

JOHN CAIUS

THE
SWEATING
SICKNESS

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*The Sweating Sickness A boke or counseill against the disease commonly
called the sweate or sweatyng sicknesse:*

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**The Sweating Sicknesse A
booke or counseill against the
disease commonly called the
sweate or sweatynge sicknesse**

In the fereful tyme of the sweate (ryghte honourable) many resorted vnto me for counseil, among whōe some beinge my frendes & acquaintance, desired me to write vnto them some litle counseil howe to gouerne themselues therin: sayyng also that I should do a greate pleasure to all my frendes and contrimen, if I would deuise at my laisure some thīg, whiche from tyme to tyme might remaine, wherto men might in such cases haue a recourse & present refuge at all nedes, as thē they had none. At whose requeste, at that tyme I wrate diuerse counseiles so shortly as I could for the present necessite, whiche they bothe vsed and dyd geue abroad to many others, & further appoynted in my self to fulfill (for so much as laye in me) the other parte of their honest request for the time to come. The whiche the better to execute and brynge to passe, I spared not to go to all those that sente for me, bothe poore, and riche, day and night. And that not only to do thē that ease that I could, & to instructe thē for their recouery: but to note also throughly, the cases and circumstaunces of the

disease in diuerse persons, and to vnderstande the nature and causes of the same fully, for so much as might be. Therefore as I noted, so I wrate as laisure then serued, and finished one boke in Englishe, onely for Englishe mē not lerned, one other in latine for men of lerninge more at large, and generally for the help of thē which hereafter should haue nede, either in this or other coūtreis, that they may lerne by our harmes. This I had thoughte to haue set furth before christmas, & to haue geuē to your lordshippe at new-yeres tide, but that diuerse other businesses letted me. Neuertheles that which then coulede not be done cometh not now out of season, although it be neuer so simple, so it may do ease hereafter, which as I trust this shal, so for good wil I geue and dedicate it vnto your good Lordshippe, trustyng the same will take this with as good a mind, as I geue it to your honour, whiche our Lorde preserue and graunt long to continue.

At London the first of Aprill

1552

The boke of Jhon Caius against the sweatynge sicknes

Man beyng borne not for his owne vse and cōmoditie alone, but also for the commō benefite of many, (as reason wil and al good authoures write) he whiche in this world is worthy to lyue, ought al wayes to haue his hole minde and intente geuen to profite others. Whiche thyng to shewe in effecte in my selfe, although by fortune some waies I haue ben letted, yet by that whiche fortune cannot debarre, some waies again I haue declared. For after certein yeres beyng at cambrige, I of the age of XX. yeres, partly for mine exercise and profe what I coulde do, but chefely for certein of my very frēdes, dyd translate out of Latine into Englishe certein workes, hauyng nothyng els so good to gratifie them w^t. Wherof one of *S. Chrysostome de modo orandi deum*, that is, of y^e manner to praye to god, I sent to one my frende then beyng in the courte. One other, a woorke of *Erasmus de vera theologia*, the true and redy waye to reade the scripture, I dyd geue to Maister Augustine Stiwarde Alderman of Norwiche, not in the ful as the authore made it, but abbreviate for his only purpose to whome I sent it, Leuyng out many subtile thinges, made rather for great & learned diuines, thē for others. The thirde was the paraphrase of the same Erasmus vpon the Epistle of S. Jude, whiche I translated at the requeste of one other my

deare frende.

These I did in Englishe the rather because at that tyme men ware not so geuen all to Englishe, but that they dyd fauoure & mayteine good learning contened in tongues & sciences, and did also study and apply diligently the same thē selues. Therefore I thought no hurte done. Sence y^t tyme diuerse other thynges I haue written, but with entente neuer more to write in the Englishe tongue, partly because the cōmoditie of that which is so written, passeth not the compasse of Englande, but remaineth enclosed within the seas, and partly because I thought that labours so taken should be halfe loste among them whiche sette not by learnyng. Thirdly for that I thought it beste to auoide the iudgement of the multitude, from whome in maters of learnyng a man shalbe forced to dissente, in disprouyng that whiche they most approue, & approuyng that whiche they moste disalow. Fourthly for that the common setting furthe and printīg of euery foolishe thyng in englishe, both of phisicke vnperfectly, and other matters vndiscretly diminishe the grace of thynges learned set furth in thesame. But chiefly, because I wolde geue none example or comforte to my countrie men, (whō I wolde to be now, as here tofore they haue bene, comparable in learnyng to men of other countries) to stonde onely in the Englishe tongue, but to leaue the simplicite of thesame, and to procede further in many and diuerse knoweleges bothe in tongues and sciences at home and in vniuersities, to the adournyng of the cōmon welthe, better seruice of their kyng, & great pleasure and

commodite of their owne selues, to what kinde of life so euer they shold applie them. Therefore whatsoeuer sence that tyme I minded to write, I wrate y^e same either in greke or latine. As firste of all certein commentaries vpon certein bokes of William framinghã, maister of art in Cambrige, a man ot great witte, memorie, diligence and learnyng, brought vp in thesame scholes in Englande that I was, euer frõ his beginnyng vntil his death. Of the which bokes, ij. of *cõtinẽtia* (or cõtinence) wer in prose, y^e reste in metre or verse of diuerse kindes. One a comforte for a blinde mã, entitled *ad Aemilianum cæcum consolatio*, one other *Ecpyrosis, seu incendiũ sodomorũ*, the burnyng of Sodome. The thirde *Laurentius*, expressyng the tormentes of Saincte Laurence. The fourthe, *Idololatria*, Idolatrie, not after the trade and veine of scripture (wherein he was also very well exercised) but conformable to scripture and after the ciuile and humane learnyng, declaryng them to worshippe *Mars*, that warre, or fight: *Venus*, that lyue incontinently: *Pluto*, that folowe riches couetously; and so forth through all vices vsed in his time. The fiueth boke *Arete*, vertue: the sixth, Epigrãmes, contained in two bokes, whiche by an epistle of his owne hand before y^e boke yet remainyng, he dedicated vnto me, purposyng to haue done many more prety thynges, but that cruell death preuẽted, and toke him away wher he and I was borne at Norwiche, in the yere of our Lord M.d.xxxvij. the xxix. daie of September, beyng then of the age of xxv. yeres, vij. Monethes, and vj. daies, a

greate losse of so notable a yonge man. These workes at his death he willed to comme to my handes, by which occasion after I had viewed thē, and perceiued them ful of al kyndes of learnyng, thinkyng thē no workes for all mē to vnderstande with out helpe, but such as were wel sene in all sortes of authours. I endeouored my selfe partely for the helpe of others, & partly for mine owne exercise, to declare vpon them the profite of my studie in ciuile and humane learnynge, and to haue before mine eyes as in a worke (which was alwaies my delyght) how muche I had profited in the same. Thys so done, I ioyned euery of my commentaries to euery of hys saied bokes, faier written by Nicolas Pergate puple to the saied Maister Framyngham, myndyng after the iudgement of learned men had in thesame, to haue set them furthe in prynte, if it had ben so thought good to them. For whyche cause, at my departyng into Italie, I put an Epistle before them dedicatorye to the right Reuerend father in God Thomas Thirlbye, now Bishoppe of Norwiche, because thesame maister Framyngham loued hym aboue others. He after my departure deliuered the bokes to the reuerende father in god Jhō Skippe, late bishop of Hereforde, then to D. Thirtle, tutor to the sayd maister framynghā, frō him to syr Richard Morisine, now ambassadoure for y^e kinges maiestie with thēperour, then to D. Tailour Deane of Lincolne, and syr Thomas Smithe, secretarie after to y^e kynges Maiestie, all great learned men. Frō these to others they wente, among whome the bokes died, (as I suppose,) or els be closely kept, that after my death they may be setfurthe

in the names of them which now haue thē, as their workes. Howe soeuer it be, well I knowe that at my returne out of Italie (after vj. yeres continuance ther) into Englād, I coulde neuer vnderstand wher they wer, although I bothe diligently and desirously sought thē. After these I translated out of Greke into Latine a litle boke of *Nicephorus*, declarynge howe a man maye in praiynge confesse hym selfe, which after I dyd geue vnto Jhō Grome bachelor in arte, a yong man in yeres, but in witte & learnyng for his tyme, of great expectatiō. That done I beganne a chronicle of the citie of Norwiche, of the beginninge therof & thinges done ther frō time to time. The matere wherof yet rude and vndigested lyeth by me, which at laisure I minde to polishe, and to make an end of that I haue begunne. And to be shorte, in phisicke diuerse thynges I haue made & settefurth in print bothe in Greke and Latine, not myndyng to do other wise, as I haue before said, al my life: For which cause al these thinges I haue rehersed, els superfluous in this place. Yet see, meaning now to counsell a litle agaynst the sweatyng sickenes for helpe also of others, notwithstanding my former purpose, two thynges compell me, in writyng therof, to returne agayne to Englishe, Necessite of the matter, & good wyl to my countrie, frendes, & acquaintance, whiche here to haue required me, to whome I thinke my selfe borne.

Necessite, for that this disease is almoste peculiar vnto vs Englishe men, and not common to all men, folowyng vs, as the shadowe the body, in all countries, albeit not at al times.

Therefore compelled I am to vse this our Englishe tongue as best to be vnderstande, and moste nedeful to whome it most foloweth, most behoueth to haue spedie remedie, and often tymes leaste nyghe to places of succourre and comforte at lerned mennes handes: and leaste nedefull to be setfurthe in other tongues to be vnderstand generally of all persons, whome it either haunteth not at all, or els very seldome, as ones in an age. Thinkynge it also better to write this in Englishe after mine own meanyng, then to haue it translated out of my Latine by other after their misunderstandyng.

Good wyll to my countrie frendes and acquaintance, seyng them wyth out defence yelde vnto it, and it ferefully to inuade thē, furiously handle them, spedily oppresse them, vnmercyfully choke them, and that in no small numbers, and such persons so notably noble in birthe, goodly conditions, graue sobrietie, singular wisedōe, and great learnyng, as Henry Duke of Suffolke, and the lorde Charles his brother, as fewe hath bene sene lyke of their age: an heuy & pitifull thyng to here or see. So that if by onely learned men in phisicke & not this waye also it should be holpen, it were nedeful almost halfe so many learned men to be redy in euery toune and citie, as their should be sweatynge sicke folkes. Yet this notwithstandinge, I wyll euery man not to refuse the counsell of the present or nighe phisicen learned, who maie, accordyng to the place, persone, cause, & other circūstances, geue more particular counseil at nede, but in any wise exhorte him to seke it with all diligence. To this

enterprise also amonge so many learned men, not a litle stirreth me the gentilnes and good willes of al sortes of men, which I haue well proued heretofore by my other former boke. Mindynge therefore with as good a will to geue my counseil in this, and trusting for no lesse gentlenes in the same, I wyll plainly and in English for their better vnderstandynge to whome I write, firste declare the beginnyng, name, nature, and signes of the sweatyng sickenes. Next, the causes of the same. And thirdly, how to preserue men frō it, and remedy them whē they haue it.

The beginnyng of the disease In the yere of our Lorde God M.CCCC.lxxxv. shortly after the vij. daye of august, at whiche tyme kynge Henry the seuenth arriued at Milford in walles, out of Fraunce, and in the firste yere of his reigne, ther chaunced a disease among the people, lastyng the reste of that monethe & all September, which for the soubdeine sharpenes and vnwont cruelnes passed the pestilence. For this commonly geueth iij. or iiij. often vij. sumtyme ix. as that firste at Athenes whiche *Thucidides* describeth in his seconde boke, sumtyme xj. and sumtyme xiiij. dayes respecte, to whome it vexeth. But that immediatly killed some in opening their windowes, some in plaieng with children in their strete dores, some in one hour, many in two it destroyed, & at the longest, to thē that merilye dined, it gaue a sorowful Supper. As it founde them so it toke them, some in sleape some in wake, some in mirthe some in care, some fasting & some ful, some busy and some idle, and in one house sometyme three sometime fiue, sometyme

seuen sometye eyght, sometye more some tyme all, of the whyche, if the haulfe in euerye Townte escaped, it was thoughte great fauour. How, or wyth what maner it toke them, with what grieffe, and accidentes it helde theym, herafter thē I wil declare, whē I shal come to shewe the signes therof. In the mene space, know that this disease (because it most did stand in sweating from the beginning vntil the endyng) was called here, the Sweating sicknesse: and because it firste beganne in Englande, it was named in other countries, the englishe sweat. Yet some conjecture that it, or the like, hath bene before seene among the Grekes in the siege of Troie. In thēperor Octavius warres at *Cantabria*, called nowe Biscaie, in Hispaine: and in the Turkes, at the Rhodes. How true that is, let the aucthours loke: how true thys is, the best of our Chronicles shewith, & of the late begonne disease the freshe memorie yet confirmeth. But if the name wer now to be geuen, and at my libertie to make the same: I wold of the maner and space of the disease (by cause the same is no sweat only, as herafter I will declare, & in the spirites) make the name *Ephemera*, which is to sai, a feuer of one naturall dai. A feuer, for the feruor or burning, drieth & sweating feure like. Of one naturall day, for that it lasteth but the time of xxiiij. houres. And for a distinction from the commune *Ephemera*, that Galene writeth of, comming both of other causes, and wyth vnlike paines, I wold putte to it either Englishe, for that it followeth somoche English menne, to whō it is almoste proper, & also began here: or els pestilent, for

that it cōmeth by infection & putrefaction, otherwise then doth the other *Ephemera*. Whiche thing I suppose may the better be done, because I se straunge and no english names both in Latine and Greke by commune vsage taken for Englishe. As in Latin, Feure, Quotidiā, Tertian, Quartane, Aier, Infection, Pestilence, Uomite, Person, Reines, Ueines, Peines, Chamere, Numbre, &c. a litle altered by the commune pronounciation. In Greke, Pleuresie, Ischiada, Hydrops, Apostema, Phlegma, and Chole: called by the vulgare pronounciatiō, Schiatica, Dropsie, Impostume, Phleume, & Choler: Gyne also, and Boutyre, Sciourel, Mouse, Rophe, Phrase, Paraphrase, & cephe, wherof cometh Chaucers couercephe, in the romant of the Rose, writtē and pronouced comōly, kerchief in y^e south, & couchief in the north. Thereof euery head or principall thing, is comonlye called cephe, pronouced & writtē, chief. Uery many other there be in our commune tongue, whiche here to rehearse were to long. These for an example shortelye I haue here noted. But for the name of this disease it maketh now no matter, the name of Sweat beyng cōmōly vsed. Let vs therefore returne to the thing, which as occasiō & cause serued, came againe in the M.D.vi. the xxii. yeare of the said Kyng Henry the seuenth. Afre that, in the yeare M.D.xvii. the ix. yeare of Kyng Henry the viii, and endured from July, vnto y^e middest of Decēbre. The iiii tyme, in the yeare M.D.xxviii. the xx. yeare of thesaied Kyng, beginning in thende of May, & continuing June and July. The fifth tyme of this fearful *Ephemera* of Englande, and pestilent

sweat, is this in the yeare M.D.LI. of oure Lorde GOD, and the fifth yeare of oure Souereigne Lorde king Edwarde the sixth, beginning at Shrewesbury in the middest of April, proceedinge with greate mortalitie to Ludlowe, Prestene, and other places in Wales, then to Westchestre, Couentre, Oxenfoorde, and other townes in the Southe, and such as were in and aboute the way to London, whether it came notablie the seuenth of July, and there continuing sore, with the losse of vii. C. lxi. from the ix. day vntil the xvi. daye, besides those that died in the vii. and viii. dayes, of whō no registre was kept, frō that it abated vntil the xxx. day of the same, with the losse of C. xlii. more. Then ceassing there, it wente from thence throughe al the east partes of England into the Northe vntill the ende of Auguste, at whiche tyme it diminished, and in the ende of Septembre fully ceased.

This disease is not a Sweate onely, (as it is thought & called) but a feuer, as I saied, in the spirites by putrefaction venemous, with a fight, trauaile, and laboure of nature againste the infection receyued in the spirites, whervpon by chaunce foloweth a Sweate, or issueth an humour compelled by nature, as also chanceth in other sicknesses whiche consiste in humours, when they be in their state, and at the worste in certein dayes iudicial, aswel by vomites, bledinges, & fluxes, as by sweates. That this is true, the self sweates do shewe. For as in vtter businesses, bodies y^t

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