

III. *Part of a Letter from Mr. George Dampier, Dated, Exmouth, November 10. 1697. to Mr. William Dampier, his Brother, concerning the Cure of the Bitings of mad Creatures. With a Remark on the same by Hans Sloane, M. D.*

YOUR Last I did not answer sooner, because I had no Opportunity of sending the Herb you sent for (if I may call it so) ; I sought Two or Three Miles about at first, before I found any of it, and afterwards found some of it as I was walking by the way side ; both which I have sent you. I have sent it as it grew, without separating the Earth, Moss, and Grass that grew about it, because you may know it the better when you see it ; you must look for it in dry Grounds ; light and sandy Ground, where Sheep feed, doth commonly afford it, but on Emett Butts, and Banks only ; Rich Land doth seldom afford it, but our Unkle did prefer that that grows on good Ground, before that which grows on too light Sand, for he utterly refused what grew in our Rye-Field Grounds, and would look for it in stronger Land, saying, that though it was the same, it wanted Strength and Vertue, as the Land did it grows on. It is a sort of *Jews Ear*, and I know no other Name for it, but *Aures Judaica*, or *Fungus Sambucinus*, which is properly the *Jews Ear* that grows on the *Alder*, this grows on the Ground as close as may be to it, being flat on it, the Moss and Grass groweth up about and
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amongst it. To use it, you must dry it in an Oven, by the Fire, or in the Sun, then powder it, and pass it through a Renge or fine Seive, the which mixed with the like Quantity of fine beaten and powdered Pepper, is the Composition. When given to a Dog, the Dog must first be blooded in the Ear, or elsewhere, if you know a more convenient Vein or Place, and then washed well all over, the Dog being kept from Meat a convenient while before, as a whole Night, or most part of a Day before, then mix it well in a convenient Quantity of Milk or Broath warm: If it be for any Cattel, it must be also blooded and well washed and given with a Drenching Horn, and the Dose may be proportioned to the Bigness or Strength of the Creature that is to take it: To a Man or Woman it must be given after Blood-letting, and well washing the Face and Hands, or Place that may be bitten, or all the Cloaths that the Person had on him or her, when bitten, to wash away the Snivel or Drivel that comes from the Mouth of a Dog or other Creature when mad, for that is the only reason for Washing. A Man or Woman may take it in warm Milk, Beer, Ale, Broath, or how he best likes it, fasting, Two or Three several Mornings to make sure; the more Ceremony you make in giving it, the more it seems to please some sort of People. After a Dog hath bitten Man or Beast, it will not appear or begin to grow Mad till after a Full and New Moon, or New or Full; but when it begins to be Mad, 'tis very hardly cured; yet our Uncle *Dampier* hath cured both Man and Beast when Mad, but with much Care and Trouble, the manner which way, he hath also told me, and you may have the Receipt if it may please you: Therefore when you know any thing to be bitten, or suspect it to be so, use the Remedy as soon as may be after, and then, when given in time, it prevents

prevents all Signs or Madnes at all, which hath made some indiscreet People say it did no Good, they believe it would have done well enough without it : But our Unkle hath fully confuted that Mistake several times, by not Drenching a Dog of small Worth sometimes, in a Gentleman's Cry of Dogs, which hath died Mad, and not one of the rest Sick, but have followed their Master's Game rather better than before. I am sure that I had died, if I had not taken Three of my Unkle's Doses Three Mornings Fasting, in Warm Milk, by the Bite of a Greyhound, for I escaped narrowly, it being almost too late : For I was Bit at *Cearn*, and knew not that the Dog had been Bitten by a Mad Dog, till after the Dog was Dead Mad, and a Messenger came to acquaint me of it on purpose, to *Coker* ; therefore I can truly say, *Probatum est*. And indeed, being ingenuously prepared and given, 'tis a most Noble and Infallible Medicine. I have also sent you Two Doses of our Unkle's own preparing, which by Chance I had by me, and am never without some of it wherever I stay, by those Papers you may see the Dose that he commonly prepared, and may doe the like if you have occasion for it : During his Life, I was under an Obligation to conceal the Receipt thereof to my self, which, since his Decease, I am disingaged of ; yet I shall hardly communicate it to any but your self and my own Children. I was with my Unkle when a Dog had gotten in amongst a whole Heard of Cattel at *Charmister* by *Dorchester*, and had bitten some, which growing Mad, and feeding together with their Fellows, when Mad, the Driveling of them infected many more, and the Distemper continued almost all the Summer amongst them, still One or Two Dying, and Infecting more ; they drenched them for the Murrain, and went to Conjurers, and told them, they were Over-look'd by some unlucky Person, that had been deny'd something desired, or otherwise

therwise crossed, and had Spells and Charms for that Purpose ; but all to no purpose : But I hearing the Circumstances, imagined the Disease, and our Uncle being sent for, found Three or Four Sick, which he could not cure, but ordered all the rest to be driven Three or Four times through the great River, and all put from the same Pasture, till after it should Rain a good Shower or Two, which would wash away the Snivel from the Ground, and then Drenching them prevented any farther Evil, for not one was sick afterward. And then also ceased those ill Censures the Neighbours had of a harmless, long Nos'd old Woman or Two. The whole Heard was near Two Hundred and Fifty, about Forty died : They all acknowledged that he did them above a Hundred Pound's Worth of Good. This was much talked of by Hundreds of People, who knew the Truth of it. Much more may be said of this Mad Matter, but enough I think at present.

Dr, *Sloane's* Remark on the foregoing Account.

THE Simple or Herb mentioned in this Letter, is not Jews Ear, but is the Lichen Cinereus terrestris, described by Mr. Ray in his *History of Plants*, p. 117. and grows commonly in most Barren Places about London, and all over England.

The Weight of one single Dose of this Simple, and the Pepper mix'd, Communicated to me by Mr. Southwell, with Mr. Dampier's Leave, is near ʒiv.