

**RESEARCHES INTO THE NATURE
AND TREATMENT OF
DROPSY IN THE BRAIN, CHEST,
ABDOMEN, OVARIUM AND SKIN**

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Researches into the Nature and Treatment of Dropsy in the Brain, Chest, Abdomen, Ovarium and Skin by Joseph Ayre

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JOSEPH AYRE

**RESEARCHES INTO THE NATURE
AND TREATMENT OF
DROPSY IN THE BRAIN, CHEST,
ABDOMEN, OVARIIUM AND SKIN**

RESEARCHES
INTO
THE NATURE AND TREATMENT
OF
DROPSY
IN THE
BRAIN, CHEST, ABDOMEN, OVARIUM,
AND SKIN;

IN WHICH
A MORE CORRECT AND CONSISTENT PATHOLOGY
OF THESE DISEASES
IS POINTED OUT,
AND
A NEW AND MORE SUCCESSFUL METHOD OF TREATING THEM,
RECOMMENDED AND EXPLAINED.

By **JOSEPH AYRE, M.D.**
MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON, &c. &c.

THIRD EDITION.

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1838.

318.

TO

J O H N A Y R E, M. D.

THE FOLLOWING WORK

IS

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS FRIEND AND BROTHER,

THE AUTHOR.



ADVERTISEMENT.

IN putting forth the Third Edition of this work, I have not found it necessary to make any change in the doctrines delivered concerning Dropsy, nor any in the treatment recommended for it, as farther experience in both has only tended to confirm me in their truth and importance. I have greatly enlarged the Fourth Chapter, which consists of a selection of cases of Dropsy, as illustrating strongly the successful method of treatment recommended for it. In them, if I mistake not, will be found the proof of the superiority of the antiphlogistic method of treatment over the stimulant and tonic plan so commonly pursued in these diseases, and of the practicability of permanently curing many of those severer forms of the complaint, which it is too much the practice to treat with worse than palliatives, or wholly to neglect as incurable.

Hull, 1833.

J. A.

PREFACE.

IF evidence were wanted to show the unsatisfactory nature of the pathological views at present entertained of Dropsy, such evidence might be found in the number of the remedies recommended and employed in its treatment, and in the multiplied modes of their administration; for it may be assumed as an axiom in medicine, that a correct pathology is necessarily accompanied by a simplicity of prescription, and that the one may be regarded as the appropriate test of the other.

The illustrious Sydenham believed, from his success in a single case, that a drastic purgative was a specific for the cure of abdominal dropsy; and acknowledged, with the candour which distinguished him, the

surprise and disappointment he afterwards felt by its failure in other cases. Since his time, numerous medicines of various powers, and in pursuance of various objects, have, in their turn, been adopted and discarded; and such has been the confiction of opinions in regard to the efficacy of most of them, as to create, in the minds of many practitioners, an utter distrust of them all. The cause, however, of their failure has arisen, not so much from any intrinsic defect in the medicines themselves, as from the defective pathology which governed their use, and particularly from the neglect of an antiphlogistic regimen and treatment, which are necessary to give them effect — in regarding, in fact, too commonly, the serous accumulation as the only disease, with debility for its assigned cause, and the means employed for its removal, as the appropriate and only remedy for both.

To correct these, and other erroneous notions concerning the nature and mode of treating this disease, and to fix its pathology