

**EPIDEMICS EXAMINED AND
EXPLAINED: OR, LIVING GERMS
PROVED BY ANALOGY TO BE A
SOURCE OF DISEASE, PP. 2-192**

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EPIDEMICS

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A SOURCE OF DISEASE.

BY

JOHN GROVE, M.R.C.S.L.

AUTHOR OF "SULPHUR AS A REMEDY IN EPIDEMIC CHOLERA."

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JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.

MDCCCL.

Med 1668.50

"The tendencies of the mind, the turn of thought of whole ages, have frequently depended on prevailing diseases; for nothing exercises a more potent influence over man, either in disposing him to calmness and submission, or in kindling in him the wildest passions, than the proximity of inevitable and universal danger."—*Hoeber's Epidemics of the Middle Ages.*

"The grand field of investigation lies immediately before us; we are trampling every hour upon things which to the ignorant seem nothing but dirt, but to the curious are precious as gold."
Sewell on the Cultivation of the Intellect.

TO

BENJAMIN GUY BABINGTON, F.R.S., M.D.,

PHYSICIAN TO GUY'S HOSPITAL,

AND

PRESIDENT OF THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SOCIETY,

ETC. ETC.

THESE PAGES ARE, BY HIS KIND PERMISSION,

Respectfully Dedicated,

BY HIS OBLIGED AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE following pages have been written with a view to render some aid in establishing a sound and firm basis for future research, on that absorbing topic, the Causes and Nature of Epidemic Diseases.

The amount of information already published on Fevers, on the Exanthemata, and on the Plague, is truly astonishing, and the more so when it is considered, that at present no rational account or explanation is given of the causes of these affections.

It appears to me but reasonable to suppose that as every thing on this earth has been created on a wise and unerring principle, Epidemic and Infectious Diseases are only indicative of some serious errors in our social arrangements and habits. The dangers and misery brought upon us by disease, may, as shewn by Dr. Spurzheim and Mr. Combe, be warnings against the infringement of the natural laws.

Indeed, what is more rational than to suppose that the Seeds of Disease are coeval with the fall of man. His first disobedience

brought death :—that his subsequent errors should hasten its approaches is not to be marvelled at. The undetected murderer, though he may escape the punishment human justice would inflict upon him for his delinquency, suffers a penalty in the tortures of conscience, infinitely more horrifying than the most ignominious death. The law of nature is triumphant.

No less certain, though after a different manner, are the consequences of minor forms of disobedience. It is so ordained, that certain diseases shall arise, under peculiar conditions, which may have been brought about by a train of causes, easily imagined, and difficult to be explained, but all having their origin in the vices and errors of man in his moral and social relations.

If man neglects the cultivation of the ground ; with rank vegetation, the germs of fever will invisibly grow and multiply ; if he harbours that which is rotten and corrupt, he is himself consumed by those agents destined to remove the rottenness and corruption ; it is a part of the law of nature that there should be active and energetic agents for this purpose. The seeds of disease, like the seeds of plants, may be shewn to have