Of the causes of the scurvy

PART II

diet used there, nature points out the remedy. In such a situation, the ignorant sailor, and the learned physician, will equally long, with the most craving anxiety, for green vegetables, and the fresh fruits of the earth; from whose healing, attenuating, and saponaceous virtues, relief only can be had. And such people, in the height of the malady, not only employ their thoughts all day long on satisfying this importunate demand of nature, but are apt to have their deluded fancies tantalised in sleep with the agreeable ideas of feasting upon them at land. What nature, from an inward feeling, makes them thus

in others. Kramer enumerates the different places where it raged most, viz. where-ever the soil was damp and marshy. This observation has been made not only in Hungary, but in every other part of the world; and I will venture to affirm, that, without any one exception,

Scorbutus locis aridis ignotus est (Steggius).

Moisture was discovered to be one of the causes of this malady by Ronsseus, the very first author who ever wrote expressly upon it. The facts he produces, seem demonstratively to prove it; besides having the corroborating evidence of every accurate observation made since his time. All which, viz. the experience of two hundred years, we must contradict, by excluding this cause, and referring the scurvy to occult miasmata, or such latent causes in the air as produce fevers, and some other epidemical diseases. There are indeed perhaps but few diseases whose causes are more evident to the senses, and admit of more express proofs. Stugart, in Germany, was formerly noted for being a place where the scurvy raged much; but, upon drying up a large lake in the neighbourhood of the town, the disease has since quite disappeared. Along the banks of the Rhine, from Dourlach to Mentz, particularly at Philipsburg, it often succeeds large inundations of that river. Sinopraeus observed at Cronstadt, that the appearance of the scurvy, and its malignity, always depended upon the wetness of the season; a dry season instantly stopt it.

Where we have such undeniable proofs of the effects of moisture and driness, I cannot see any reason for having recourse to occult miasmata in the air, or the like imaginary and uncertain agents, for breeding a disease which a person contracts from moist air, by lying in a damp lodging, and using at this season too solid gross food. Such circumstances produce the distemper in every part of the world; and it may effectually be prevented at any time, by living in dry apartments, going well clothed, and having proper diet.

Though I have called the one the predisposing, the other the occasional
A TREATISE
OF THE SCURVY

IN THREE PARTS

Containing an inquiry into the Nature, Causes, and Cure, of that Disease
together with a Critical and Chronological View
of what has been published
on the subject

BY

JAMES LIND, M.D.
Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians
in Edinburgh

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LIND'S TREATISE
ON SCURVY

A Bicentenary Volume
containing a reprint of the First Edition of
A TREATISE OF THE SCURVY
by James Lind, M.D.
with Additional Notes

EDITED BY
C. P. STEWART, PH.D., D.SC.
AND
DOUGLAS GUTHRIE, M.D., F.R.C.S.E

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CONTENTS

EDITORS' FOREWORD

A TREATISE OF THE SCURVY BY
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Preface

PART I

I. A critical history of the different accounts of this disease
II. Of its several divisions, viz. into scurvies cold and hot, acid and alcaline, &c.
III. Of the distinction commonly made into a land and sea scurvy
IV. Of the scurvy being connate, hereditary, and infectious

PART II

I. The true causes of the disease, from observations made upon it, both at sea and land
II. The diagnostics, or signs
III. The prognostics
IV. The prophylaxis, or means of preventing this disease, especially at sea
V. The cure of the disease, and its symptoms
VI. The theory
VII. Dissections
VIII. The nature of the symptoms, explained and deduced from the foregoing theory and dissections
PART III

I. Passages in ancient authors, supposed to refer to this disease; together with the first accounts of it | 249

II. *Bibliotheca scorbutica:* or, A chronological view of what has hitherto been published on the scurvy | 262

Appendix | 349

A Chronological Index of Authors | 352
An Alphabetical Index of Authors, &c. | 355

ADDITIONAL NOTES—BIOGRAPHICAL AND TECHNICAL

I. The Third Edition of the *Treatise* | 361
By C. P. Stewart, PH.D., D.SC., Reader in Clinical Chemistry, University of Edinburgh

II. The Lind Tradition in the Royal Naval Medical Service | 369
By Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir Sheldon F. Dudley, K.C.B., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S.E., F.R.S., Medical Director-General of the Royal Navy, 1941-5

III. James Lind and Some of His Contemporaries | 387
By Douglas Guthrie, M.D., F.R.C.S.E., Lecturer in History of Medicine, University of Edinburgh, and A. P. Meiklejohn, M.A., B.Sc., D.M., M.R.C.P., Senior Lecturer in Nutrition, University of Edinburgh

IV. Scurvy in the Nineteenth Century and After | 404
By C. P. Stewart

V. The Chemistry of Vitamin-C | 413
By E. L. Hirst, M.A., D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S., Professor of Organic Chemistry, University of Edinburgh

VI. The Role of Ascorbic Acid in the Human Body | 425
By A. P. Meiklejohn, C. P. Stewart, and R. Passmore, M.A., D.M., Senior Lecturer in Physiology, University of Edinburgh
ILLUSTRATIONS

JAMES LIND, M.D.  

From an engraving by I. Wright from a painting by Sir George Chalmers, Bart. (1783). The engraving forms the Frontispiece to the copy of Lind’s Essay on Diseases incidental to Europeans in Hot Climates in the library of Haslar Hospital. The signature is from Lind's letter to Sir Alexander Dick.

TITL-E-PAGE OF THE FIRST EDITION  
i

H.M.S. SALISBURY  

LETTER FROM JAMES LIND TO SIR ALEXANDER DICK  

In this letter, dated 18th May 1758, Lind resigns the Treasurership of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh on his appointment as Physician to Haslar Hospital.

GENEALOGY OF JAMES LIND  

PAGE  

388