 “ hitherto been able to discover it; nei-  
 “ ther, did I ever receive such an Expe-  
 “ riment from another, though never so  
 “ sharp sighted: But, perhaps, some Al-  
 “ lowance is to be made for Us *dim. I-*  
 M 3 “ *slanders,*

## 166 CONSIDERATIONS

“ *slanders*, whose thick Air is not favour-  
 “ able to that exquisite Penetration of  
 “ the *Italians*. But, without Offence to  
 “ *so great a Name*; it seems to me alto-  
 “ gether disconsonant to Reason, that a  
 “ *pestilential Seminary* should breed the  
 “ *said Insects*; since, it is both *nitrous*  
 “ and *poisonous*.

“ As, in putrid Fevers, so more in-  
 “ stantly in a Pestilence, the *Malignity*  
 “ drives away *Worms*, and forces them  
 “ to crawl out, yet alive; so far is it  
 “ from being true, that they are genera-  
 “ ted out of the said Seed: In certain ma-  
 “ lignant and cancerous *Ulcers*, as like-  
 “ wise in the *Blood* of some Men, *wormy*  
 “ *Animalcules* may sometimes be formed;  
 “ which, I suppose, owing to a peculiar  
 “ Viciousness of the *nutritious Juice*, ra-  
 “ ther than to a *Poison*; and therefore,  
 “ This ought not to be enumerated a-  
 “ mongst the true Causes of a Pestilence.

But, not to insist on this Author's  
 Way of Reasoning; if we consider the  
 vast Extent of Land, over which the  
 Pestilence suddenly spread from the Tem-  
 ple of *Apollo*, in the Reign of the Emperor  
*Virus*, and the mighty Devastation at-  
 tending it; and the Progress of another  
 Plague,

## ON PESTILENCES. 167

Plague, which, beginning in *Cathay*,  
 came so far as *England*, in the Year 1348;  
 it will not be easy to suppose, that  
 Swarms of little Insects, which no Man  
 ever saw, can be the Cause of such diffu-  
 sive Infections.

AS to the *Putrefaction of dead Bodies*;  
 by the unquestioned Evidence of Histo-  
 rians, This appears to have, at least,  
 concurred with other Causes of a Pesti-  
 lence, and to have born a Share in the  
 Blame. We have an Instance of this  
 Kind in *Ammianus*, speaking of an In-  
 fection, that did not, indeed, spread o-  
 ver the Country; but was confined to  
*Amida*, a City in *Mesopotamia*. In this  
 City (says He) where the Multitude of  
 Corpses scattered through the Streets, sur-  
 mounted the Duties of Interment, to so  
 many Evils was a Pestilence added; which  
 was nourished by the Corruption of Bodies  
 breeding Worms, by hot Vapours, and by  
 the Common People languishing various  
 Ways. Then, giving the Notion of the  
 Philosophers and Physicians concerning  
 Pestilences in General; he concludes with  
 the following Account. When they had  
 been shattered by this destructive Pest, and  
 a few, oppressed by the Throng, perished  
 by the immoderate Heat; at length, in the  
 M 4 Night

*Night following the Tenth Day, small Showers dissipated the stagnating condensed Vapour; and a sound Health of Body was recovered.*

This Historian, in his foregoing Book, describes the Situation of *Amida*, in these Words. *On the South Side It is washed by the near Approach of the bending Stream of the Tigris: On that Side, which is opposed to the East Winds, It overlooks the Plains of Mesopotamia: On the Part obnoxious to the North Wind, being near to the River Nymphæus, It is overshadowed by the Summits of Taurus; which divides the Nations on the other Side of Tigris from Armenia: Where it lies open to the Western Breez, it borders on Gumathena [or Comagena] a fertile Country, and equally fruitful by Tillage; wherein there is a Village, named Abarne, famous for its healing hot Baths. Now, in the very Middle of Amida, under the Castle, rises a plentiful Spring; the Water whereof may, indeed, be drank, though it smells offensively from evaporated Heats.*

Hereupon, we may first observe, that this City lies in the same Tract of Land with *Seleucia*: In the next Place, that the Pestilence, here mentioned by *Ammianus*,

*mus*, seems to have happened upon a great Slaughter of Men; whose Bodies corrupted above Ground, and bred Worms. Such putrid Steams may, indeed, be a concurrent Cause of a Pestilential Sickness like This; which was of a short Duration, and dissipated by small Showers: And yet, some Exhalations of a *Naphthitick* Nature might likewise be lodged, at the same time, in the stagnating Air, and be precipitated, or born down, by the Rain; especially, if we reflect upon the Neighbouring *Hot Baths*, and the *Spring* in the Center of the City, which the Heats made offensive. Hence, that active Principle, so manifestly peculiar to *Naphtha*, may here be very justly supposed to have been kindled by these Heats; though not to such a Degree, or in such a Quantity, as when it taints the Air through many Countries: And therefore did this Pestilence, probably, finish its Course in Eleven Days, upon the falling of gentle Showers.

OF the forementioned Plague, in the Year 1348, the French Historian *MÉZERAY* speaks thus: *During all these Times Mankind was afflicted with all the Scourges of Heaven. An universal Earthquake, that reached even France and the Nor-*

*Northern Countries, overturned whole Cities, unrooted Trees, and Mountains; and filled the Plains with Gulphs of such a Depth, that it seemed as if Hell threatened to swallow the Race of Men. This Disaster was not so great, nor attended with such fatal Effects, as were produced by a Pestilence, which unpeopled the Face of the Earth of more than Half the Inhabitants. It is said, that a Globe of stinking, enflamed Vapour, falling from the Sky, in the Kingdom of Cathay, spread it self more than an Hundred Leagues around; and, having laid the whole Country waste, it left such an Infection in the Air, as engendered this Malignity: Which proved cruel in Asia, and in Africa; more furious in Italy and Hungary; but, a little less mortal in Germany, and in France.*

This gives me an Occasion to recur to what has been said \* of the frequent Return of the Plague, formerly, amongst Us. And, the Pestilences, which I have met with in our Histories, before the *Bills of Mortality* were regularly continued, are in or about the following Years; beginning with the Sickness in

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\* No. CCCXVIII.

Four-

*Fourteen Hundred Seventy Six, and Seventy Nine; which may probably be the same, continued. These Years, then, are 1497 and 98; 1501; 1521; 1526; 1531; 1540; 1543; 1545; 1564; 1592; 1593: Which Two last Years are in the Register; though, but defectively. And of the Year Fifteen Hundred, Twenty Six, it may be remarked; that the Pestilence then raged through the Winter; insomuch, that all Communication with the Court being forbid, and the usual Diversions of the Christmas Holidays suspended, it was called THE STILL CHRISTMAS.*

NOW, upon the Whole; it may be true, That the Pestilential Vapours, which reached into *England* in *Sixteen Hundred, Sixty Five*, were first wafted to *Poland* from the *East*; and there blended with grosser Steams, rising out of the Morasses of that Country: Which Supposition will very naturally account for the \* *Scorbutick Taint*; that (according to *Hodges*) was complicated with our last Plague.

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\* No. CCCX.

And,

And, indeed, the more critical we are in our Enquiries into these subtil Operations of Natural Substances; either by considering their Progress through different Climates, whereby they frequently receive Alterations, as well by the Addition of some new Matter, as by losing somewhat of their original Force; or by observing, how they may be diverted in their Course, and hastened, or retarded in their Motion: The stricter, I say, we examine into these and other natural Circumstances; the more Reason shall we have to be jealous of the Truth of those Doctrines and Accounts, which most Writers, from the Time of *Galen*, have implicitly transcribed, one from the other.

And, this Jealousy ought to be still the stronger; because we see the Generality, who pretend to study Nature, so closely wedded to *Theories* in Philosophy, as to take them for Better, for Worse. Thus, keeping their early Vows inviolable, they grow enamoured with Prejudices; and thereby, neglect to set down certain Notices, that might illustrate the Truth to After-times, when it came to be considered with Impartiality. Moreover, how Few are there, since the Days  
of

of *Hippocrates*, sufficiently curious, patient, and exact, to make just Observations on these secret Workings of Nature; notwithstanding they are of the greatest Concern to Mankind! And, therefore it is, that I have studiously avoided, in these Papers, to transcribe the Accounts of Pestilences, written by Authors, whose Curiosity and Judgment are equally to be suspected; either from their own Incapacity, or from the Ignorance of the Ages, or Countries, wherein they lived.

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*The Conclusion of the foregoing Papers.*

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*Friday, June 9. Numb. CCCXXXVI.*

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**T**HE Sum of the whole Argument, deduced through a long and painful Enquiry, amounts to the subsequent Conclusions.

1. Our last Pestilence, and all the Preceding of the same Kind, owed their Rise to foreign Countries; as may likewise be said of That, which now afflicts  
*France.* 2. The

2. The Causes of Pestilences are Natural Substances: And consequently, not Volatile Salts; nor any other Artificial Extracts, or Things, that have never been shewn to subsist in Nature.

3. These Causes are such Bodies, as are so light and minute that they may be wafted in the Air; frequently imperceptible to our Senses; and sometimes dense enough to be perceived.

4. They are likewise such, as may remain, in the Form of Vapours, during Months, and Years; unless they are dissipated, or destroyed, by some powerful Cause.

5. In which Case, any lurking Seeds may infect particular Persons, whose Bodies are predisposed to receive them; even after the Air is clear of them.

6. Their Activity is often checked, during a Season; and, so long, their Power of Infecting is, thereby, proportionably diminished.

7. A *Diffusive Contagion* wholly depends upon sufficient Quantities of Pestilential Exhalations in the *Air*, and a due Temper of Weather.

8. It

8. It does not appear, that the Pestilence can pass from one Person to another, at a Distance, if there be not some Pestilential Vapour in the Air, by means whereof the Steam from the Infected may run, like a Train of Wildfire, to the Healthful.

9. The Pestilence spreads more or less, according to the Quantity of these Exhalations wafted in the Air, and the Aptness of the Season to cherish and communicate them in their Vigour: Which has often happened in the *Autumn*; and sometimes in the *Winter*, as well as the *Summer* Months.

10. Pestilences rise gradually to a Height, if not interrupted: And their Decrease is swifter than their Increase.

11. When the Pestilential Exhalations meet with any Interruption (such as may happen from contrary, or cold dry Winds) the Infection then fluctuates accordingly.

12. When these Exhalations are spent, or the whole Collection of them is precipitated out of the Air; (as frequently happens by Rains) the Contagiousness ceases.

13. These

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13. These Exhalations pass often in a Current from one Country to another: Within the Verge or Limits whereof the Sickness is contagious; and, out of which malignant Air, particular Persons, who happen to have any Seeds of the Infection lodged within, or about them, may sicken even to Death; but then they do not communicate the Distemper to others.

14. The Countries, wherein the fore-mentioned Kind of Pestilence is known to be a Native, do abound in *Naphtha*, or in *Maltha*; which are Natural Productions, whose known Powers answer to the Effects of this fiery sort of Pestilences.

15. Consequently; it seems very probable, that They, or some other Bodies of the like Nature, are the genuine Causes of such Pestilences.

16. When Exhalations of this Kind pass through different Climates and over different Lands, other Vapours, peculiar to some of those Countries, may mix with them.

17. Hence

## ON PESTILENCES. 177

17. Hence may arise a great Variety of Symptoms in Pestilences, as they appear in divers Places, remote from the Regions, which gave Birth to the first Exhalations.

18. The Expedients (mentioned by the Ancients) for extinguishing *Naphtha*, when it has taken fire, are advised as proper for destroying and curing a Pestilence, by the *Greek* and other Physicians; and this, merely from their Experience; and not from any Knowledge, or Suspicion of this particular Cause.

19. The Method, whereby the *European* Merchants, residing in *Syria*, secure themselves from the Pestilence, is as consonant to the whole Series of Observations, laid down in the foregoing Papers, as it is successful.

20. That Method (encamping on the Mountains, in the hot Months, wherein the Pestilence rages in the Lower Countries) is directly opposite to the Practice of shutting up Persons in their Houses, or in *Lazaretto's*; or of preventing Men from the free Enjoyment of the open Air; in which they ought to be encouraged, rather than restrained.

N

21. Where-

21. Wherefore Lines, Guards, and even Quarantines, are of no Service; but rather contribute to encrease the Mortality amongst the People.

22. And this last Remark answers, in Fact, to the best Observations made upon former Pestilences; as well as to the present Experience of the *Provensals*.

23. We may now perceive the Reason, why no Compositions of Drugs, hitherto used, have ever appeared to be serviceable in curing these Pestilences; since, That can only be effected by destroying the Cause; whether in the Air, or in the Bodies of Men, and in all Things round them.

24. Now, the Cause of these Pestilences of *Eastern* Original can be destroyed by none of the Medicines commonly used: For, high and spirituous *Cordials*, however they may cherish and support the Spirits, are apt to inflame: And *Sudorificks*, in so much as they powerfully heat at first, and, after they have taken Effect, extreamly weaken and dispirit, must be at least unserviceable, if not pernicious.

25. Where-

25. Wherefore, the simplest and most common natural Substances, such as fine *Earths* well washed, and good *Water*, have been recommended by ancient Physicians; the later of which has been used with Success in our last Plague.

26. It is to be suspected, that the administering of Drugs growing in hot Countries (which have imbibed the fiery Particles of their native Soil) has destroyed whole Nations, trusting to their Efficacy in Pestilential Sickneses: Wherefore none of the old, nor of the modern *Alexipharmicks*, which by sufficient Experience have proved hurtful, ought ever to be repeated on the like Occasions.

27. The Result from this whole Enquiry is; That, when any Country is visited by a Pestilence, the Spirits of the People ought to be refreshed and preserved by all Methods, that will not interfere with the main Design of extinguishing the pestilential Flame. Wherefore the freest Use of the open fresh Air is to be principally recommended: And such Air, as is least tainted with the infectious Exhalations, is to be found upon open, rising, dry Grounds, and Mountains.

N 2

AND



AND now, I can assure my Readers, that it is as pleasing to Me, as it can be to any of Them, to see this Subject brought at last, to a Conclusion: A Subject (of what ever Use it may prove to the Publick) wherein I have been far from seeking, and yet farther from finding, my private Advantage; or even any Satisfaction, besides what results from a Consciousness, that I have employed my best Endeavours to rescue the Lives, the Liberties, the Trade of my Fellow-Citizens (in the most effectual Manner I could learn by the most diligent Enquiries) from a threatening Calamity, the most terrible at least, if not the most grievous, that can befall a Nation.

Many other Things I could, indeed, have said, more fully to illustrate and support several of the Observations made in the Course of these Papers: But, the Generality have as little Patience, as Curiosity; and there has been enough said to awaken the Attention of the Few, who have Inclination and Capacity to examine farther into the Reasonableness of these Notions. What ever has been advanced is freely submitted to their Consideration, with this sincere Declaration, that the Intention of the Author, whether

ther on this, or any other Occasion, is neither to propagate, nor to defend an Errour; and consequently, not to gain-say a Truth.

As to the Tedioufness of the Subject, I beg leave only to add, in my own Defence; That I have been very sensible, from the Beginning, it would be thought tiresome, and improper for single Papers: But then, knowing it to be of the utmost Importance, and having not Leisure to treat it in another Method; Necessity, not Choice, has made me trespass upon the Indulgency, shewn to my Labours.



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## The Free-Thinker.

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*Nec poterat quisquam reperiri, quem neque  
morbus,  
Nec mors, nec luctus tentaret tempore tali.*

LUCRET.

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Friday, Dec. 16. Numb. CCLXXXVI. 1720.

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**N**otwithstanding the Translation of Thucydides, by Mr. Hobbs, is deservedly esteemed; yet I thought my Readers would not excuse me, if I transcribed from him the following Passage, which is an Entertainment proper for this Day.

THE Winter, now expiring, concluded the first Year of this War: And, no sooner did the Summer begin, than the Peloponnesians and their Allies made an Irruption, as before, into Attica; and pitching there, wasted the Country. Not many

many Days after they came into Attica, the Sickness first began to seize the Athenians; said to have raged before through divers Places, as well about Lemnos, as in other Regions. Certain it is, We have no mention, that either so great a Pestilence, or the like Mortality amongst Men, ever happened any Where. For, neither were the Physicians, prescribing at first through Ignorance, able to cure; but Themselves mostly died, as They visited most: Neither did any other human Skill avail. Even Supplications in the Temples, or Enquiries of Oracles, and other Resources of this Kind, as many as were tryed, proved all ineffectual: So that, they at last gave them over, submitting to the Evil.

It first began (as they say) in the Æthiopia above Ægypt, and descended, afterwards, into Ægypt, and Libya, and far within the Dominions of the King. Into the City of the Athenians it fell unexpectedly; and first attacked the Inhabitants of the Peiræan Port; whereupon, it was said, that the Peloponnesians had cast Poisons into the Water Pits: For, as yet, no Springs had been discovered There. At last, it removed up into the City; and then, much greater Num-

bers died. Now, let every One, Physician or Private-Man, declare, so far as he knows, whence this might probably happen; and what Causes, he thinks, might have a Power sufficient to work so great a Change: I shall only declare of what Kind it was; and by what Indications judging, if it should happen hereafter, any One, instructed before-hand, may best be able to know it: These Things will I manifest; having my self been ill, and seen others in their Illness.

Now, this Year, (as generally acknowledged) was of all the most healthy, with regard to other Indispositions: Or, if any One had an Ailment, all turned into This. But, Persons in full Health, without any apparent Cause, were suddenly seized first with violent Burnings in the Head, and Rednesses, and an Inflammation in the Eyes. Inwardly, both the Throat and the Tongue soon grew bloody; and the Breath issued forth offensive and putrid. Next to these succeeded a Sneezing and an Hoarseness; and, not long after, a Pain fell into the Chest, with a violent Cough: And, when it had settled in, and quite subverted, the Stomach, then ensued Evacuations of the Bile, of every sort ever mentioned by  
Physicians,

Physicians, accompanied with great Misery. Many likewise were taken with an empty Hickup, causing a strong Convulsion, that in some ceased immediately, in others much later.

The Body, outwardly examined, was neither very warm, nor pallid; but reddish, livid, putting forth little Pustules and Ulcers. But, the inward Parts so burned, that none could bear the Coverings of the slightest Garments, nor of the finest Linnens, nor any Thing, beside Nakedness; and, what they most desired was to throw Themselves into cold Water; and many of the Persons, who were neglected, labouring with a continual Thirst, plunged into Wells: But, whether they drank more, or less, the Effect was the same; and they were troubled with a perpetual Restlessness, and Watching. Neither did the Body, so long as the Distemper continued at the Height, waste and languish; but resisted the Misery, beyond Expectation: Inasmuch, that the Generality died of the inward Burning, within Nine, or Seven Days, while yet they had some Strength remaining; or, if they escaped this Tryal, the Disease falling into the Belly, and causing there a violent Exulceration,  
with

with the Addition of an immoderate Flux, many at last died, through Weakness. For, beginning from above, the Malady, which first seized the Head, passed through the whole Body. And, if any one survived the worst, this was very apparent by the extreme Parts; for, it broke out in the Privy-Members, the Fingers, and the Toes; with the Loss of which, many escaped. Some likewise lost their Eyes: Others, upon their Recovery, were immediately taken with a total Oblivion of all Things; so as neither to know Themselves, nor their Friends and Relations.

Language cannot express the Manner of this Sickness; which was not only too severe for human Nature, but likewise appeared to be of a foreign Kind, chiefly by the following Circumstances. The Winged and Four-footed Animals, that usually prey upon Men, though Multitudes lay unburied, either came not near them, or if they tasted, died. As a farther Proof; there was a manifest Scarcity of such Birds; and they were neither seen elsewhere, nor hovering about the Carcasses. But the Effects were yet more visible in the Dogs, by reason of their Familiarity with Men.

Such

Such, upon the whole (not to mention many particular Sufferings, which happened to one different from another) was the Appearance of this Distemper: Neither were they infested, during that Time, with any of the usual Diseases; but every Indisposition ended in This. Some died through want of Attendance; and others, though attended with all possible Care: And, it cannot be said, wherein Medicines proved of any Advantage; since, what relieved one was prejudicial to another: Neither was the Constitution of the Body, whether strong or weak, of any Significance in this Case; for it swept away all, under what Regulation soever or Method of Cure they were confined.

But the greatest Cruelty of this whole Evil, was the Despondency, which every one felt upon falling Sick, (for the Mind taking at once a Turn to Despair, they abandoned themselves, and made no Resistance) and that they perished like Sheep, one infecting another; which, indeed, was what most increased the Mortality: For, if, out of Fear, they forbore to visit one another, they died forlorn; and many Families became desolate, for want of Assistance; and if they

they visited, they likewise died; principally those, who had a Sense of Vertue: For, thinking it a Dishonour to spare Themselves, they went in to their Friends; seeing the very Domesticks, overcome by the vast Calamity, were at last tired out, and unmoved with the Lamentations and Groans of the Dying. Moreover, those who had escaped, did more abundantly commiserate both the Dead and the Sick; as having before had Experience of their Sufferings, and finding themselves now secure from the Danger: For, it never took the same Person twice, so as to prove fatal. They were likewise accounted Happy above all Men: And even They themselves, in the Excess of their present Joy, conceived a flattering Hope, never, for the Time to come, to die of any other Distemper.

The carrying of all Things from the Country into the City, was an Addition to their present Affliction, and no less a Calamity to the People, who flocked in. For, having not Houses, but dwelling, in the hot Season of the Year, in stifling Huts, the Mortality exceeded all Order; for, the Dying lay in Heaps upon the Dead, crowding up the Streets; and round all the Fountains lay Men half-dead,

dead, gasping for Water. The very Temples, wherein they had set up Dwelling-Tents, were filled with the Bodies, that died there: For, the Evil raging beyond Measure, and Men not knowing what to do, they grew wholly regardless of any Distinction between Things Holy and Profane. All the Laws, by which they were wont to regulate Funerals, were violated; and they buried, every one, where they could. Through the Want of Conveniencies, arising from frequent Funerals, many committed shameful Indecencies: For, some laid their Dead upon, and put Fire to, the *Piles* of others, preventing those, who built them; and others, bearing a dead Body, would throw it upon another, that was burning, and go away.

The great Licentiousness, which, in other Respects, likewise prevailed in the City, began from this Sickness. For, what a Man would before have dissembled, he durst now freely own to be done out of mere Voluptuousness; seeing so swift a Change, by the Rich dying, and Persons, worth nothing, inheriting their Affluence: So that they thought it reasonable to snatch all Enjoyments, and accelerate their Pleasures; per-

perswaded, they held both their Lives and their Possessions, only by the Day.

No Man was forward to honourable Fatigues; thinking it uncertain, whether he might live to accomplish them: But, whatever was thought pleasant, or a present Gain, was esteemed honest and advantageous: Neither did the Fear of the Gods, nor any Law of Men, restrain them: Because, on one hand, to worship, or not to worship, seemed a Matter of Indifference, since all were observed to perish alike; on the other, not one of the Offenders expected his Life would be prolonged to receive Punishment from Justice: And, imagining a much heavier Judgment to hang over them, they resolved, before it fell, to enjoy, at least, somewhat of Life.

*Mul-*

*Multarum semina rerum  
Esse supra docui, quæ sunt vitalia nobis;  
Et contra, quæ sint morbo, mortique necesse est  
Multa volare.* LUCRET.

Friday, December 30. Numb. CCXC.

**H**AVING given, to the Curious, \* Four Papers under the Title of TRANSACTIONS, it is now Time to add a *Fifth* to them, as my *Kalendar* for the Year now expiring: Wherein I shall note the Seasons in their natural Order, with the most material Occurrences, whether they be such as in any Measure were influenced by the Course of the Year, or other Incidents proper to be transmitted to Posterity.

In the Beginning of the Spring (the preceding Winter having been dry and mild) Men were not without Apprehensions, that the Summer would advance, before the Springs could rise, and the

\* N<sup>o</sup>. 181, 183, 185, 187.

Ponds and Ditches be filled with sufficient Supplies of Water for the Uses of the Country. These Apprehensions were increased by the unusual Heats, observed in the Beginning of *April*, and continuing till about the middle of the Month: But then, the *North-East* Winds rising; Thunder and Lightning, attended with violent Rains, on a sudden introduced the desired Alteration. Toward the End of *April*, the *Westerly* Winds prevailed; whereupon the Air grew clear again, and warm.

In *May*, the *North-East* Wind returned, with Thunder and Lightning; at the Time, when the *Baltick* Seas began to thaw, and lie open to Mariners. Next, succeeded a *North* Wind; which, prevailing greatly over the Heat, introduced a Kind of Winter: And thus the Weather continued through the later Part of *May*, and the Beginning of *June*; inasmuch that, the *Westerly* Winds, which followed, bringing on heavy Rains in abundance, the Meadows were flouded, in many Parts of the Island, as is common in Winter. And indeed, the Rains had so diluted the Earth, and chilled and moistened the Air, that we were not in the least sensible of the ordinary Effects of Summer. These

These Rains ceased on the *Fifth* of *June*, in the Evening; after a Day resembling in every Respect (bating the Length) the most wet and drizzly Days near the *Winter-Solstice*. Then blew the *Easterly* Winds afresh, in a clear Sky, as is usually seen early in the Spring; and the Air grew so keen, that, on the *Sixth* and the *Seventh* of *June*, the Fields were, in the Morning, covered with a *Hoar Frost*.

On the *Eighth* and *Ninth*, the *South-West* Wind was heard, attended with *April* Weather; the Sun gleaming, by Intervals, between the Showers: And, in the Afternoon of the *Ninth* Day, dark Clouds, charged with Thunder, were ushered in, by a brisk Gale from the *North-East*. This cold Wind prevailing, a fierce Storm of Hail followed upon the Thunder; and much Rain ensued, with bleak *Easterly* Winds, till after the *Solstice*; when the Weather, about the *Twentieth* of *June*, grew Hot: Nevertheless, the unkindly Winds (not unusual in *May*) were unseasonably repeated until the End of this Month.

Through all this Variety of Wind and Weather, the Changes of Distempers in  
O human

human Bodies were exactly correspondent to the Alterations in the Seasons; the Physicians observing the *Spring Agues* to return in the Beginning, and the *Summer-Diseases* in the End of *June*.

The *Coruscations*, called the *Northern Dawn*, were seen in the Months of *February* and *October*; the Seasons, wherein they appeared in the foregoing Years. So that, the same general Constitution of Nature seems still to continue; at least, in this Respect; Though our Weather has been influenced by the Winds blowing from the *Western Ocean*; and has consequently proved more rainy, than in the immediately preceding Years.

The last of those Years was remarkable, almost universally, for Heat and Drought; at least over all *Europe*, and other Parts, from whence we could receive any exact Accounts. And here, it may be worthy our Observation, that *Homer*, in his First *Iliad*, assigns the Cause of the Pestilence, raging in the *Grecian Camp*, to the Darts, that *Apollo* shot amongst the Troops, in his Anger: Which, taken out of the *Mythick Language*, signifies the Rays of the Sun in their full Vehemence; a Cause, which seems

seems to have been lately verified by severe Experience in *France*. The *Syrian Pestilence*, which swept away the Inhabitants of *Marseilles*, and infected other Towns in *Provence*, raged most, during the Droughts and Heats of this last Summer; For, there the Season was hot and dry, as in the former Year; notwithstanding that *Great-Britain* has, ever since the Spring, continued independent of those Laws, which have over-ruled the Southern Continent.

With us, the Winter has, hitherto, been mild and rainy, and the Earth neither covered with deep Snows, nor bound up by hard Frosts; at least in the South Parts of the Island. The Waters have overflowed the Low-lands; the Pastures have, every where, been sufficiently drenched; and the Cattle supplied with fresh Herbage: By which Means, the Husbandman saves much of his dry Fodder, and has the Prospect of a plentiful Year.

It is a common Opinion, that sharp, frosty Winters are the most favourable to our Tillage, and agree best with our Vegetables, as well as with our healthy Animals. Nevertheless, the Experience



of these last Thirty Years shews, that the Price of Corn has fallen in our Markets, according as the Winters have been moist and open; and that, there has been a Scarcity, as often as they proved severe and dry. And, indeed, a keen, lasting Frost cannot well be supposed agreeable to the tender Plants and Grains, which, at first imported from warmer Climates, are now become a considerable Share of our ordinary Food: And, as for the Weeds, the spontaneous Growth of our Soil, their Luxuriancy may always be subdued by the Diligence of the Gardiner, the Planter, and the Plowman.

*Wheat* is the Native of a hot Climate; and is therefore preserved here, by being sowed betimes in the Autumn, that it may take root, and spring up before the Frosts; which then only check its too forward Growth. And though the strong Grains of Wheat do, by this Advantage, survive a long frosty Season; yet the weaker perish. Wherefore, though the Choice of Wheat, and other foreign Vegetables, having strength to resist the Severity of the Weather, may ripen to more than ordinary Perfection; yet so great a Plenty is not to be expected, as happens after milder Winters, wherein  
the

the more feeble Grains can thrive, and encrease the Harvest to a *whole Crop*.

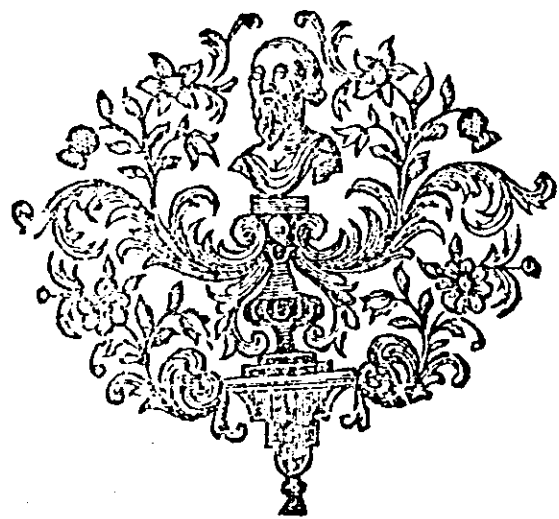
Our labouring Animals are not injured by moist and gentle Winters; neither do any of the beneficial Kinds seem, thereby, to suffer; *Sheep* only excepted. Not only in Winter, but at all Times, excessive Rains and Moisture are prejudicial to *Sheep*; being, in such Seasons, subject to a Distemper, not unlike the *Dropsy*. Their Fleeces are coarser, and their Flesh not so delicious, where the Herbage is rank: They delight in dry Pastures, and Downs, where the chalky Soil yeilds Grass in short and slender Blades; which makes the Wooll fine, and the Mutton delicate. But then, the Flocks, which are fed upon Hills, and dry, rising Grounds, seldom suffer from the Moistness of the Year.

Thus much for the last Annual Course of Months; in which Nature has been very indulgent to us: But, notwithstanding the Plenty, the Healthfulness and great Tranquility of the Year; such has been the perverse Ingenuity of some Able Heads, that the Publick labours more than ever, under manifest Difficulties; and very few, if any Persons, can say  
they

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they are not reduced to Difficulties in their Private Concerns: To redress both which Evils, nothing less, than the Justice and the Wisdom of the whole Legislature, seems sufficient.

*F I N I S.*



Handwritten text, possibly a title or page number, written in cursive script. The text is oriented vertically and appears to read "The Book of the" followed by a name that is difficult to decipher due to the cursive style and image quality. It is located in the upper left quadrant of the page.

