

**GOUT AND RHEUMATISM;
AND THE CURATIVE
EFFECTS OF GALVANISM**

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Gout and Rheumatism; And the Curative Effects of Galvanism by Richard Moore Lawrance

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RICHARD MOORE LAWRENCE

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AND

THE CURATIVE EFFECTS

OF

GALVANISM.

BY

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NATURA NIHIL AGAT FRUSTRA.



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PREFACE.

IN directing attention to Electricity, or more strictly speaking Galvanism, and its curative powers, I by no means pretend to develop either the nature of a new agent or a new application of it, in the character of a therapeutic. The history given in the text at the beginning of this essay will secure me from any such imputation.

When the medical properties of electricity were first manifested, enthusiasts imagined that they had discovered a universal remedy; and from the numerous failures consequent on such unlimited application it fell into disrepute, and instead of holding the place of a powerful therapeutic directed by professional science, it became and remains to

this day, chiefly a source of emolument to ignorance and empiricism.

Under the consideration that medical men generally look upon this branch of physics as one but very remotely connected, if indeed at all, with practice, and therefore devote but little time to its study, it seemed excusable to appropriate a portion of the following pages to a general outline of electrical science; I have therefore given in the first place a concise detail of the general history, nature, and powers of electricity.

Having, as it were, initiated the reader into the first rudiments, I proceed to those relations which more intimately connect the phenomena of electricity with those of life. Thus, in the remarks upon electro-physiology, the effects of the agent, not only upon the animal tissues and economy, but even upon the vital principle itself, are shown and explained.

Electrolysis or electro-chemical decomposition is next examined; but the above details being merely supplementary to the immediate object of this little work, have been

treated with brevity and conciseness, and yet it is to be hoped without any sacrifice of clearness or perspicuity.

Passing on from such preliminaries to the introduction of electricity as a remedial agent in disease, I have ventured to introduce it to the reader as a valuable therapeutic in the treatment of gout and rheumatism; and in illustration, I have given a few out of many cases which fully warrant the opinion of its powers which I have advocated. At the same time, I am aware that galvanism, as a branch of medical science, has to encounter many difficulties, not from the prejudice alone with which it is regarded, but because the application is both troublesome and tedious, and, what is more, requires an amount of patience and a sacrifice of time which men in extensive practice will hardly afford.

There is but one more point to which I shall allude. Many who have witnessed or experienced the effects of electricity as exhibited at the various scientific institutions, run away with the notion that the medical application is in every respect similar to these wonder-exciting exhibitions, and the invalid is dismayed by the apprehended violence of shocks which he thinks his debilitated frame is totally un-

able to endure. A perusal of the following pages will, I hope, convince the reader that such fears are founded upon a totally mistaken notion of the nature of galvanism in proper hands as a medical agent.

21, *Connaught Square*,
March 24, 1855.

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