

## TEXTS AND DOCUMENTS

### “MATRIX AND THE PAIN THEREOF”: A SIXTEENTH-CENTURY GYNAECOLOGICAL ESSAY

by

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Simon Forman (1552–1611), author of the following essay, practised astrological medicine in London from about 1590 until his death. Lacking formal medical training, Forman was repeatedly called before the examiners of the Royal College of Physicians of London, the licensing body for all physicians who practised in and around the city.<sup>1</sup> Although he failed to pass the examinations set by the Cambridge- and Oxford-educated physicians of the College, he continued to practise without a licence and was repeatedly jailed and fined. Despite this opposition from the College, however, Forman’s reputation was considerable, and his medical practice grew rapidly.

Forman gained a comfortable financial position and a flourishing practice only after years of turmoil and hardship.<sup>2</sup> Born in Wiltshire, the fifth child in a family of eight, Forman apparently showed an early appetite for learning, which his father attempted to satisfy by sending him to school. The father’s death on Forman’s eleventh birthday put a stop to his schooling, however, and he was eventually apprenticed to a shopkeeper, an apprenticeship from which he asked to be released after six years. After a few months as a schoolteacher, Forman went to Oxford as a poor scholar for fifteen

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<sup>1</sup> Some of Forman’s encounters with the College of Physicians are detailed in Charles Goodall, *The Royal College of Physicians of London . . . and an historical account of the College proceedings against empiricks and unlicensed practicers*, London, 1684, pp. 337–9. See also George Clark, *A history of the Royal College of Physicians of London*, 2 vols., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964, vol. 1, pp. 145, 167–8, 199, and 216. Harold J. Cook, *The decline of the old medical regime in Stuart London*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1986, provides a useful summary of the activities and prerogatives of the College of Physicians (especially pp. 20–45).

<sup>2</sup> Most of the details of Forman’s life appear in *The autobiography and personal diary of Dr. Simon Forman*, James Orchard Halliwell (ed.), London, 1849. Halliwell printed directly from Forman’s own manuscripts, though he expurgated sexually explicit passages. The same manuscripts are reprinted with some omissions as an appendix in A. L. Rowse, *Simon Forman: sex and society in Shakespeare’s age*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974. Rowse’s book focuses primarily on Forman’s personal life and on the identity of his most important clients and pays little attention to his medical career. A detailed, if occasionally inaccurate, account of Forman’s life appears in the *Dictionary of national biography*, Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee (eds), 22 vols., New York, Macmillan, 1908, vol. 7, pp. 438–40.

months (1573–74), the only formal university training of which there is any record. After leaving Oxford, Forman held a series of positions as a schoolteacher and a tutor, and then was imprisoned for sixty weeks in 1579–80. The charges against him are not clear, but they probably had something to do with his practice of magic or occultism. His books were confiscated during this period and returned to him (with some missing) over a decade later. Forman claimed in one of his poems that a letter from Queen Elizabeth finally brought about his release from prison.

Forman's records from 1580 until he moved to London in 1589 are very intermittent. He did more teaching; he was imprisoned briefly at least once more; he travelled on the Continent; he went to sea. He first mentioned magic and astrology as interests in 1579; in 1580, less than a month after his release from prison, he reported his first medical patient, claiming to have cured Henry Johnson of consumption. In 1581, in a summary of his year's activity, Forman wrote that he had practised "physic and surgery". Having visited London several times with a family who employed him as a tutor, Forman finally decided to move there in 1589, and he seems to have immediately set himself up as an astrological physician, seeing both medical patients and clients who wanted non-medical astrological advice.

Forman's patients (as recorded in the surviving records of his London practice from 1597 to 1601)<sup>3</sup> represented a cross-section of London's inhabitants. Among them were courtiers, clerics, merchants, craftsmen, shopkeepers, servants, sailors, and actors. The influence of certain courtiers probably explains why Forman suddenly, in 1603, was granted a medical licence by Cambridge University, though he had never been in attendance there. The licence gave Forman some respite from the antagonism of the London physicians, but he was still called before them intermittently until his death. The licence seems to have given him courage to resist, however; after 1603, he sometimes did not respond to their summons and, except for one brief visit, he apparently avoided jail.

Although dependent on astrology for help in diagnosis and the timing of medical treatment, Forman's medical techniques were fairly practical and conservative. He generally adhered to Galenic principles of humoral medicine, but read widely in contemporary medical literature; for example, he borrowed a manuscript copy of a work of Paracelsus which had not yet been published in England and copied the treatise for his own library. He freely added new techniques and medicines which he found in such medical literature to his own Galenic framework. In fact, some of the medicines recommended at the end of the following essay were only newly available in late sixteenth-century England as a result of the New World voyages. Forman not only knew about these new substances but apparently had added them to his own pharmacopoeia.

In addition to his reading in both classical and contemporary medical works, Forman also relied upon his own experience and observation in treating patients. This practice, together with his lack of formal medical training, set him apart from members of the College of Physicians and placed him within that amorphous group of

<sup>3</sup> Ashmole MSS 234, 226, 195, 219, 236, and 411, Bodleian Library, Oxford University.

medical practitioners labelled empirics.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the treatise which follows, though rooted in Galenic theory, cites Forman's own experience and that of women whom he has interviewed, as authorities for some of its observations and recommended practices.

Forman's deviations from standard practice appear intermittently in his case records and in his gynaecological writings. Forman prepared many of his own medicines, unlike the licensed physicians who had their prescriptions prepared by apothecaries. He distrusted uroscopy, preferring astrological diagnosis, and resorted to blood-letting less frequently than most of his contemporaries. His conservative attitude toward blood-letting is especially evident in the following treatise on amenorrhoea, for which the standard treatment was copious blood-letting in the foot.<sup>5</sup> Forman recommends instead a routine of vaginal purges, pessaries, external applications, and comfortable drinks.

Women with gynaecological problems, both pre- and post-pregnancy, comprised a sizeable segment of Forman's clientele. Of their symptoms, retained menses was by far the most common complaint.<sup>6</sup> Of course, a number of these cases can be accounted for as undiagnosed pregnancy, as Forman recognized. Gynaecology seems to have been a speciality of Forman's,<sup>7</sup> as was the treatment of melancholy, and comments concerning gynaecological cases and their treatment are scattered throughout his medical writings and casebooks. As a sample, I quote Forman's lengthy description of the woman with an impostume, a case he followed closely but did not treat himself. Forman diagnoses the problem as complications arising from amenorrhoea and uncharacteristically comments that he would have prescribed blood-letting once the woman was on the way to recovery.

There was a certain woman that was troubled with a sore dizeas and it was thus. Shee had often times a certain pain or rising in her left side, with longe continuance, in

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of such non-licensed practitioners, see Margaret Pelling and Charles Webster, 'Medical practitioners', in Charles Webster (ed.) *Health, medicine and mortality in the sixteenth century*, Cambridge University Press, 1974, pp. 165–235.

<sup>5</sup> Audrey Eccles, *Obstetrics and gynecology in Tudor and Stuart England*, Kent, Ohio, Kent State University Press, 1982, pp. 74–5. See also, Beryl Rowland (transl. and ed.), *Medieval woman's guide to health: the first English gynecological handbook*, Kent, Ohio, Kent State University Press, 1981, pp. 61–9, where the first recommendation for amenorrhoea is bleeding "a considerable quantity of blood at their big toe one day, and another day at their other big toe" (p. 67). The rationale behind this treatment is explained in Galen's essays on venesection; see Peter Brain (ed.), *Galen on bloodletting: a study of the origins, development and validity of his opinions*, Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 25–30, 81–4.

<sup>6</sup> In 1597, a year for which I have calendared Forman's cases, he held approximately 830 medical consultations with women patients. 38 per cent involved gynaecological matters: possible pregnancy, complications after childbirth, vaginal infection, prolapsed uterus, excessive vaginal bleeding, and stopped menses. Omitting those patients who came specifically to inquire whether they were pregnant (some of whom were still menstruating), 46 per cent of Forman's gynaecological consultations (about 145 women) included stopped menses as a symptom (Forman's casebook for 1597 is Ashmole ms 234).

<sup>7</sup> Michael MacDonald, *Mystical Bedlam: madness, anxiety and healing in seventeenth-century England*, Cambridge University Press, 1981, focuses on the treatment of madness in the practice of Richard Napier, Forman's friend and medical protégé, much as I focus here on Forman's gynaecological treatments. For additional information about Forman and Napier's relationship and about Napier's practice, see Ronald C. Sawyer, 'Patients, healers and disease in the Southeast Midlands, 1597–1634', Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1986.

thend it grewe to Impostumation\*<sup>8</sup> even in the pit of her stomacke, and laie ther as bige swollen vp as a mans arme and hauing the counsell of diuers phisions they knewe not what it was nor howe to remedy it. Some theire opinion was it should be cut & laused that it mighte com forthe and the woman was then verie grosse in the body and sore sicke. In thend there cam a fellowe, and his counsell was that it should not be cut. For yf it wer cut and that the wound toke ayer after the matter and substance was out, then the partie wold die: and so he toke the woman to cuer, and first he applied a pultice very hote vnto it for too dais & too nights, and by that time the matter was removed vp vnto her brest and papes,\* and swollen vp wonderfully. Then he applied his pultiz theron again to dryue it inwardes, and whill the pultiz was one he gaue her a purgation that soe sone as it came into the stomacke the purg should dryue it downwardes and hyt did soe: soe that it came downe vnto her groine and ther it swolle again wonderfully. Then he gaue her a vomite, of asarabacca or som such thinge that she did vomite mightily & soe moch that at laste the velme<sup>9</sup> or bag that thimpostum was in cam vp & out at her mothe and he had prepared at a smithes an yron instrument of a quarter of a yerd long croked at on end barbed thus, like a fish croke or fishe hocke and ever as the velm or bag cam forth he caughte it still with that Instrument and held it fast that it returned not in again, but it cam forth alle. Then he applyed certain mollifing\* pultizes on the flanke and with an Incision knife he cut sodeinly the swelling or Impostumation and ther cam forth moch filte\* & matter even almost a pottell.\* Soe he cured it vp, purginge the woman strongly: and after this it begane to swell againe but he cured her as before is said. But me thinkes he should haue don well to haue let her blod after she was recouered. And after that haue also gyuen her som Sirup to haue shut the open places in the body & to haue dried vp the humors. For it seameth that this Impostumation was caused for that the matrix veins wer stopte that she could not haue her naturall purgation, wher vpon the grosse blod returned to the stomack & caused Impostumation. finis.

(MS Ashmole 390, 131<sup>r</sup>)

Forman's essay entitled 'Matrix and the pain therof', appears in the same manuscript as the above case history. Its value to medical historians lies both in its subject and in its approach to that subject. Little remains extant from the sixteenth century which talks in detail about women's gynaecological problems and especially about the subject of menstruation. Forman's straightforward discussion of the problems presented by stopped menses and his remedies offer a rare view of a problem which obviously affected a number of women. In addition, Forman's

<sup>8</sup> Terms marked with an asterisk (\*) are identified in a glossary at the end of the article.

<sup>9</sup> Velme [velum]: a membrane; more specifically, the membraneous septum extending backwards from the hard palate. The *OED*'s first citation is from the eighteenth century, but given the context, the meaning seems appropriate here. The notion of the dangerous "bag" associated with an impostume occurs elsewhere in Forman's papers in his account of the death of his bastard son, Joshua Walworth, who was living with Forman at the time of his death: "[Joshua] sate by the fier with other Company talkinge and in laughing the Impostume brake and he vomited a gret bole fulle of black substance and the bag wente backe again. And a lyttell before 2 after none he began to vomit again and the bag cam vp into his throte and he thruste his fingers into his throte to pull out the Bag, and died with his fingers in his mouth" (Ash. ms 240, 31<sup>v</sup>). A similar reference occurs in the poetry of Forman's contemporary, John Donne:

When no Physician of Redresse can speake,  
A ioyfull casuall violence may breake  
A dangerous Apostem in thy brest;  
And whilst thou ioyest in this, the dangerous rest,  
The bag may rise vp, and so strangle thee.

('The Second Anniversary', ll. 477–81)

discussion makes clear that what he suggested had actually been tried on real patients; their names even appear in some of his marginal notes. This treatise, which is clearly rooted in Galenic theory, offers us an opportunity to observe how his theory was modified by his experience in treating patients and by information he received from women about their menstrual cycles. Though Patricia Crawford has suggested that menstruation was frequently construed negatively,<sup>10</sup> Forman in this essay reveals no revulsion or scorn. In fact, since he believed that most gynaecological problems were related to the failure to menstruate properly, his efforts were all bent toward bringing on menstruation. (In one of his notebooks, he noted that his seventeen-year-old wife had just had her first menstrual period; he was delighted because he could now anticipate children by her.)

Forman clearly attached some importance to the manuscript of his essay. Unlike the careless hand in which he transcribed the case printed above, Forman took great pains with the appearance of his text. Written in a careful secretary hand, the treatise is on ruled pages with red letters marking sentence beginnings. Forman dated the essay 1596 on its first page and 1597 on the final page of the treatise proper. Perhaps it took some time to write, or perhaps Forman was simply careless with dates here, as he frequently was in other manuscripts. The manuscript may have been prepared as a gift which was never given or for a printer. The marginalia and the material which follows the dated signature—primarily lists of herbs and remedies—were less carefully written, with little attempt to preserve the beauty of the original manuscript. The 1598 date which appears in the recipe for a plaster made for Joan Wolfe suggests that at least some of the appended material was added after the treatise proper was written and dated.

This essay, along with the majority of Forman's manuscripts, is housed in the Ashmole manuscript collection at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. It comprises a ten-leaf section of MS Ashmole 390 (175<sup>r</sup>–185<sup>r</sup>). The essay is printed in its entirety below. The manuscript spelling is retained. However, Forman's spelling is highly idiosyncratic even for his own time; for example, he consistently spells "world" as "wordle" throughout forty volumes of manuscripts. When it seems necessary to the sense of a passage, I correct his spelling in square brackets [ ]. Abbreviations are expanded; astrological symbols and apothecary's symbols are expressed in words. Forman's own marginalia appear in italics in the main text. My annotations follow the text as numbered footnotes. The lists of herbs and other remedies which occur at the end of the treatise have been identified when possible in square brackets within the text. Terms marked with an asterisk\* in the text are defined in an alphabetical glossary which follows the notes.

MATRIX and paine therof  
per Forman  
1596

Many times women haue moch weaknes in the backe and paines of the sides & in the flancke or groine which strikes in to their thighes, *And sometims yt runes into the lefte hip and so downe*

<sup>10</sup> Patricia Crawford, 'Attitudes toward menstruation in seventeenth-century England', *Past and Present*, 1981, 91: 47–73, offers the best discussion of the subject.

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*into the thies, and about the sharebone\* & they be in extreme paine and sometime they haue a hardnes or hard lumpe in the side withall, and sometimes not and somtims it strikes vp to the stomak redie to stop their breth. In al thes yt is putrifiactiō & wind in the matrix.*

*But in Mrs. Chackam that had yt in her lefte hip as yf he wer ded or benomed, and a swelling in her backe in the lefte sid from the kydneye downward & all the left sid of her belly and lefte groine. Yt was ympostumation of the humors, and when yt was cut, ther ranne forth a pinte of matter and she was in moste terrible paine before yt was cut. For when Mrs. Whip did put her hand into her matrix she found her matrix cleane & no superflouse humors in yt which was a signe yt was not in the matrix. And after her bodi was anointed well with the dreges of lillis the pain or humor fell forward & down into her groine, and she was in gret paine, yet the swelling remained in her backe. and sometimes yt riseth vp into their stomackes and then they ar readie often tymes to vomite like on that hath the mother\* and alwaies they haue a contynowalle paine and weeknes in their reines & downe to their ridge bones\* ende, and they ar beste at ease when they syt or lie. And the only cause hearof is moch putrifiactiō in the matrix eyther of eville humors congeled in the matrix thorowe thoughte taken which stopped the vaines or som of the 5 vaines of the matrix and soe letted\* the course\* or menstruall blode which congeled in the matrixe and then the woman feeleth som hard lumpe lyke an agewe cake\* in the syde of the belly or vp towards the ribs as brod as ons hand or round lyke ons arme somewhat longe or such lyke somtymes hier in some women, and lower in other. And yf that lumpe or hardnes lie in the lefte side of the womans bodie then yt is a signe that the vaines that ronne to the lefte side of the matrix be stopte that the menstruall blod that falles into them, and should passe thorowe the lefte side of the matrix, be stopte by som cause wherbie that menstruall blod is staide and doth lie ther clotted and congeled & soe putrifieth. The like is yf the said hardnes or lumpe be found in the right side of a woman, that the vaines of the right side of the matrix be stopte as is said. And when the hardnes or lumpe lyeth on the top of the belly, then the vaines before be stopte & in all thes the woman hath never her course corrantly\* or in dewe order, quantity nor tyme, but somtimes she hath them and somtimes she hath them not. Somtimes she hath more and somtimes lesse, and somtimes she hath them at on tyme somtimes at a nother and somtimes she hath them not at all in 5 or 6 wickes space or more and somtimes every fortnight or thre wickes. Againe somtimes a woman suffers a man to lie with her when she is yet grene\* after she is deliuerd of childe, before the vaines and matrix is shute, as within 3 or 4 dais after she is deliuerd of child or within a wicke or fortnight. And then the seede of the man fallinge into some of the sells<sup>11</sup> of the matrix doth putrifie and rote, and then bredes extrem paine in their backes & places aforesaid. Also many tymes ther is a falls conception or a ded conception or a moulle\* or congelation of the menstruall blod and humors, or parte of the afterbirth lefte behinde, or the woman is not clean purged after her deliury of child, of the feculente\* matter in her matrix. And many tymes thorowe the folly of bad & vnskylfulle midwiues the woman lyeth open soe longe that her bodie gathereth moch winde and yt coleth the matrix and vaines therof somoche that the woman hath extreme paine afterwards for the vaines of the menstruall course beinge stopped, the menstruall blod stopes and congeleth to a hard lumpe as is before said. And thes diseases of the matrix a woman may haue 20 yeres, and yet haue children alsoe yf the matrix be stopte but in parte and not in toto. But yf the matrix be stopte in toto then ther is a generalle weaknes in all the matrix, and then they never haue children, till their matrix be clenched, and all this tyme they haue contynewalle paine and grife in their small of their backe & as is aforesaid. And for because we haue seene and knowene manie women of all ages old and yonge in this predicamente, we haue moch considered herof, and by experience thorowe the grace of god, our Industrie, and paines takinge in serchinge the causes by astrologie, and by the examination of diuers women that haue bine trobled herwithe we haue found that the distemperature of the matrix thorowe the causes aboue saide hath bine the cause of all their grife. Whervpon I haue writen this lyttle treatise to shoue the remedies therof.*

<sup>11</sup> sells [cells]: Forman here apparently accepts the medieval belief that the uterus was divided into seven cells: three on the right nurtured males, three on the left nurtured females, and the centre one produced hermaphrodites (Eccles. op. cit., note 5 above, p. 27).

The meanes and waie to remadi the causes aboue said and to  
purge the matrix of all putrified and feculente matter.

Youe shall vnderstand that thes diseases ar not to be remadied at all tymes, but at such tymes as ar fit to that entente. First youe muste learne the tyme when their menstruelle course doth vse to com, and som thre or 4 daies alwaies before they haue their course youe shall make them a lotion to washe their bellies as hote as thei can suffer yt all over, *Or anointe her belly back & sides welle twice a dai with the dreges of the oille of lyllies—warme strikeing\* yt downardes and forwardes, and make a pessary and dip him also in th oille of lillis & put him vp, as she lieth to open the matrix.*

*Or els quilte a peace of cotton somewhat thicke and dipe it thorowly in the oille of white lillies and lay it warme on her belly and flanckes all over to move the menstrues & make her more apte. and alsoe kepe them very warme and bath their bellies sydes and reins halfe an hower together or better to strengthen the matrix and to soften the matter that yt may the better com awaie a lotion when you shall vse youre iniectiō\* into the matrix a glister and this muste youe doe twice or thrise a daie at leste, day by day for 3 or 4 daies at leaste, before the tymes that vsually she hath her course. Then when she feelles that her wombe begyns to beare downe, and that she hath twitchinge in her backe and sydes and percuyes that her course will com, youe muste haue an Iniectiō or glister ready and a syringe *Let youre siringe be soe big & longe that the barrells ther of may containe some 5 or 6 ounces and when she feelles her course once begin to come, then vse youre siringe and spoute yt vp hard and quickly, and let her not ly open longe leste her matrix gather moch winde. But youe may not vse yt til her bodie be made apte therto and that her course begine once to come. The plaster foloweth.* with holles at thend fit for that purpose and soe spoute yt vp into her matrix that her matrix may open all the ceells therof and purg out or vomite out all the filthynes putrifaction and dreges therin, and soe to clere yt selfe therof. And this muste youe doe 3 or 4 tymes every daie soe longe as she hath her course alwaies bathinge her wombe as is aforsaid outwardly to strengthen the matrix and to mollifie and open the vaine, & soften the matter. And yf she be not cleared at that tyme, then youe may not meddle vntill the tyme that she will haue her course againe or som 3 or 4 daies before. And then bathe her and washe her again as aforsaid every dai till her course doe com, then again vse youre Iniectiō as aforsaid. And this muste youe doe 3 or 4 monethes when she hath her course till she be clere, and that her paine be gone and her course doe com in order. And alwaies when you haue done, laie a plaster on her navelle to comfote the matrix & on the backe also. *A woman that is skilfulle may put her hand into the wombe of the woman sicke and feelle wher\* the matrix be righte or foulle or noe, or wher the necke of yt be turned this wai or that waie or wher her course be ready to com or noe, for youe may not offer to do any thinge with youre siringe tille nature of yt selfe begine to work & to caste forth the superfluities or menstrues. Then help nature as moch as youe may, but vse outward remedies alwaies before to make nature worke & to provoke the course, & vse pessaries alsoe & drinks in at the mouth, and plasters and ointmentes on the belly and sydes as is said.**

And further for the cueringe more perfectly of thes forsaid diseases thou shalte vnderstand that the matrix is formed in suche sorte that ther is noe waie into the matrix but one (excepte by the 5 vaines wherby the menstruall blod descendeth into the matrix) and that is by the vulua.<sup>12</sup> Vnderstand therefore, that whatsoever is giuen in at the mouth to purge the matrix cannot make that stronge operation and workinge in the matrix, as an iniectiō or clister put in belowe at the vulua into the matrix, because yt is digested in the stomake, and leaseth his vertue and chife operation soe that yt worketh but quintessentially in his partes and not in his substauce e longinquo et remota valde a re ipsa.<sup>13</sup> And again the matrix is a wordle of yt selfe lyinge between the bowells and the bladder spreddinge yt selfe to bothe sides of the belly to the nauelle hips and

<sup>12</sup> Forman does not subscribe to the Hippocratic notion that the uterus is connected directly to the digestive tract (Rowland, op. cit., note 5 above, p. 28) and that medicine by mouth would therefore have a direct effect on it. He does believe, however, that smelling sweet or fetid things will affect the position of the uterus.

<sup>13</sup> *e longinquo et remota valde a re ipsa*: from a distance and greatly removed from the thing itself.

reines & vp towardes the stomache and is blowen vp like a bladder the nether end or mouth therof remainyng in the vulua and therfore whatsoever is taken in at the mouth commeth not to the matrix but by circulation after digestion in the vaines and beinge strayed in the kydneyes where the 5 vains of the matrix haue their originalle and thorowe those vaines yt coms to the matrix, as the blod doth. For medisons gyven to exempte\* the matrix or to purg the matrix and to make yt vomite out that which is in yt, muste and oughte to be of that nature and quallity, that other medisons are that ar gyuen to a man or woman to exempte the stomake that is cloyed with humores to make him vomite vp those humores out of his stomake and soe to rid his stomake therof. And thou shalte knowe that those medisons that ar gyuen to make a man vomite, doe never digeste in the stomake, for yf they did digeste then wold they not force a man to vomite. But when nature and the digestiue vertue begins to worke theron yt casteth out such a fume, such a taste or noisum\* sauour in the stomacke that nature nor the stomacke cannot abyde yt, but laboreth by and by to caste yt out againe with violence and that cominge out againe bringeth mani humors or such thinges as ar in the stomacke with yt. For we find by experience that if anie one take a purgation or potion purgatiue when the moon doth applie\* to Jupiter he will vomite yt vp againe and yt will not goe downe but com vp againe or the moste parte therof. Because Jupiter houldeth the vertue digestiue. And when the Mone doth applie to Jupiter she helpeth the vertue digestiue in the stomake & lyuer makinge yt strong to caste out evill matter that anoyeth the stomak and wekneth the vertue retentiue inducing moisture which maketh the expulsiue vertue the stronger. For alwais when the expulsiue vertue is stronge in any parte of the body, ther the retentiue vertue is weeke et econtra.<sup>14</sup> Soe likewise is yt with the matrix all noisum thinges doth trouble the matrix and makes her vomite vp those humors or excrementes that ar in her. And againe the matrix dothe encline and drawe to all swete and sauourie thinges as to muske, amber, cyuete\* & such like for yf a woman were such swete thinges aboute her necke or smelle the sensure\* of such sweete thinges, the matrix will rise vp to the stomak or yf the woman haue the precipitation\* of the matrix yt draweth vp the matrix. And againe yf a woman be troubled with the mother, then yf youe make a pessarie of cyuete muske or of such swete thinges and put yt vp into the vulua, yt draweth downe the matrix and alsoe because the matrix doth flie all noisom and stinckinge savours, men vse to bid women smelle to stinckinge thinges that ar troubled with the mother as to galbaunum\*, assafetida\*, old shoues or to the feathers of a wodcoke or such lyke and to were thinges of ill sauoure as galbaunum about their neckes that the sauoure therof maie be contynewally in their noses, to kepe downe the matrix. And to lie swete smelling thinges belowe alsoe betwene their leges. And when they haue the precipitation, they burne stinckinge thinges and tak the fume of yt belowe to driue vp the matrix and smelle to sweete thinges aboute.

But to com to our purpose toching the cueringe of the matrix when she is replete\* with ill humores or putrified matter as aforesaid, we haue said that for any difficulte matter in the matrix, a medison gyuen at the mouth avaieth lyttle. Also the administration of clisters belowe at the fundament\* doe lyttle good because they enter not into the matrix as we haue proued often times. And hauinge dewe consideration herof I haue made diligente Inquisition amonge graue matrons and midwifes and others to knowe wher the matrix doth exempte himself of any thinge that yt receyue of man more then once in a month or noe. And they haue told me yea, that yt doth exempte yt selfe of any thinge that yt receyveth of man and dothe vomite out the nature and sperme of man receiued by diuers coitions, and will alsoe belche out wind (like as the stomacke doth) at the vulua.<sup>15</sup> Wherby we perceiue that the matrix exemptieth her selfe alwais with the tyde, *The matrix exemptieth her selfe to the tyde*. by the course of the moon. Twise in 24 howars. For as the tyde doth flowe soe doth the matrix begin to flowe and open and spred her selfe & the humors doe gather in the matrix. And when the tyd begins to falle & to goe out then doth the matrix exempte her selfe & caste out mani superfluities that ar in her. But

<sup>14</sup> et econtra: and vice versa.

<sup>15</sup> Such comments make it clear why such practitioners as Forman were called empirics. Though based in Galenic theory, Forman's treatise nowhere cites a medical "authority", but instead validates itself by reference to the experience of Forman and of "grave matrons and midwives".



youe muste knowe that this which the matrix doth caste out, is newly receiued and not fallen into any of the cells of the matrix wher yt is shute vp & inclosed as conceptions ar but newly receiued and lyeth open in the matrix. And herby we find 3 manner of tymes when the matrix doth or wold purge her selfe of all euill things re[ceiued] into her, *3 times that the matrix purgeth her selfe.* and is apte at those tymes to doe yt, though manie tymes shee doth yt not or cannot doe yt because the burden is greate and the matrix is weke and hath not sufficiente strength thervnto for the naturalle expulsiue vertue is weakened in her. Therefore at such tymes as she is apte thereto and the moon in a fit place to that intente as in Cancer, Scorpio, or Pices which help the vertue expulsiue, and when she applyeth to Venus, youe ought to assiste nature to that intente and giue or vse remedies to that entente. And the firste tyme when the matrix doth exempte her self of newe conceyued matter of men is twice alwais in 24 howares. That is to saie when the tyde begins to falle, for then the moon begins to falle, & descend in the humain bodie. The 2 tyme is, when the menstruall course doth vse to com once in 28 daies and that is a greter exemptiynge then the firste. For in this tyme she exemptieth her selfe not only of putrifaction newly re[ceiued], but alsoe of the menstruall blod naturally, yf the matrix be not stoppe or haue any Impediment. But yf any of the vaines or ceells of the matrix be stoppe then againste this tyme youe muste labor to vnstop them that nature maie haue his course that when the course dothe com, the matrix and nature by the helpe of arte may thorowely exempte her selfe and cast out all filthines that is in her. And this is the tyme that we expecte and take to that entente. Another time ther is alsoe when nature doth exempte her selfe in parte but not in toto, and that is when a women trauaileth with child. For then the matrixe doth exempte her selfe of many grosse humors blod and water. But all the celes of the matrix doe not then open as we haue proued by our experience. Ther is alsoe a purging of the matrix by medison which is done violently and artifically. The other 3-manners of the purging of the matrix is naturally, but this artifically. Therefore we oughte wisly to ioine arte and nature together. For some tymes ar better then others and more fitter.

Nota

Vnderstande that the matrix belongs to Venus and Libra and the menstruall blod flowares\* termes\* whites\* of women belonge vnto the Moon and Scorpio. The sperme and seed of man & woman & course therof belonge to Mars. The testikells<sup>16</sup> of man and woman and the vulua and the yearde\* belonge to Venus and the reines of the backe and the belly belowe the nauell the pecten os sacrum\* and spina dorsio os.\*

The philosopher saith, any sicke member of the bodie is beste comforted or cured when as the same signe that gouerneth the said member that is soe griued is fre from eville plannetes and from their infortunate beames or aspectes.\* That is when noe euille plannete doth aspecte that signe by quartile conjunction\* or opposition,\* and when the Moon is fre from eville impedimentes and in conjunction or aspecte of a plannete that is good to that entente, and in the same signe that gouerneth the same member yf yt may be.

Matricem non purgabis in hora Venus neque in hora Moon sed in hora martis vell solis,<sup>17</sup> *And youe mai put Libra in ass[endant] and the Moon in Scorpio or Scorpio in ass[endant] and the Moon in Aries, Virgo, or Capricorn but youe oughte to giue youre Iniection when the tid coms in & that it is almost ful water, that in the turninge of that tyde the matrix mai vomit it out againe.* or when Libra, Scorpio or Sagittarius is in assendente, and when the Moon is in Aries, Virgo or Capricorn applying to a retrograde\* plannete or to Jupiter. For in such a tyme the matrix wilbe apte to vomite out againe the Iniection put into her, for Aries, Virgo and Capricorn ar syna ruminatia\* apte to giue vomites in, and when the Moon ap[roach] to Jupiter by conjunction, or yf Sagittarius be in asses[endant] and the Moon ap[roach] to Jupiter by any aspecte he causeth the matrix to open and to vomite out the medison & humors againe. Also yf the Moon be in Aries, Virgo or Capricorn ap[proaching] to a retrograde] plannet he make one

<sup>16</sup> testikells [testicles]: in a woman, the ovaries were considered analagous to the male testicles (Eccles, op. cit., note 5 above, p. 26).

<sup>17</sup> *Matricem . . . solis:* You do not purge the matrix in the hour of Venus or the Moon but in the hour of Mars or the Sun.

caste vp again the medison. And in cuering of other diseases of the matrix yt behoueth to heate the matrix and to comforte the vertues digestiue. And then youe oughte to put Libra in the asses[endant] and the Moon in Aries, Leo or Sagittarius ap[proaching] Mars aut the Sun in Aries, Leo, Sagittarius or Libra and let Venus be stronge in Aries, Taurus, Leo, Capricorn, Cancer or Pisces.

And when youe will purg the matrix by a potion at the mouth, then let Libra be in asses[endant] and doe yt in the howare of Mars or the Sun and let Venus be free and stronge vnder the earth, or in the 3.2.12.11. or 10. house fre from dus<sup>18</sup> 6th and 8th, and let the Moon be *aucta numero*<sup>19</sup> or elles let Jupiter be in in the 6th.

And in all potiones glisters vomites inictions or other administrations of medisons, at that instante tyme when youe firste minister to the partie, loke to the lord of the 6 house, that he be weake and infortunate and let him haue noe dignitie\* if youe can & put him in the 12 or 3 house or in the 9 house or in the 11 house remotus, soe that yt be not Jupiter. For Jupiter reioiseth in the 11 house, & Saturn in the 12 house. The weaker dus 11<sup>20</sup> is, the sonner shall the infirmity be cured, and the better shall the medison take place and worke. Looke in generalle chapter of giuing of medison and of curing diseases. *In my bocke writen to that intente, and be sure when youe giue medison to vomit to purge clense or expell ani feculent matter, haue respecte to the tyde, and to the expulsive signes and let the Moon apply to Jupiter out of Aries, Virgo, or Capricorn which ar vomiting signs or out of Capricorn aut put Capricorn, Aries, Virgo or Capricorn in ass[endant] for Jupiter naturally doth make on vomite yf the Moon apply vnto him.*

The manner howe youe shale vse the woman  
when youe put an iniectiōe into her matrix.

Firste youe shale bathe the bodie of the woman as is aforsaid with a bath or *Or anointe her belly and sides with the dreges of the oille of white lillies, and make bathes & fomentations of camomille—as Mrs Whip vsed.* lotion made to that entente, as here after shall followe, to make her bodie apte to that purpose and to open the matrix and to sumple\* the matter or hardnes in the matrix or congelation of humors lyinge in her belly or sydes lyke ague cakes or hard lumps, and this muste be done 2 or 3 tymes every daie very hote in a bathing tub or other wise, alwais 3 or 4 daies before the tyme that she thinkes her course will com. And when shee feelles and knows that her course will com or is redie to com or doth begine to com downe, then haue your iniectiōe and instrumentes redye and take and lay the woman on a bed soe that her hipps may lye moch hier then her hed but firste giue her the powder to drincke som too howars or more before abortiue<sup>21</sup> to kepe downe the matrix and to force the matrix somoch as youe may to open.

And then take your sirindge and fill yt with your iniectiōe, and firste put in your finger at the vulua vp into the matrix and feelle wher the mouth of the matrix be open and doe lie righte or noe for somtimes the matrix is soe weke of yt selfe that yt will not kepe open, and then youe muste haue a nother manner of Instrument that is brod at the outward end and smaller towardes the Inner end and that Instrument muste be of som 5 or 6 ynches longe somewhat bending or croked vpwades. That muste youe put firste into the matrix and let yt staie therin to kepe open the matrix, and allwaies put your syringe with your iniectiōe into that and thorowe that put yt vp into the matrix spouting it hard vp, twice or 3 tymes on after another & let yt reste in the matrix & let the woman lye till the matrix doth vomite yt vp a gaine. And when the matrix hath vomited that out, fill the matrix againe with freshe as afore spouting yt vp 4 or 5 spoutes full or more till the matrix be fulle, and soe doe till the matrix will vomite vp no more. Then youe oughte to spoute yt lastly with goates milke and oille of violets and suche lyke *Goates milke or cowe milk.* as shall followe to comforte the matrix and then lay warme clothes on her

<sup>18</sup> dus: Forman's abbreviation for "dominus"; in astrology it means "having influence over". Here, Venus must be free of the influence of the 6th and 8th houses.

<sup>19</sup> *aucta numero*: [the Moon] having increased with respect to number?

<sup>20</sup> the weaker dus 11 . . . : The weaker the lord of the 11th astrological "house" is, the sooner will a cure take place.

<sup>21</sup> abortiue: modifies "powder"; Forman's syntax is confusing.

body and her plaster on her navell again and one her backe to comferte the matrix and reins. And thus thou maiste doe without daunger for the matrix will receive yt, and within 3 howars will bring forth whatsoever is in the matrix. For the matrix will vomite yt out againe as experience showeth so sone as the tide turneth.

And alwaies make your glisters accordinge to the matter wheron youe will haue yt to worke. Yf to bringe downe the menstruall course, make yt of a sheps hed and of such thinges and herbes as provoke the course as of madder, cammomille and penniroiall, whitworte and suchlike.

Yf to bringe forth som ded foetus, then of such thinges as provoke abortion. *As elebor & sowbred.* Yf to purge the matrix generally of humors then make yt accordingly, to purge the humors therin, and all waies put yt in at the vulua.

And after the matrix is soe scoured then take a weathers head\* and boille him with mallowes, violetes leues, and straine yt and put therto foote oille\* and with a syringe let her spoute yt vp into the matrix as she lyeth. And after giue thinges at the mouth to purge the bodie. And here haue I writen the greteste secretes on of them in phisick for womens causes. forman. 1597.

After the conclusion of the treatise proper, Forman skips a line and continues in a less careful hand.

And here vnderstand a greate secrete, that Eleborus albus\* poudred 1 dram is a strong vomite yf you put therof in your Iniection yt will mak yt work the better & sonner. Soe will the decoction of daffodille or sowbred, and the pouder of tobacca, and nux vomica, the pouder of savine, or the barke of a willowe.

And this hath bine found to be a speciall remedie inwarde and approued for such as haue had the dropsie of their matrix and their courses stopte and body swollen very moch. To take 6 sponfulls of the Joice of sage, 2 sponfulls of sallet oylle\* and iiiii oz. of old charnico\* or old sacke, and drink yt of at a draughte\* hote in the morninge and soe moch more at nighte and within 7 dais yt hath forced downe the course and remedyed the dropsie. When yt hath bine thoughte they haue bine paste al remedie & hope.

And for because ther shale wante nothinge that is necessarie to this purpose I will heare set downe a table of such thinges as cause abortion and cause the matrix to vomite out and discharge her selfe of all dead birthes and fals conceptions or of any other putrified matter that is in her which followe.<sup>22</sup>

Astrologia h d 2 <sup>23</sup> [aristolochia—birthwort]	Lauender	
Agarike h d 2 [agaricus— larch agaric]	Mirrhes h 2 [mirra—myrrh]	Trocis* de mirh [troches of myrrh]
Ammoniacum h 1 [giant fennel]	Marigoldes	Tros* de alcathengi [troches of winter cherries]
Brionie h d 3 [wild nep]	Mandrake	Trifora saracenic [saracen trefoil?]

<sup>22</sup> In identifying the following medicinal substances, I have used, in addition to the *OED*, John Gerarde, *The Herball or generelle historie of plantes*, London, 1597; William Turner, *New herball*, London, 1551, and *Seconde part of [his] herball*, London, 1562; and William Salmon, *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis or the new London dispensatory*, London, 1679. In addition, identifications have been checked where possible against Tony Hunt, *The plant names of medieval England*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 1989. In cases of disagreement, I have followed Hunt's identifications.

<sup>23</sup> h d 2: hot and dry in the second degree. Many herbals list the qualities of plants this way in order to help the user determine their effect on humoral balance. This list contains hot and dry substances which are meant to counteract the cold moistness thought to be characteristic of women. Forman apparently tired of recording degrees midway through his list.

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Barce Iuniperi [bark of juniper]	Mather [madder]	Trifora magna [great trefoil?]
Barce Lauri [bark of laurel]	Opoponax [woundwort]	Tym [thyme]
Camipiteos h d 2 [camepitheos—ground pine]	Oill of savin	Takamehac* [tacamahac]
Camomill h d 3	Oille of willow	Tyrania
Cinamon h d 3	Pulegium [penniroyal]	Wild tyme.
Coniza h d 3 [plowman's spikenard]	Polimontanum [poly]	
Casshes h 2 [cassia?]	Pills of willow	
Dittam h d 3 [dittany]	Rewe [rue]	
Daucus h d 3 [carrot]	Rad. panacis [root of opoponax]	
Elleborus h d 3 [hellebore]	Savine	
Galbanum h d 2	Saxfrage [saxifrage]	
Garden cresses h d 3	Sesely [hartwort]	
Horhound h d 3	Sagapenum [sweet marjoram?]	
Horstraunge h d 3 [sulphurwort]	Sellindin [selinum?—wild celery]	
Lapdamun h d 3 [ladon]	Sowbred	
Laserpitium h d 3 [laserwort]	Scammoni	
Lupins	Smirnum [candie Alexander]	
	Saffron	

These are good to make glisters and Iniections to caste into the matrix to lysome\* yt and to sumple\* the matrix and to lose the humors and to make the matrix open and the vaines to open and to strengthen the matrix.

Cabbage	Cowe milke
Colwortes	Penniroyall
Borax minr [a kind of stone]	Camomille
Figes	Motherworte
Joice of radiges [juice of radishes]	Mallowes
March mallowes	Hollihockes
Whitworte [feverfew]	Smallach [smallage—wild celery or parsley]
Radish rotes	Nep [catnip or sometimes bryony]
Rosmarie	Pouder of nep
Sage & the Joice	
Mercuri herb [English mercury or Good Henrie]	
Mather	
Savine	
Sowbred	
Saffron	
Hens grece [chicken fat]	
Oill of violetes	
Oill of lyllies	
Gotes milke	
White wine	
Oill of savin	

*Barbara H. Traister*

Thes ar good to make plasteres of, to strengthen the matrix, and to bring yt to operation and workinge and to comferte yt, and to cease paine in the raines and to strenthen the wombe and the foetus and to make the womb and foetus stronge.

Ammoniacum [gum from ferula or fennel]	Sagapenum [? sweet marjoram]
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Cloves	Sumach
Galbanum	Sinnamom
Gum dragante [gum draconis]	Takamehac

Lazerpytium [laserwort]	Vng.* agrippe [unguentum agrippae]
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Ladanum [? hart's- tongue fern]	Vng. comitisse [unguentum comitissae— gentian]
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Opoponax	Mastich
Rosen [rose]	Vng. sandalinum [sandalwood]

glister pro matrix<sup>24</sup>

RX colwortes	boil all in a quart
camomill an m. <sup>25</sup>	of milk, strain
smallach	yt & put therto
saffron. a farthingworth	
eleborus albus 3 drams sliced	
of the oills of lillies camomill savine 2 oz.	

fiat clister pro matrix

A plaster to strengthen the backe of a woman that hath moch weknes in her back, and yt is approued often and yt draweth vp and houldeth vp the matrix & the Birth.

RX vng. comitisse takamehat ana partes equales cinnamoni 1 dram<sup>26</sup> gariophilli [cloves] 2 scruples sumach 1 oz. pulveriz aut fiat in pltrum.<sup>27</sup>

The plaster that I mad for Jone Wolfe 1598, 23 Septemb to strengthe and comferte her weke backe and to stop the whites, caused of Mars in Libra, Moon sept a Venus in Libra. Saturn in Libra d here.

RX vng. infrig gall	sanguinis drac 2 drams
vng. comitiss cal an oz.	[sanguis draconis—bloodwort]
carannae [a tree resin]	zinziber 2 drams [ginger]
sem sumacis [seed of sumach?]	caere 2 oz. [wax]
acatia an oz.	olibani 1 oz. [frankencense]
[acacia—Egyptian thorn]	masticis 1 dram [resin from the masticke tree]
hipoquistidos*	

pouder them and melte the gums and make a plaster therof on lether. This is a wonderfull comfortable plaster, and yt is cold in 2 degres.

<sup>24</sup> The format of this and the following recipes resembles in its wording many medieval medicinal recipes. Forman probably copied them, and perhaps his lists of medicines as well, from earlier manuscripts.

<sup>25</sup> m[anipulus]; abbreviation meaning a handful.

<sup>26</sup> vng. . . . dram: Take equal parts, one dram each, of vng. comitisse [unguentum comitissae], tacamehac, and cinnamon.

<sup>27</sup> pulveriz aut fiat in pltrum: pulverize or make into a plaster.

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Thes are good to make Bathes and lotions to bathe and washe the womb with alwais 3, 4, or 5 daies before youe minister your glisters. For thes open the vaines bodie and matrixe, by their vertue and prouoke the menstruall course.

absinthium [wormwood]	centaureum vtriq [centaury]	lapattium [dock]	pulegium [penniroyal]
abrotonum [southernwood]	chamepytis [camepitis— ground pine]	laureola [spurge laurel]	radicula [radish]
acorus [sweet flag]	choemedris [camedreas— germander]	lazerpitium [laserwort]	rotundus oderatus Iuncus [camel's hay]
adiantum [maidenhair]	chamedaphne [?cinquefoil]	laurus alepand [horse tongue]	rubia [madder]
agaricum [larch tree]	chrisocome [goldilocks]	leucoion [gilliflower]	ruscus [butcher's broom]
allium [garlic]	cycer [cicer—pea]	libanotis [rosemary]	ruta siluestre [wild rue]
alisma [sopewort]	cinnamonum	ligusticum [ligustrum— cowslip]	sagapenum [sweet marjoram]
amomum [poppy]	clynopadium [mastick]	lily radix [lily root]	sabyna [sabino— cypress]
amigdala amaz [almond]	conyza [fleabane]	lythospermon [gromwell]	salvia [sage]
anemone [poppy]	coris [corindum?— winter cherry]	marubium [horehound]	sampsucus [marjoram]
anisum [anise]	costus [costmary]	meum [mew]	scordium [garlic germander]
anthemis [camomille]	crocodilium [chameleon thistle]	melissa [balm]	serpillum [leek]
apium [smallage]	cucumis silv [wild cucumber]	mirha [myrrh]	seseli [hartswort]
apiastrum [balm]	cyclaminus [cyclamen— sowbred]	napus [rape—turnip]	sison [cisson—ivy]
aristol. long [aristolochia longa—long birthwort]	cyperus [galingale]	nasturtium [cress]	sium [rocket]
arthemesia [mugwort]	daphnoides [laurel]	nigella [black cumin]	smirnum [thoroughbred parsley]
asarum [asarabacca]	daucus [carrot]	oesypus*	solaris ma [solanum manicum?—raging nightshade]
ascyrum [St Peters wort]	dictamnus [dittany]	olea ethiop lacrima [wild olive]	spicanardi [spikenard]
asphodelus [asphodel]	dictamnus creticum [dittany of crete]	olusatrum [alexander]	stavisacri [stavesacre]
baccharis [plowman's spikenard]	elaterium [elacterium—juice of wild cucumber]	oreoselinum [mountain parsley]	staphilinus [parsley or carrot]
balsamum [balsam]	eleliphacus <sup>28</sup> [salvia or sage]	origanum [marjoram]	sticax [sticados— houseleek]

<sup>28</sup> eleliphacus: one of the few occasions when Forman takes a name from Greek instead of using the more common Latin (salvia) or English (sage).

batis [batus— blackberry]	epithimum [thyme]	panax [woundwort]	thlaspi [tiaspus— shepherd's purse]
betonica [betony]	ermun [ermion?—lily]	pastinaca silvestris [wild carrot]	thimbra [timbra— savory]
bitumen*	eringium [holly]	peonia [peony]	thimus [thyme]
brioniae radix [root of bryony]	feniculum [fennel]	petroselinum [horse- parsley]	tilia [linden]
brassica [wild cabbage]	galbanum	peucedanum [hog's fennel]	tragium [stinking orach]
bunium [fennel]	gladiolos [corn flag]	phu [fu—valerian]	tragoriganum [goat's marjoram]
calamintha [calamint]	glysisis [gliceria?— licorice]	piper [pepper]	tricomanes [maidenhair]
calamus odoratus [aromatical reed]	hedera [ivy]	polium [poly]	trifolium [clover]
canchamum [cancamum]	helyocrisis [golden mothwort]	porrum capitulum [leek]	trissago [germander]
capparis [honeysuckle]	hypericum [St John's wort]	porrum siluestre [wild leek]	veratrum [illegible] [hellebore]
casia	lasminum [jasmine]	pseudobunium [wintercress]	viole albe [white violet]
castoreum*	Invla [onion]	pseudodictamnus [bastard dittany]	vitex [chaste tree]
cassutha [cuscuta?— dodder]	Iris		vitis nigra [red bryony]
cancalis [Canicularis?— henbane]	lanaria[?]		vrtica [nettle]
caedri fructus [cedar berries]	lauendula [lavender]		

#### GLOSSARY

AGEWE CAKE: enlargement of the spleen or liver caused by ague.

APPLIE: bend to, approach.

ASPECTES: the relative position of the heavenly bodies as they appear to an observer on the earth's surface at a given time.

AS(S)AF(O)ETIDA: a resinous gum used in medicines, noted for its noxious odor.

BITUMEN: a pitch with a loathsome smell, hot and dry in the third degree (Gerarde, note 22 above, p. 1018). Turner mentions that bitumen is a substance made when birch bark is boiled and then juice is squeezed out (note 22, 1551, f. v), but this is apparently an extremely rare usage, and Turner does not mention any medicinal purpose for the extracted juice.

CASTOREUM: a reddish-brown unctious substance with a strong smell and bitter taste; obtained from beavers.

CHARNICO: a wine from Portugal, similar to sherry.

CORRANTLY [CURRENTLY]: readily, smoothly.

COURSE: menstrual flow.

CYVETE [CIVET]: musk.

DIGNITIE: a situation in which a planet's influence is heightened by its position in the zodiac.

DRAUGHTE: the quantity of a drink which can be swallowed at one "pull".

ELEBORUS ALBUS: white hellebore.

EXEMPT: empty.

FECULENTE: foul, filthy.

FILTE: filth.

*A sixteenth-century gynaecological essay*

FLOWARES: female menses.

FONDAMENT [FUNDAMENT]: the anus or the buttocks.

FOOTE OILLE: neat's foot oil, made from the feet of oxen.

GALBAUNUM: resinous gum used in medicines, noted for its noxious odor.

GRENE [GREEN]: recently delivered of a child.

HIPOQUISTIDOS: juice extracted from a fungus (*hypocristus*) which grows under the shrub *Cistus*.

Gerard writes, "It is a sure remedie for all infirmities that come of fluxes . . . it doth notably comfort and strengthen" (note 22, p. 1099).

IMPOSTUMATION: formation of a swelling or an abscess.

INIECTION [INJECTION]: the act of forcing a fluid into the cavities or vessels of the body with a syringe.

LETTED: hindered or impeded.

LYSOME [LISSOM]: to supple, limber.

MOLLIFYING: softening.

MOTHER: the womb, but often used, as in this treatise, for a condition characterized by difficulty in breathing, thought to be brought on by a rising of the womb.

MOULLE [MOLE]: a false conception which produced a tumour-like or malformed embryo which usually miscarried.

NOISUM: noxious.

OESYPUS [OESYPHUS]: filth from sheep's wool. When the wool is boiled it produces this emollient.

OPPOSITION: the relative position of two heavenly bodies when exactly opposite to one another as seen from the earth's surface.

PAPES: nipples.

PECTEN OS SACRUM: pelvic bone.

POTTELL: a measure containing two quarts.

PRECIPITATION OF THE MATRIX: complete prolapse of the uterus.

QUARTILE CONJUNCTION: the aspect of two heavenly bodies which are ninety degrees distant from one another.

REPLETE: filled.

RETRO[GRADE]: to go backward in apparent motion in the zodiac.

RIDGE BONES: spine or backbone.

SALLET OYLLE: salad oil.

SENSURE: apparently derived from "cense", meaning to perfume with incense. Forman means "perfume" or "smell".

SHAREBONE: pubic bone.

SPINA DORSIA OS: backbone or spine.

STRIKEING: rubbing lightly or stroking.

SUMPLE: soften, make supple.

SYNA RUMINATIA [SIGNA RUMINANTIA]: astrological signs which promote vomiting or regurgitating.

TAKAMEHAC: aromatic resin from the New World. The first OED citation is 1577, suggesting that Forman was up-to-date in his list of medicines.

TERMS: female menses.

TROCIS, TROS [TROCHISK or TROCHE]: flat tablet of medicinal substance; pill.

VNG [UNGUENTUM]: ointment.

WEATHERS HEAD: a male sheep's head.

WHER: whether.

WHITES: non-menstrual vaginal discharge.

YEARDE [YARD]: penis.