

Consilium 7

Ruth Breindel and Isabella Colucci

Evidence:

John Pict was being detained by a tumor full of fluid of the legs with a constant ulcer, and now through fourteen years he had been severely tormented by his disease, with the help of B. Lawrence Justinian having been begged for, shortly arrived at a complete health.

Abstract:

- 1. The Tumor of the type is called OEdematosus.*
- 2. Dropsy is not possible to happen unless with a damaged liver.*
- 3. They purge all lack of moderation, especially that is conspicuous, of strengths.*
- 4. Nature is fighting back against everything in vain.*
- 5. The art is supplied by Nature, and the doctor of this art, or rather Nature is the servant.*
- 6. Long diseases, are not able naturally to be overcome, but little by little, and with long interval of time.*

1. The swelling¹, which this John Picatus was enduring/suffering from in his legs, about whose miraculous healing is just now being discussed, was edematous; however the Doctors call this swelling edemus, which is accustomed to be

¹ Tumor in the Latin can mean tumor or swelling.

produced from cold matter, and moist, truly slimy [matter]. In truth both the quality and quantity of matter producing the swelling shows this was enough and more of its nature, in contrast with another, which was being cleansed at length by him through a little ulcer, for it was watery and of much quantity, as the 29th patient stated above in the 10th summary, number 2. [Italian sentence: There due to the fact there being the usual large amount of water coming out of that leg [quoting the patient (testis)]. For both of these is particular to cold matter, in addition to which because of the (long) duration of the disease and the severity and incapacity in motion [i.e., he couldn't walk] were indicating this very thing most clearly, when chronic diseases come about from cold humors [as in 4 humors of the body]. Galen, book 4, Aphor 4.4 and cold matter might make it serious in part because of its density.

Although a swelling of this type might be very troubling of itself, so that it brings weariness of life to the sick person, nevertheless it is not so grave a disease from its own nature, rather it is the sign of a much more grave and difficult disease: for the cause of this disease was not depending from the very defect of the legs, but it was showing the defect of the much more known part that was inside the body, certainly of the liver; indeed when edematous swellings, if they are greatly significant, are produced from weakness, and from a defect of the blood producing ability of the liver itself: for when this internal organ [liver] because of the weakness of the heat is not able to transform all fluid matter [chylosam – has to do with something in the liver, diabetes and lymph system] that has been transmitted to itself into pure blood, a portion of it remains somewhat semi congealed, which to the more weakened parts just as sent is not suitable for nutrition, it arouses edemous swellings of this type, as has been done

in our case; in which, when the lower parts [legs] become swellings, and are notably greatly inauspicious, it appears that this condition was a certain type of dropsy², certainly of that which is called anasarca³, in which the entire body, sometimes nevertheless only the lower parts become swollen. One sign of this thing, or another most obvious sign from the words of testimony is able to be described, indeed a continuous swelling of the legs, & especially with a sick person standing or walking; & the slowness (of movement) & no control in movement, both of which is put by Authors for a sign of this condition; & concerning the former... with these words “the feet and lower legs become swollen for those standing,” concerning the latter, indeed, ... said, “One who is crippled because of weakness and the slow movement of the body with useless swelling.” And it is evident that each of these symptoms was present in our sick person, and concerning the following, all patients in summary #2 unanimously state, and John himself, patient 27, in 10 above. [Italian: And now I walk freely, where before I could only bring myself with difficulty and walk for two or three [steps]. Believe that it was necessary for me to sit. I kept trying very much to walk. And when it was fitting for him to come down into the bottega, he came yet with crutches. Every time that he got up on his feet, his legs swelled up.]

Therefore now the true understanding of this disease having been set up, it will be easy now to determine, whether or not the cure of this disease, having been followed immediately after the invocation of B. Lawrence, was miraculous.

And it seems as it must be said, and firmly asserted, that this was miraculous, then also because the cure of this disease was overcoming the strength of [what] is sprung from nature, then also because the manner of the

² Dropsy is another name for edema.

³ Anasarca is extreme edema.

cure was by any means supernatural, and beyond the methodical arrangement of Nature. However the cure of this disease was overcoming the strength of nature from the 4 stages, and in the first respect by the orders of the remote cause of the disease and of the improvement of part [of the body]. Second, in respect to regaining part. Third, in respect to the long duration and strength of this disease. Fourth, in respect to the weakening of the very small parts of the Nature of the sick person, which neither is helped by Medical aid for so long a space of time meanwhile it was able to rise up again.

(2) And as far as the first stage, the Doctors knew that no dropsy was able to happen, unless with a damaged liver, Galen *lib 6. de los. aff. cap. 7* & all Doctors of Divinity, when they make words about dropsy; rather not only dropsy, but a simple oedematous swelling, if it has been made strong, everywhere is created by a damage of the liver. Gal *lib. 3. sumpt. caus. cap. 2*. Therefore, since this conspicuous swelling, oedematous, was present here, certainly its cause was from excessive cold of the liver, and was drawing out its origin from the diminished heat. Galen *loc cit de loc. aff.* & with him all the others DD teach that Swellings of this type come about from excess of this type. Therefore to cure this disease, and for the removal of the cause of [the source of] the disease it was necessary to bring this excess of the liver back to the opposite, which was impossible from a double source. First because the strength of the patient was weak, & the warmth of the same one very frail; for all excesses have this characteristic when they are conspicuous, such as this was, that they exceedingly weaken their strength very much. Galen *cit lib. 3 de sympt. caus. cap. 1*. And if in the beginning of this short excess Nature is not able to overcome it, what must be hoped for from its help after so many years have passed? Second, because this

excess had already been made strong, & in this condition it had proven innate; for when Nature is not able in the beginning to correct the excess of parts, but [excesses] increase day by day, little by little it becomes accustomed to them, and thus it makes those things innate to itself and it is not less impossible for those things to change in the future, than Nature herself, or in whatever way by Nature the defect creeps in.

3. As far as the second stage, there is no reason for us to devote attention to more tedious things; for there were parts taking in those fluids bloody and full of excrement, produced by a defect of the liver, the lowest of all parts of the body, more downward and colder by nature; for because they were lowest, it shows that they recovered themselves most promptly from all the upper parts. From which, because they were sloping downward, it was coming about that with the most difficulty, rather in no way now they were able to send back the fluids had been received to those parts. From which, because they were cold, evidently it was following, they themselves were not able to digest the fluids that had been received nor to melt [them] nor in any way to overpower [them]. And indeed some supply of the spoken-of fluids was being cleansed through the small ulcer, even though always a poultice was remaining on the side of the internal organ, from which continually new matter was being generated which had to be sent to those affected parts. For the liver, as if a perennial fountain from what was taken up because of the short time of cold, or rather because of the lack of heat, was putting forth new fluids with excrement, nor was it able to happen, that it would cease to produce for some time, unless restored to its former state, which was altogether impossible in the way of Nature. Therefore, for until [the liver] lived inseparable, and the Liver performed its own duty, for that long it was necessary

that it [the liver] supply new fluids to the affected parts, unless it were to cease from making blood, which was not able to come about unless with that inseparable part failing.

As far as the third stage it is also most evident, that the strength of [the swelling] had overcome the healing of Nature, because the disease was already in a condition, and strengthened for so many years, now neither stronger warmth nor a more blooming age⁴ nor stronger strength nor anything else was able to bring help in order to overcome this, therefore the matter was much more desperate, where the warmth was already weak, where the age already was declining, where the strength was already weak; in which case the blood from day to day was escaping colder and the heat was being returned more weakened.

Until finally the fourth stage is evident to Nature from the very sequence of the deed at the same time, & the inadequacy of the Art⁵ of Medicine is of no benefit towards the healing of this disease, when in so many years neither Nature herself, nor the very Art is of benefit for so many applied remedies through three rather famous Doctors, whose reputation & writings have come to us; indeed it must be reckoned that these most famous Doctors have moved every stone, so that they might free the Sick person from so troublesome a disease. But in vain everything was fighting against Nature for it was present too much and unconquerable; by which being present all things are rendered useless.

Hippocrat. *In Leg. Num. 2*, because Art is the helper of Nature, and the Doctor himself is the helper of Art, or of Nature. Id. Hippocr. *Lib 1 de morb. Popul.*

Section. 2 & Onciac also noted ex Legum-peritis [from those skilled in law]. *Lib. 2 Colloq. Mixi. n. 3*. For which reason the Doctor always imitates nature. And

⁴ blooming age: perhaps he means a younger person

⁵ Art and Skill are 2 complimentary translations for the Latin Ars, artis.

although meanwhile also, rather it always helps a great deal, nevertheless it is not able to accomplish anything, if there the inability of the subject to restore health is present.

Because finally the method of healing this most long-term disease was in some way beyond Nature, it is evident that when long diseases, both because of the weakening of heat and Nature, and because of both the abundance of fluids and the quality (for there are many cold [fluids], as I said [there were] others from Galen) are not able to be healed naturally unless [there are] extraordinary draining and little by little, and with the longest interval of time, he from the other excretion and from the steady invocation of B. Lawrence went into remission in the most brief interval of one week he was completely cured with no help of Art intervening, as is evident from what happened before. Therefore in this case when natural heat wandered back to its former strength when it had been almost extinguished, it seems this deed had to be almost equal to the resurrection of the dead.