

**AN ESSAY ON INDIGESTION, OR, MORBID
SENSIBILITY OF THE STOMACH & BOWELS, AS
THE PROXIMATE CAUSE OR CHARACTERISTIC
CONDITION OF DYSPEPSY, NERVOUS
IRRITABILITY, MENTAL
DESPONDENCY, HYPOCHONDRIASIS, AND
MANY OTHER AILMENTS OF BODY AND MIND**

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An essay on indigestion, or, Morbid sensibility of the stomach & bowels, as the proximate cause or characteristic condition of dyspepsy, nervous irritability, mental despondency, hypochondriasis, and many other ailments of body and mind by James Johnson

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JAMES JOHNSON

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AND MANY OTHER AILMENTS OF BODY AND MIND.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
OBSERVATIONS ON THE DISEASES AND REGIMEN OF INVALIDS,
ON THEIR RETURN FROM HOT AND UNHEALTHY CLIMATES.

SIXTH EDITION,
(IMPROVED.)

By **JAMES JOHNSON, M.D.**

OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, AND PHYSICIAN TO HIS ROYAL
HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CLARENCE;
AUTHOR OF THE INFLUENCE OF TROPICAL CLIMATES ON EUROPEAN CONSTI-
TUTIONS, AND EDITOR OF THE MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL REVIEW,
&c. &c.

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TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
PRINCE WILLIAM HENRY,
DUKE OF CLARENCE,

&c. &c. &c.

THIS ESSAY IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

OF THE

CONDESCENSION AND URBANITY

PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED

WHILE SERVING UNDER HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S FLAG,

BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S

DEVOTED HUMBLE SERVANT,

JAMES JOHNSON.

*Suffolk Place,
10th August, 1829.*

P R E F A C E

(TO THE FIRST EDITION.)



THE subject of this *Essay* has occupied the pens of so many able writers, of late, that some excuse may seem necessary for another tax on the Public. The present, however, is not a very heavy tax on the purse or patience of the reader; for if it be a bad, it is, at all events, not a large book. I shall not therefore offer an apology, since no apology will procure a favourable reception for him who obtrudes himself unnecessarily on the time and attention of his professional brethren.

The materials of this *Essay* have been drawn entirely from personal observation, and not a few of them from personal suffering; and if I have questioned certain popular doctrines, and insisted on a more rigorous system of self-control than may suit the ideas of many people, both in and out of the Profession, I have done so on the sure ground of experience. Those who disrelish the precepts I have laid down—or who may think the promised advantages too dearly purchased by the proposed sacrifices, have only to go on, till *more* and ill health induce them to think more seriously on the work of reformation. I have not preached Utopian doctrines on the subject of diet—I have proposed nothing but what has been practised by many others, as well as by myself, with advantage—and I am confident that he who gives the plan a fair trial, will never condemn it, even if he have not fortitude to pursue it.

In this *Essay* I have endeavoured to investigate the operation of moral causes on the digestive organs, more minutely than has generally been done: and to trace, with more care, the reaction of these organs on the mental faculties. The amount of suffering which is inflicted on the body through the agency of the mind, is only equalled by the retributive misery reflected on the mind through the medium of the body. The play of affinities and reciprocity of sympathies between the intellectual and material portions of our nature, have not been sufficiently attended to in the investigation and management of diseases; and I am not without hope that this *Essay* may be instrumental in lessening the extent of human maladies by increasing our knowledge of their moral as well as physical causes.

In the treatment, I have ventured to expose the injury which is done to the stomach by a farrago of tonics and stimulants, as well as by violent purgation—while I have shown the efficacy of some simple remedies when judiciously employed. But, above all, I have endeavoured to demonstrate

the true principles on which the plan of diet and regimen should be constructed, not only in indigestion, but in a host of mental and corporeal discomforts which are little suspected of having their origin in the stomach. Having long suffered from this class of complaints, in my own person, my attention has been strongly drawn to it in others. The result of my experience is here given, in as small a space as possible, and the Public will decide whether or not my observations have been correct and the deductions from them legitimate.

JAMES JOHNSON.

Suffolk Place, Pall Mall East,
1st Nov. 1826.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE rapid exhaustion of a large impression of this Essay, in less than two months, has far exceeded my expectations, and, I fear, is disproportioned to the slender merits of the work. I have now to return my grateful thanks to the Public for so favourable a reception—and to the Press for so liberal a notice of this Essay. In revising the sheets for a Second Edition, I trust I have improved the Work, and have only to hope that it may prove useful to my younger Professional Brethren, and, through them, to the Public at large.

JAMES JOHNSON.

Suffolk Place, Pall Mall East,
10th January, 1827.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE short period that has elapsed since the Second Edition of this Essay was published, prevents the addition of much new matter; and I am happy to find that the criticisms of the Press, and the general reception of the work by the Public, afford few grounds for altering or retracting any thing which I have advanced. I have appended some notes, in various places, to this Edition, and have only to hope that the precepts and principles which it inculcates, may tend to mitigate the sufferings of my fellow-creatures, by directing the attention of my junior Professional Brethren into the best channel of observation and practice.

JAMES JOHNSON.

Suffolk Place, Pall Mall East,
10th April, 1827.

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

THE demand for a Fourth Edition of a purely medical work, in the short space of nine months, is rather unusual. For this success I am far from taking much credit to myself. If there be any merit in the work, it depends almost entirely on close observation of the phenomena of diseases—of their various causes—and of their appropriate remedies. Such observation is compatible with a very moderate degree of talent—and the record of experience thus gained, requires no other ornament than a strict regard to truth.

I have taken this opportunity of revising carefully the whole of the Work, and I have introduced, in various places, a considerable addition of what I hope will be found useful matter.

JAMES JOHNSON,

Suffolk Place,
20th August, 1827.

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

THE Fourth Edition, consisting (as the third) of ONE THOUSAND COPIES, was published on the 1st of September last, and is now out of print. At an earlier period of life, this literary success would have probably induced some emotions of vanity: It can now only excite feelings of gratitude to the Public—and create a hope, that this Essay has done some good to my fellow creatures, by mitigating the sufferings of humanity. Although I have had no reason to subvert any principle which had been laid down in the First Edition, I have, however, been able to make considerable improvements in subsequent Editions—and even in this last.

JAMES JOHNSON,

Suffolk Place,
10th April, 1828.

PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION.

IN revising this Edition for the press, I have had but very few alterations to make. Additional experience has suggested a few additional hints in the course of the Essay. An instance may be seen at page 75, respecting the influence of malaria, or damp, in the production of nervous, dyspeptic, and hypochondriacal affections.

JAMES JOHNSON,

10th August, 1829.