Extracts from

Account of the Yellow Fever which prevailed in Virginia in the years 1737, 1741, and 1742, in a Letter to the late Esq. de l'hotel de Golden, Esq. of New York, from the late John Mitchell, M.D., F.R.S., of Virginia.

The letter, written by Dr. Mitchell in 1744, finally came into the hands of Dr. Rush, who placed it in the hands of Dr. Mitchell's sister in 1780. It was published in 1814 in the American Medical and Philosophical Register, vol. iv., 1814.

Sir,

I am giving you an account of the pestilential distemper which has lately raged in Virginia, I shall not touch on any thing relating to it, which you have had a full account already in the same or like discourse.
writing, and spare you the tedious terrors of reading, by which reason it would be needless here, to enter into a particular enumeration and description of all the symptoms which accompany this dire disease, they being no more, and no fewer, than what are commonly ascribed to and may be observed in most malignant fevers; besides they are already enumerated by Dr. Warren, the symptoms and their remarkable stages of our disease, are much the same as those observed by the said author in the malignant fever of the Barbadoes; but I shall recount those symptoms, which appeared true to the posthumous or, and inseparable from the disease—at least when rightly formed, as they seem not yet to be so well known, by which this fever will appear to be of the malignant kind as it generally resembles those that are contagious, by its
first, appearing with a pain in the head and back and about the stomach, succeeded by grievous anxieties and oppression about the precordia. In general this disturbance may be defined to be a pestilential fever proceeding from an infectious disease or a generic which influences the stomach and adjacent viscera, obstructs the biliary ducts, and dissolves the adipose humours; to which generally succeeds an effusion of a fluid or other yellow humour upon the external or internal surface of the body, unless prevented by some means or other.

Those pectoral respiratory synphines appeared to be the following, viz., whilst the other Pains are more peculiar to

1. A very great sudden debility without any manifest cause.

2. A gurrying anxiety, generally very grumbling.

3. A short and quick difficulty of orthopneic respiration after a fast is formed.

4. A contractile Pulse; the artery feels tense, but the Pector.
unspeakable, to which succeeds a depressed n soft and low pulse, after the
sluggish the disease, or after the yellow
appearance, a pain of the
ventricularis, either much un-
explained, or to be felt on pressing
that part, and more or less severe
according to the severity of the disease.
5. A yellowness in the eyes or all on
the body at the state of the disease; may
prevently colligation, or critical
discharges; to which may be added a
violent and unusual kind of pain of the
head, unless it is drowned, as it very
in the more previous complain in
the previous.
The principal causes and state
of the body in this disease may be
prettily reduced to those vessels in the
annual economy from the following
anatomical dissections.

February 14, 1741-2. At the request
of Richard Clencheste, Esq. in Virginia
and in the presence of him sexual
others. I opened the body, and this
large who died of this disease.
This was the body of an elderly woman,
post-mortem, who died the day before, in
the prime of the disease, with the following
complaints: grievous and violent
ailments, occasioned as she said
by the sickness of her stomach,
severe pain in her head and back,
returning by intervals. Convulsed
by convulsions, and the serpentine
cordis painful to the touch, short quick
and intermitting respiration with
diseased sighs and heavy groans; a
slight burning rather than delicious,
black tongue, unquenchable thirst.
Ninieres, my quick and depressed
pulse, the eyes very yellow, a sudden
and severe pain about the neck a few
minutes before death.
After culturing the tegument of the
abdomen, the fat of the body appeared
a yellow, so as to be noticed by the bystanders,
and was indeed as yellow as the eyes
commonly are in jaundice.
penetrating into the cavity of the abdomen, and laying the tegument aside, I was surprised to see no such thing as an omenurium; at first I imagined I had torn it off, removed it from side with the teguments; but in vain was it sought for in the whole body. There appeared a few things like the blood vessels of the calf adhering to the place where it is generally connected to the stomach and colon, the bodies of which connection might be discovered; but there was no more remaine of its substance than a little yellowish thin oily liquor floating up and down among the intestines and about the mesentery.

The liver appeared turgid and plump without any bluish in its outer convex surface; but in its concave surface, two thirds of it was of a deep black colour, round the gall bladder seeming to be mortified or corrupted.

The gall bladder appeared return'd of a deep yellow, but within was full of a black ropby coagulatus atra tiliis, which
such substance—likewise obstructed
its force likewise and stunted cholecystology.

This atra-bile was hardly fluid; but
in opening the gall bladder it retained
its form and shape without being eunomized
being of the consistency of a thin
extract—and within glutinous and
ropy like porridge when boiling; this black
mallein seemed so much unlike bile
that I doubted if there was any bile in the
gall: it more resembled bruised or
mortified blood, evacuated from the mortified
guts of the liver surrounding, although
it until stain a knife a probe thrust
into it of a yellow colour, which, with
its roppy consistency seemed more
peculiar to a bilious union

The duodenum was of a deep yellow
colour as usual when to outside; but—
while contiguous to the cephalic fellea, had
a mixture of a deep green or erisimos
colour intermixcd with its yellow;
within, it contained a viscid bile, or
rather a yellow mucous, closely adhering
to its trunks, mixed with a little thin
blood bile; like that anterior in the stomh.
The villous coat appeared to be lined with a thicker fur or blinder than ordinary which being scraped or peeled off the inner muscular coat of the gut appeared red and inflamed.

The stomach seemed manifestly inflamed. It had a thick muslin surface toward its upper surface. Its longitudinal strips of a dark red color, somewhat resembling the flushing in the cheeks or a rose in the leg; it had nothing within but a little drink which had just swallowed, and some of the black chlorella, resembling that in the gall-bladder, floating upon it, which was a blacker color than than in the gall-bladder itself. It looked red from within as if it had been inflamed there likewise; so illusory or at appeared, like that of the dividing more fuzzy texture, as if it were swollen and distended which was particularly marked by all others who opened any bodies that died of this disease.

The lungs instead of being collapsed were rather inflated as he inspired.
in which spots, generally more than one
all vesicular, or blisters, like those
of an erysipelas or gangrene, contain
ing a yellowish humor.

I did not so curiously examine the
other parts, as I saw no defect in any;
and these seemed sufficient to show
the cause of his death. I ascribed to the
mental symptoms of the disease;
only the blood vessels in general seemed
very simply 1 blood, even the very capi
and its branches; the blood seemed to
be collected in the vasa; for upon cutting
the lungs or sound liver, spleen, they
bled freely. The brain was not opened
in want of conveniences at hand, but
it did not seem to be affected in
the disease, and was not affected
in those more who were opened.

This woman was taken with a pain in her
head and back, extending from the limbs as
far as the region of the liver, with great sickness
of the stomach, succeeded by chills, fever,
exci nes, lassitude, &c., and was
found to die pellagra.