

III. *An Extract from the Acta Eruditorum for the Month of March, 1713. Pag. 111.*

De Contagiosâ Epidemiâ, quæ in Patavino agro & totâ fere Venetâ ditone in Boves irrepfit, Dissertatio. Auctore Bernardino Ramazzini, Practicæ Medicinæ Professore Publico. Patavii, 1712. in 8vo.

A Dissertation concerning the dreadful Contagious Distemper, seizing the Black Cattle in the Venetian Territories, and especially about Padua.

IT is now (at the Publishing the Discourse) a Year and half, since a dreadful, unexpected and violent Contagion has seiz'd the *Black Cattle*, which, like an increasing Fire, could neither be extinguish'd nor stop't by any Human means.

This first began to be observ'd a little in *Agro Vincentino*, and soon discover'd it self more openly in the Country, spreading it self every way even to the very Suburbs of *Padua*, with a cruel Destruction of the *Cows* and *Oxen*. It has also been taken notice of in *Germany*, in many Places; nor has it been yet wholly conquer'd, Publick News informing us, that it still remains in the Territories of *Milan*.

Of this so threatening a Distemper, the famous *Dr. Ramazzini*, according to his yearly Custom, on *November 9. 1711.* made a particular Dissertation; in which he inquir'd into the Causes of the Distemper, and shew'd what Remedies might be us'd, to put a stop to its violent Course.

It is sufficiently evident, that this Distemper, in the Cow-kind, was a true Fever, from the coldness, rigor and standing up of the Hair of the Cattle at first, which was soon succeeded by a violent sharp burning, with a quick Pulse. That this Fever was malignant, mortal and pestilential, its concomitant Symptoms plainly shew'd; such as great uneasiness with difficulty

faculty of breathing, great pantings with a sort of snorting, and at the beginning a kind of *Stupor* and Drowsiness, a continual Flux of a strong smelling Matter from the Nose and Mouth, a very fetid Dung, sometimes with Blood, all Ruminarion ceasing, Pustules breaking out over the whole Body on the 5th or 6th day, like the *Small Pox*; they all generally dy'd about the 5th or 7th day, very few of them escaping.

The Author deduces this Distemper from a contagious Original. He tells us, it is certain, that out of a great Drove, such as the Merchants bring yearly into *Italy* out of *Dalmatia* and the bordering Countries, one Beast happen'd to straggle from the rest, and be left behind; which a Cowherd finding, brought to a Farm belonging to the Illustrious and Reverend Count *Borromeo*, Canon of *Padua*: This Beast infected all the Cows and Oxen of the Place where he was taken in, with the same Distemper he labour'd under; the Beast it self dying in a few days, as did all the rest, except one only, who had a Rowel put into his Neck.

'Tis no strange thing therefore, if from the *Effluvia*, like an Atmosphere, proceeding from the sick Cattle, from those dead, and from the Cowhouses and Pastures where they were fed, and by that means infected, and chiefly from the Cloaths of the Cowherds themselves, this Infection falling upon a proper Subject, should diffuse it self so largely. When therefore this subtil venomous Exhalation happens to meet with any of the Cow kind, joining it self with the ferous Juices and Animal Spirits, whilst it is carry'd all over the Body, disorders the natural consistence of the Blood, and corrupts the Ferments of the *Viscera*; whence it naturally follows, that the natural Functions of the *Viscera* are vitiated, and the requisite Secretions stop'd. For

Dr. *Ramazzeni* not only supposes, but asserts, that this Poison is of that kind which rather fixes and coagulates, than dissolves the Blood: For besides the forementioned Symptoms accompanying the Disease, the Eye it self is a Witness; since the dead Carcases being open'd while they are yet hot, little or no
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Blood nevertheless runs out; those Animals having naturally a thick Blood, especially when the Fever has continued so many Days. Whether therefore this Plague came first from the foreign Beast, or any other way, it is the same thing. when at last it fell upon some Animal in which there was the morbid Seminary or Ground prepared for it.

In the dead Bodies of all the Cattle it was particularly observed, that in the *Omasus*, or Paunch, there was found a hard compact Body, firmly adhering to the Coats of the Ventricle, of a large Bulk, and an intolerable Smell: In other Parts, as in the Brain, Lungs, &c. were several *Hydatides*, and large Bladders fill'd only with Wind, which being open'd gave a deadly Stink; there were also Ulcers at the Root of the Tongue, and Bladders fill'd with a *Serum* on the sides of it. This hard and compact Body, like Chalk, in the *Omasus*, the Author takes to be the first product of the contagious *Miasma*. He adds a Prognostick, believing that from so many Attempts and Experiments, and the Method observ'd in the Cure of this Venom, at last a true and Specifick Remedy will be found out to extirpate the poisonous Malignity wholly: He also expects some mitigation of it, from the approaching Winter and North Winds. He does not think this Contagion can affect Human Bodies, since even other *Species* of ruminating Animals, symbolizing with the Cow-kind, are yet untouch'd by it; nor was the Infection catch'd from the Air, provided due care was taken in the burying the dead Bodies.

As for the Cure of it: From the *Chirurgical* Part he commends Bleeding, burning on both sides the Neck with a broad red-hot Iron, making Holes in the Ears with a round Iron, and putting the Root of *Hellebore* in the Hole, a Rowel or Seton under the Chin, in the Dew-laps; he also orders the Tongue and Palate to be often wash'd and rub'd with Vinegar and Salt.

As for the *Pharmaceutical* Part; he recommends *Alexipharmicks*, and specifick Cordials; and from the *Veg table Kingdom*, three Ounces of *Jesuits Bark*, infus'd in 10 or 12 Pints of Coriaria Water or small Wine, to be given in 4 or 5 Doses; which

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is to be done in the beginning of the Fever, when the Beast begins to be sick. From the *Animal*, two Drams of *Sperma Cati* dissolv'd in warm Wine. From the *Mineral*, *Antimonium Diaphoreticum*. Against *Worms* breeding, an Infusion of *Quicksilver*, or *Petroleum* and Milk is to be given. And lastly, as to the *Food*, Drinks made with Barly or Wheat Flower or Bread, like a *Prisane*, fresh sweet Hay made in *May* and macerated in fair Water. In the mean time the Cattle must be kept in a warm Place, and cloath'd, to keep them as much as possible from the cold Air, daily making Fumigations in the Cowhouses with *Juniper Berries*, *Galbanum*, and the like. As to Prevention; he enjoyns Care in cleaning the Stalls, and seraping the Crust off from the Walls; Care also is to be taken of their Food, that it be good, the Hay and Straw not spoil'd by Rain in the making, and judges their Food ought to be but sparing; Friction, rubbing and currying, not only with the Hand, but with a Currycomb and Brush; with Setons under their Chin, made with a hot Iron run through the Part, and kept open with a Rope put through it.
