

XCVII. *A further Account of the Case of the Family at Wattisham, in Suffolk, whose Limbs mortified: In a Letter from Charlton Wollaston, M. D. F. R. S. and Physician to Guy's Hospital, to Thomas Birch, D. D. Secretary to the Royal Society.*

Dear Sir,

Pall-Mall, Oct. 29, 1762.

Read Nov. 11,
1762.

DR. Heberden some time since communicated a letter from me, giving an account of a most remarkable mortification of the limbs, which had affected a whole family in Suffolk. As the society may be curious to know some farther particulars relating to this singular calamity, I thought it might not be improper to acquaint them, that most of the unhappy sufferers have survived it.

The father is perfectly recovered; except that the two fingers, which were particularly affected, remain in some degree contracted.

The mother is still alive. In my former account dated April 13, I mentioned, that one of her feet had separated at the ankle; and that the other leg was perfectly sphacelated to within a few inches of the knee, but not then taken off. Some little time afterwards the husband broke off the tibia, which was quite decayed, about three inches below the knee: the fibula was not decayed; so the surgeon sawed it off. The stumps of both legs still continue unhealed; and as the ends of the bones in both of them seem to be cariose, and the woman will not consent to any farther operation, they may perhaps
never

never heal. The mortification however has not, in this limb, nor indeed in any one of these cases, spread beyond the original separation. Her right arm is considerably wasted, and the fingers contracted.

The eldest girl, Mary, died within a few weeks after I saw her.

The second girl, Elizabeth, is perfectly well: the fores quite healed.

The third girl, Sarah, is not yet well. Her foot separated at the articulation of the os scaphoides with the astragalus. The os calcis, and astragalus, are both of them cariose, and probably keep the wound from healing.

The two boys are perfectly recovered; and seem in every respect as healthy as possible.

I have taken all the pains I could to enquire into the cause of so remarkable a disorder; and Mr. Bones, the minister of the village, who knew the family before this misfortune happened to them, and has ever since been indefatigable in his attention and tenderness to them, has also made all the enquiry in his power: but we have not been able to find, that there was any thing particular either in their diet or manner of life, to which it could be attributed. The corn, with which they made their bread, was certainly very bad: it was wheat, that had been cut in a rainy season, and had lain on the ground till many of the grains were black and totally decayed: but many other poor families in the same village made use of the same corn without receiving any injury from it. One man lost the use of his arm for some time; and still imagines himself, that he was afflicted with the same disorder as Downing's family: but, by what I

could learn from him, there seemed to be no reason for this supposition. He is long since perfectly recovered.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient

Most humble servant,

Charlton Wollaston.

XCVIII. *Observations on the Tides in the Island of St. Helena: in a Letter from the Rev. Nevil Maskelyne, A. M. F. R. S. to Thomas Birch, D. D. Secretary to the Royal Society.*

Reverend Sir,

Read Nov. 18, 1762. **N**OT having met with any observations of the tides made in a place so near the line as this, or at an island situated in the middle of so large an ocean, I was desirous of making some experiments on this subject. For this purpose I had a post about 20 foot long erected in a convenient place in the harbour before James's fort, which was the properest situation that could be found, being to the leeward part of the island, where ships may ride at anchor safely all the year round.

One side of it was painted black, over which white strokes were painted at the distance of 3 inches,