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COMMUNICATIONS

OPHTHALMIC LEECHDOMS

BY

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IN the years 1864, 1865, 1866, were published in the Rolls Series, three volumes by the Rev. Oswald Cockayne, entitled, *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft in Early England*. These have been long out of print and are now very scarce. I was fortunate, not long ago, in securing a set, and, for the benefit of readers of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF OPHTHALMOLOGY, have transcribed the parts which deal with the eye in the hope that they may prove of interest.

The question of continuity in England after the departure of the Romans and before the pacification of the Heptarchy is a much disputed point. Authorities, such as the late Professor Haverfield and Mr. Collingwood, are in favour of there being no continuity between the Roman and Saxon epochs. On the other hand, Professor Zachrisson, of Upsala, working on place-name material, holds that "for philological reasons a conscious and artificial revival of Roman names is entirely out of the question."

Mr. Cockayne, in his preface, would seem to support the latter tenet. He held that the Saxons accepted Greek and Latin learning, and that the Gothic nations had a knowledge of the kinds and powers of worts, *i.e.*, the practical part of botany: "their medicines must have consisted partly in the application of the qualities of these worts to healing purposes, for otherwise the study was of no real utility." Charms played a large part. Marcellus, *cir.* 380 A.D. recommends, "to avoid inflamed eyes, when you see a

star fall or cross the heavens, count quickly, for you will be free from inflammation for as many years as you count numbers." Chastity on the part of the patient and the leech, coupled with a Greek word written on parchment and suspended round the neck, will work wonders. "As soon as a man gets pain in his eyes tie in unwrought flax as many knots as there are letters in his name, pronouncing them as you go, and tie it round his neck."

"For white spot, as cataract, catch a fox alive; cut his tongue out; let him go; dry his tongue and tie it up in a red rag and hang it round the man's neck. If anything to cause annoyance get into a man's eye, with five fingers of the same side as the eye, run the eye over and fumble at it, saying three times, 'tetunc resonco, bregan gresso,' and spit thrice. For the same, shut the vexed eye and say thrice, 'in mon deromarcos axatison,' and spit thrice; this remedy is 'mirificum.' For the same, shut the other eye, touch gently the vexed eye with the ring finger and thumb, and say thrice, 'I buss the Gorgons mouth.' For hordeolum, which is a sore place in the eyelid, of the shape of a barleycorn, take nine grains of barley and with each poke the sore, with everyone saying the magic words, 'kuria kuria kassaria sourophbi,' then throw away the nine, and do the same with seven; throw away seven, and do the same with five, and so with three and one. For the same, take nine grains of barley and poke the sore, and at every poke say, 'pheuge pheuge krite se diokei,' 'flee, flee, barley thee chaseth.' For the same, touch the sore with the medicinal or ring finger, and say thrice, 'vigaria gasaria.' "

For purposes of amusement these charms may be contrasted with that in the story of a woman who procured an amulet to cure bad eyes. Hopeful of recovery, she refrained from weeping and got well. A zealous opponent of sorcery prevailed on her to give up the amulet, which was found to contain these words: "Der-Teufel cratze dir die Augen aus, und scheisse dir in die Löcher, may the devil scratch thine eyes out, and —in the holes". The knowledge that she had been imposed upon brought on a relapse of the condition in this case.

The first of these volumes consists of an Anglo-Saxon *Herbarium*, derived partly from Apuleus and partly from Dioscorides, together with the *Medicina de Quadripedibus* of Sextus Placitus, with some fly-leaf leechdoms and charms. The second volume consists of three leech books; the first two form a treatise on medicine with its proper colophon at the end, the third is of a more monkish character. The book probably belonged to the abbey of Glastonbury. In the colophon is the following, "Bald habet hunc librum Cild quem conscribere jussit." Bald was the owner, Cild, the scribe. The former seems to have been an Anglo-Saxon general practitioner, and he had some knowledge

of eye prescriptions. Without wishing to be facetious, may we not consider him as the earliest of our professional ancestors in ophthalmology? Although his treatment for a foreign body in the eye may not have progressed beyond fumbling at the closed eye with his ring finger, we may perhaps credit him with some sense; and I personally like to think of him as the lineal forebear of the ophthalmological giants of the nineteenth century.

In volume I, the herbs are arranged in a sort of index, with the conditions for which they are of use. With regard to ophthalmic complaints, these are generally sore eyes, sometimes, dimness of sight, occasionally, bleared eyes; swelling of the eye is mentioned often, erysipelas, once, headache, more frequently.

I propose to take the various herbs useful for eye conditions and abstract what is said about them in the body of the work.

BETONY. To be gathered in the month of August, without use of iron; when gathered, shake the mould, till none of it cleave thereon, and then dry it in the shade very thoroughly, and with its roots altogether reduce it to dust; then use, and taste of it when thou needest. For sore of eyes, take the roots of the same wort, seethe them in water to the third part (evaporating two thirds of the water), and with the water bathe the eyes, and take leaves of the same wort and bruise them and lay them over the eyes upon the face. For dimness of sight take the same root, by weight one drachm and give (the patient) to drink fasting, then it diminishes the part of the blood from which dimness cometh. For bleared eyes, take of the same wort betony, and give (the patient) to swallow, it will do good and will clear the sharpness of the eyes.

MUGWORT. (*Artemisia vulgaris*.) It turneth away the evil eyes of evil men.

RAVENS LEEK. (*Orchis*.) For sore of eyes, that is, when that one be tearful, take juice of this same wort, and smear the eyes therewith; without delay it removes the sore.

KNOTGRASS. (*Polygonum aviculare*.) For sore of eyes, before sunrise, or shortly before it begin fully to set, go to the same wort proserpinaca, and scratch it round about with a golden ring, and say that thou wilt take it for leechdom of eyes, and after three days go again thereto before rising of sun, and take it, and hang it about the man's swere (neck); it will profit well.

MAYTHE. (*Anthemis nobilis*.) For sore of eyes, let a man take ere the upgoing of the sun . . . and when he taketh it, let him say that he will take it against white specks, and against sore of eyes; let him take next the ooze and smear the eyes therewith.

WOOD LETTUCE. For dimness of eyes, it is said that the earn (eagle) when he will upfly, in order that he may see the more brightly, will touch his eyes with the juice, and wet them, and he through that obtains the greatest brightness. Again for dimness of eyes, take juice of this same wort, mixed with old wine and with honey, and let this be collected without smoke. It is best that a man mingle together juice of this wort, and wine and honey, and lay them up in a glass ampulla; use when need be; from this you will observe a wondrous cure.

GARCLIVE. (*Agrimony*.) For sore of eyes, take this wort, which is named agrimony; pound it so green by itself; if then thou have it not green take it dry and dip it in warm water, so as thou may earliest use it; smear then therewith; hastily it driveth away the fault and the sore from the eyes.

FEVER FUGE, or the lesser Curmel. For sore of eyes, take this same wort's juice; smear the eyes therewith; it heals the thinness of the sight (weakness of vision). Mingle also honey thereto; it benefits similarly dim eyes, so that the brightness (of vision) is restored. If one then fall into this mischief, take a good handful of this same wort, seethe it in wine or in ale, so that of the wine there be an ambur

or jug full; have it stand three days; take then every day when there may be occasion, a half sextarius, mix with honey; then let him drink this fasting.

POPPY. For sore of eyes, that is what we denominate blearedness, take the root of this wort, which the Greeks name mekona, and the Romans papaver album, and the Engle call white poppy, or the stalk, with the fruit,, lay it to the eyes.

CELANDINE. For dimness of eyes and soreness and obstruction (albugo) take juice of this wort, beaten out of the roots, let that be well pounded with old wine and honey and pepper together, then smear the eyes inwardly. Also, we have found that some men have smeared their eyes with the milk of this same wort, and it was thereby better with them. Again for eyes getting dim, take ooze of this same wort, or the blossoms wrung out, and mixed with honey; mingle then gently ho: ashes thereto, and seethe together in a brazen vessel; this is a special leechdom for dimness of eyes.

CHEADLE. (*Mercurialis perennis.*) For sore of eyes and swelling, take leaves of this same wort, pounded in old wine: lay that to the sore.

HOUNDS HEAD. (*Antirrhinum orontium.*) For sore of eyes and swelling, take roots of this wort, seethe them in water, and then bathe the eyes with the water; soon it relieves the sore.

RUE. For sore of eyes and swelling, take this same wort rue, well pounded lay it to the sore, also the root pounded, and smear therewith; it well amendeth the sore. For dimness of eyes, the leaves of this same wort, give them (to the patient) to eat fasting, and give (them him) to drink in wine.

RUE. (*Ruta Montana.*) For dimness of the eyes and for an evil cut, take leaves of this wort, sodden in old wine, then put the extract into a glass vessel; afterwards anoint with the fluid.

BASIL. (*Clinopodium vulgare.*) For sore and swelling of eyes, pound this same wort in good wine, smear the eyes therewith: thou shalt heal them.

MARCHE. (*Apium.*) For sore and for swelling of eyes, take this wort, well pounded with bread; lay this to the eyes.

SOUTHERNWOOD. (*Artemisia abrotanon.*) For sore of eyes, take this same wort, sodden with the wort which is called cydonia, and then pounded with a loaf, as if thou shouldst work a poultice; lay this to the sore, it will be relieved. N.B., this wort is of two kinds, the one is wife, or female, the other wer, or male; and they have in all things alike might against the things of which here before we quoth.

SEMPERVIVUM SEDIFORME. For erysipelatous inflammations, and for sore of eyes, and for foot addle, or gout, take this wort, except the root, pound with smede, or fine flour, in the manner in which thou mightest work up a poultice, lay it to these infirmities; it will alleviate them.

ORPINE or Livelong. Pounded with meal this wort healeth sore eyes.

ELDER. (*Sambucus nigra.*) For mickle heat and swelling of the eyes, take the self same wort, mingled with meal, and wrought to a cataplasm; lay to the eyes, they be relieved.

MILOTIS. This wort thou shalt take up in the waning of the moon, in the month which hight August; take then the root of this wort, and bind it to a yarn thread, and hang it to thy neck; that year thou shalt not feel dimness of thine eyes, or if it befall thee, it suddenly shall depart, and thou shalt be hale. This leechcraft is a proved one.

This ends the Herbarium. We miss from the descriptions any of the herb eyebright, or euphrasy, also fennel and mallows, which in later times were sovereign cures for ophthalmic conditions. Both the latter herbs find mention in this Herbarium, but not in an ophthalmic capacity. We see that the Anglo-Saxon leech relied principally on extracts from the roots or leaves in water, wine or honey. From the frequent mention of the word poultice, we can imagine that the practitioner in those far off times was much addicted to this old fashioned and rather septic remedy.

The *Medicina de Quadripedibus* gives the medicinal virtues of the parts of animals, arranged under the headings of the particular animals. As can be imagined all sorts of nastiness find a place, but the eye for the most part is lucky in not having dung or urine advised for its ailments. The following are the ophthalmic portions.

For dimness of eyes, take a foxes gall mingled with honey of dumbledore* (Latin, cum melle attico), and applied to the eyes, it healeth.

For sore of eyes, a hares lung set on and bound fast thereto; the sore will be healed. For dimness of eyes, a hares gall mingled with honey, and smeared with, brighteneth the eyes. For sore of eyes, a hares liver sodden is good to drink in wine, and to bathe the eyes with the broth.

For the men who from the tenth hour of the day see not, let them receive with their eyes the smoke of the same drink, and reek them with the broth; and let them wet the liver, and rub and smear therewith.

For brightness of eyes, gall of a wild buck mingled with field bees honey, and smeared on; the brightness cometh to them.

For dimness of eyes, mingle together a wood goats gall and a little of wine; smear therewith thrice; then be they healed.

For heat and pricking of eyes, new goats cheese set upon the eyes with the eyelids; quickly will be amends for him (the man).

To remove away eye pain (ad glaucomata, Latin) take a wolfs right eye, and prick it to pieces, and bind it to the suffering eye; it maketh the sore to wane, if it frequently be smeared therewith.

Mingle with field bees honey (melle attico), a bulls gall, against obscurity and darkness of the eyes, put it upon the eyes; wonderfully it healeth.

For pain and pricking sensation in the eyes, break to pieces a hounds head; if the right eye ache, take the right eye; if the left ache, take the left eye, and bind it on externally; it healeth well.

Among the fly-leaf leechdoms occur the following which have reference to the eyes.

This is the best eyesalve for eye pain, and for mist, and for pin, and for worms, and for itchings, and for eyes running with teardrops and for every known swelling: take feverfew blossoms, and dills blossoms, and thunder clovers blossoms, and hammer worts blossoms, and wormwood of two kinds, and pulegium, and the netherward part of a lily, and coloured dill, and lovage, and pellitory, and pound the worts together, and boil them together in harts marrow or in his grease, and mingle oil besides; put them a good mickle into the eyes, and smear them outwardly and warm at the fire; and this salve helpeth for any swelling, to swallow it and to smear with it, on whatever limb it may be.

This is efficacious for an eyesalve: take yellow stone (ochre), and salt stone (rock salt), and pepper, and weigh them in a balance, and drive them through a cloth, and put of all equally much, and put all together, and drive again through a linen cloth; this is a tried leechcraft.

The following note on beet might give some credence to the view that our Anglo-Saxon forefathers recognised some connexion between the eyes and chronic headache.

For old and constant head ache, pound the wort which hight beet, and rub up on the temples and top of the head, thou shalt wonder at the leechdom. Again for the same, pound celandine in vinegar and smear the head therewith above the eyes: the man shall soon be better.

The last ophthalmic leechdom in the first volume is for pain in the eye.

* Dumbledore—a bumble bee.

It is, take the netherward part of a bulrush, pound it, and wring it through a hair cloth, and add salt; then squeeze it into the eye.

The rest of the volume deals with charms to find lost cattle, for catching a swarm of bees, etc.

Bald's leech book begins with a list of the contents, the first two paragraphs may be transcribed here.

Leechdoms against all infirmities of the head, and whence comes ache of all or of the half head (hemisrania) and cleansings and swilling against filth and ratten to the health of the head; and how one must tend a broken head, and how if the brain be out.

Leechdoms against all tenderness of the eyes, against mists of the eyes, either of an old or of a young man, and whence that comes, and against white spot and against tears of eyes, and against speck on eyes, against imminutions (contractions of the pupil) and if a man be bleareyed, against pocks on eyes, and against figs (possibly styes) and against worms, or insects; and eye salves of every kind.

The leechdoms for headache are for the most part not worth recording here, but the following is of interest:—For head wark, take elecampane and groundsel and fen cress and gitrife, boil them in water, make them steam upon the eyes, when it is hot, and rub about the eyes with the worts so hot.

Bald's leechdoms for the eyes are as follows:—

Leechdoms for mistiness of the eyes; take juice or blossoms of celandine, mingle with honey of dumble dores (melle attico) introduce it into a brazen vessel, half warm it neatly on warm gledes, till it be sodden. This is a good leechdom for dimness of eyes. For the same mingle the juice of wild rue, dewey and bruised, mingle with equally much of filtered honey, smear the eyes with that. For mistiness of eyes many men, lest their eyes should suffer the disease, look into cold water and then are able to see far; that harmeth not the vision, but much wine drinking and other sweetened drinks and meats, and those especially which remain in the upper region of the wamb and cannot digest, but there form evil humours and thick ones; leek and colewort and all that are so austere are to be avoided, and care must be had that a man lie not in bed in day time supine; and cold and wind and reek and dust, these things and the like to these every day are injurious to the eyes. For mistiness of eyes, take green fennel, put it into water for thirty days in a crock (earthen vessel), one that is pitched on the outside, fill it then with rain water; after that throw off the fennel and with the water every day wash the eyes and open them. Again, from the vapour and steam of ill juices and from nausea cometh mist of eyes, and the sharpness and corrupt humour causes that, against which this is to be done. For mist of eyes, take of celandine juice a spoon full, another of fennels, a third of southernwoods juice, and two spoon measures of the tear of honey (virgin honey that drops without pressure), mingle them together and then with a feather put some into the eyes in the morning and when it be midday, and again at evening after that, when it is dried up and spent; for sharpness of the salve, take milk of a woman who hath child, apply it to the eyes.

Again, a noble craft. Take equal quantities of balsam and of virgin honey, mix together and smear with that.

Again, for the same, juice of celandine and sea water; smear and bathe the eyes therewith. It is then most advisable that thou take juice of celandine and of mugwort and of rue, of all equal quantities, add honey to it, and balsam, if thou have it, put it then into such a vessel that thou may see the it with glue (probably a covered vessel), and make use of it. It does much good.

For mist of eyes, salt burnt and rubbed fine and mixed with dumble dores honey; smear therewith.

Again, juice of fennel and of rose and of rue and dumble dores honey, and kids gall, mixed together; smear the eyes with this. Again, lay upon the eyes green coriander rubbed fine and mixed with woman milk.

Again, let him take a hares gall and smear with it.

Again, live perriwinkles burnt to ashes; and let him mix the ashes with dumbledores honey.

Again, the fatty parts of all river fishes melted in the sun and mingled with honey; smear with that.

For mist of eyes, juice of betony beaten with its roots and wrung, and juice of yarrow and of celandine, equally much of all, mingle together, apply to the eye. Again, mingle pounded root of fennel with the purest honey, then seethe at a light fire cleverly to the thickness of honey. Then put it in a brazen ampulla, and when need be, smear with it, this driveth away the eye mists, though they be thick.

For mist of eyes again, wring out juice of celandine or of the blossoms of it, and mingle with dumbledores honey, put it in a brazen vessel, then make it luke-warm cleverly on warm gledes, or on ashes, till it be done. That is a unique medicine for dimness of eyes.

Some avail themselves of the juice singly, and anoint the eyes with that. For mist of eyes again; juice of ground ivy and juice of fennel; set equal quantities of both in an ampulla, then dry in the hot sun, and smear the inward part of the eyes with that. For mist of eyes again, smear earthgalls juice, that is herdwort, on the eyes, the vision will be by it sharper. If thou addest honey thereto, that is of good effect. Further take a good bundle of the same wort, introduce it into a jug full of wine, and seethe three days in a close vessel; and when it is sodden, wring out the wort, and drink of the ooze sweetened with honey every day, after a nights fasting, a bowl full.

The eyes of an old man are not sharp of sight; than (sic) shall he wake up his eyes with rubbings, with walkings, with ridings, either so that a man bear him or convey him in a wain. And they shall use little and careful meats, and comb their heads and drink wormwood before they take food. Then shall a salve be wrought for unsharpsighted eyes; take pepper and beat it, and beetle nut and a somewhat of salt and wine; that will be a good salve.

For much eye ache. Many a man hath mickle ache in his eyes. Work him then groundsel and bishopwort (betony) and fennel, boil all the worts in water, milk is better, make that throw up a reek on the eyes. Again, let him mingle with wine celandine and woodbines leaves and the herb cuckoosour (*Oxalis Acetosella*).

Again for much eye ache, pound in wine the nether part of cropleek (possibly *Allium savatium*) and the nether part of Wihtmars wort, (perhaps *Cochlearia anglica*), and let it stand for two days. For pearl, an eye salve; take ashes of broom and a bowl full of hot wine, pour this by a little at a time thrice on the hot ashes, and pour that then into a brass or a copper vessel, add somewhat of honey and mix together, apply to the infirm mans eyes, and again wash the eyes in a clean wyll (spring). For pearl on the eye, apply the gall of a hare, warm, for about two days, it flieth from the eyes. Against white spot, take an unripe sloe, and wring the juice of it through a cloth on the eye, soon, in three days the spot will disappear, if the sloe be green. Against white spot, mingle together vinegar and burnt salt (a substitute for sal ammoniacum) and harley meal, apply it to the eye, hold thine hand a long while on it.

For pearl, an eye salve; take seed of celandine or the root of it, rub it into old wine and into honey, add pepper, let it stand for a night by the fire, use it when thou wilt sleep. Against white spot, boil in butter the nether part of ox-slip (*primula veris elatior*) and alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) rind.

In case the eyes be tearful, juice of rue, and goats gall and dumbledores honey, of all equal quantities. If eyes be tearful, add to sweetened wine ashes of harts horn. Work an eye salve for a wen, take cropleek and garlic, of both equal quantities, pound them well together, take wine and bullocks gall, of both equal quantities, mix with the leek, put this then into a brazen vessel, let it stand nine days in the brass vessel, wring out through a cloth and clear it well, put it into a horn, and about night time apply it with a feather to the eye; the best leechdom.

For a wen on the eye, take hollow cress (*gentiana campestris*), roast it, apply it to the eye, as hot as possible. (N.B., Wisps or styas are still called wuns in Devonshire).

For eye ache, let him work for himself groundsel and bishopwort and beewort (*Acorus calamus*), and fennel, boil all the worts in water; milk is better.

For ache of eyes, take the red hove (*Glechoma hederacea*), boil it in sour beer or in sour ale, and bathe the eyes in the bath, the oftener the better.

For eye ache, take twigs of withewind (*Convolvulus sepium*), pound them, boil them in butter, apply them to the eyes.

Work an eye salve thus; take nut kernels and wheat grains, rub them together, add wine, strain through a cloth, then apply to the eyes. For acute pain and ache of eyes, mingle well crumbs of white bread and pepper and vinegar, lay this on a cloth, bind it on the eyes for a night. Thus shall a man work an eye salve, take the nether part of strawberry plants and pepper, pound them well, put them on a cloth, bind them fast, lay them in sweetened wine, make somebody drop one drop into the eyes. Work an eye salve thus; leaves of woodbind (*Convolvulus*), woodmarche (*Apium graveolens*), strawberry plants, southern wormwood (*Artemisia abrotanum*), green hellebore, celandine, pound the worts together much, mingle with wine, put in a copper vessel or keep in a brazen vat, let it stand seven days or more, wring the worts very clean, add pepper, and sweeten very lightly with honey, put subsequently into a horn, and with a feather put one drop into the eyes. Work an eye salve thus: take beetle nut (?) and sulfur, Greek olusatrum (*Smyrnum olusatrum*) and burnt salt, and of pepper most, grind all to dust, sift through a cloth, put it on a fawns skin, let him keep it about himself, lest it get moist. Introduce a small quantity into the eyes with a tooth pick; afterwards let him rest himself and sleep, and then wash his eyes with clean water, and let him look in the water, *that is keep his eyes open under water*. Work eye salve thus; pound thoroughly cummin and a strawberry plant, and souse with sweetened wine, put into a copper vessel or into a brazen one, let it stand many nights, wring the wort through a cloth and clear the liquid thoroughly, then apply to the eyes when thou may wish to rest; if the salve be too biting, sweeten it with honey. For imminution of the eyes, take olusatrum, mingle with spittle, anoint the eyes outwardly not inwardly.

For imminutions, the nether part of the herb ashthroat (*Verbena officinalis*), chewed in the mouth and wrung through a cloth, and applied to the eye, wonderfully healeth. In case a man be bleary eyed, take agrimony, boil it thoroughly down to the third part, wash the eyes frequently with that. For a pock or pustule in the eyes, take woad and ribwort (*Plantago lanceolata*), and brooklime (*Vernica beccabunga*), boil in milk, in butter is better, and work a fomentation. Boil brooklime and yarrow and wood chervil (*Anthriscus silvestris*) in milk.

For worms (nits) in eyes, take seed of henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*), shed it on glodes, add two saucers full of water, set them on two sides of the man, and let him sit there over them, jerk the head hither and thither over the fire and the saucers also, then the worms shed themselves into the water. For "dry" disease in the eyes, which is called fig, and in Latin is called *churosis* (sycosis) the yolk of a hens egg and seed of marche (*Apium*) and olusatrum and garden mint. Again for fig, break to pieces a hock shank unsodden of a sheep, apply the marrow to the eyes. For thick eyelids, take three handfuls of mugwort, three of salt, three of soap, boil them till two parts out of the three of the ooze be boiled away, then preserve in a copper vessel. For him who hath thick eyelids, take a copper vessel, put therein cathartic seeds and salt there among, take celandine and bishopwort and cuckoosour and attorlothe and springwort (*Euforbia lathyris*) and English carrot, and a somewhat of radish, and ravens foot (*Ranunculus ficaria*), then wash them all, then pour wine on; let it stand, strain again into the copper vessel; then let it stand fifteen nights and the dregs will be good. Have with thee clean curds and introduce into the vessel on which the dregs are, as much of the curd as may cleave thereon. Then scrape the scrapings off the vessel, that will be a very good salve for the man who hath thick eyelids.

Bald's formularies for the eye end here. The following are taken from the third of the leech books mentioned above.

For swollen eyes, take a live crab, put his eyes out, and put him alive again into water, and put the eyes upon the neck of the man who hath need; he will soon be well. Work a good eye salve thus; take celandine and bishopwort, wormwood, woodmarche, leaves of woodbind; put equal quantities of all, pound them well, put them into honey, and into wine, and into a brazen vessel, or a copper one; put in of the wine two parts in three, and a third part of the honey, order it so that the liquor may just overrun the worts; let it stand for seven nights, and wrap it up with a piece of stuff; strain the drink through a clean cloth, put it again into that ilk vessel, use as occasion may be.

The man who putteth upon his eyes for about thirty nights, part of the suet of a fox, he will be for ever healthy.

If there be a mist before the eyes, take a child's urine and virgin honey, mingle together of both equal quantities, smear the eyes therewith on the inside.

Again, mingle together a crabs gall, and a salmons, and an eels, and field bees honey, smear the eyes inwardly with the salve.

Against a white spot in the eye; rub to dust burnt salt, and swails apple, and olusatrum, of all equal quantities, rub to dust, and put on the eyes, wash lightly with spring water, smear afterwards with womans milk.

If there are worms in the eyes, scarify the lids within, apply to the scarifications the juice of celandine; the worms will be dead and the eyes healthy. If flesh wax on eyes, wring wormwort into the eyes, till they are well.

If red sponges wax on the eyes, drop on them hot culvers blood, or swallows, or womans milk, till the sponges be got rid of. If the eyes are bleared, take dry rue and virgin honey, mingle together, let it stand for three nights, wring through a linen cloth, and afterwards apply to the eyes. Work a good dry salve for dim vision thus: take swails apple, and burnt salt, and pepper, and olusatrum, and mastich; rub to dust, sift through a cloth, apply by little and little. Again, reduce to dust mastich, and burnt oyster shell, and use as need be; either hath power to remove white spot from the eyes. Work a smooth eyesalve thus; take butter, boil in a pan, skim the foam off, and purify the butter in a dish; put the clear part into a pan; pound celandine and bishopwort, wood marche, boil thoroughly, strain through a cloth; use as need may be.

For imminutions, and for all pain of the eyes; chew wolfscomb, then wring the ooze through a purple cloth upon the eyes, at night, when the man has a mind to rest, and in the morning apply the white of an egg.

The contents of the third volume are of a more varied character than those of the earlier volumes. Various receipts are given, and a good deal of space is devoted to dreams, charms, and a glossary.

There is a good deal of similarity about the receipts, and it seems best to abstract them, rather than to give them in full.

The following eye salves are vaunted. Rub up aloes into vinegar, smear the head therewith, and put it into the eyes. Put into a horn wine and pepper, and into the eyes when you wish to go to bed. Take the nether part of strawberry and pepper, put them into a cloth, lay them in sweetened wine, drop from the cloth a drop into either eye, if eyes are stopped up, take a crabs gall and white mint, wood lettuce and a salmons gall, collect them, drip into the eye through a coloured linen cloth and a little of the ooze of arum, then the eye recovers. The best eye salve is made with dumbledores honey, foxes grease, and a roebucks marrow, mingled together. For pock on the eye, take marrow, soap, and a hinds milk, mix, and whip up, let it stand till it be clear put the clear liquor into the eye; with God's help the pock shall go away. We are next given an all-in policy against eye wark, mist, wen, worms, itch, bleared eyes and all strange swellings. A goodly mixture of worts is boiled with harts marrow or grease, and of the result, a "good much" is put into the eyes and smeared on the outside, warm at the fire. If eyes are bleared, take green rue, pound it small and wash with dumbledores honey or with down honey, wring through a linen cloth on the eye as long as needful. Another receipt for pock in the eye is to take verdigris and a hinds milk, mix and whip up, let it stand till it be clear, then put of the clear stuff into the eye, and with God's help, etc. For an eye salve, take aloes and zedoary, laurel berries and pepper, shave them small, and lay fresh cows butter in water, then take a broad whetstone and rub the butter "on the whetstone with copper so that it may be pretty tough" then add some part of the worts thereto, and put the paste into a brass vessel, let it stand there for nine days and let someone turn it every day; afterwards melt it in the same brass vessel, strain through a cloth, then put it into whatever vessel thou wilt, use it when need be. This is good for all infirmities of the eyes. For sore of eyes sing this Latin prayer "*Sana Domine, oculos, hominis istius—sicut sanasti oculos Tobiae sancti, et sicut aperuisti oculus duorum cecorum.*"

For blindness of the eyes. This shall avail for tenderness of the eyes, as Hippocrates the leech made it known, that is to say first that the sore cometh upon the eyes with much heat, as whiles it cometh on with moisture, so that they are swollen, and at whiles without soreness, so that they grow blind, and at whiles from the fluxes which run from the eyes. They must then be thus cured. If the disorder

cometh from dry heat, then take a cloth and dip it in water, and wash the eyes then put a cupping horn on the temples; and if they turn blind without any soreness, give satureia, savory, to drink, and he will be healed; and eftsoons if any thing troubleth the eyes within, take mead or womans milk, and put it into the eyes.

For bleared eyes; work a poultice like a little cake with pounded leaves of verbenia, and lay it on the eyes for a day and a night. Or make a poultice with olusatrum, honey and egg-white, mix and lay to the eyes. New cheese can be used in the same way.

This shall be for dimness of eyes, which the Greeks name glaucomata. Take three spoons of womans milk, and celandine, one spoon full, and aloes and crocus, saffron in French, and mix, and squeeze through a linen cloth, and then put the salve into the eye.

This shall be for tenderness for eyes, which are sores in the eye roots. Take myrtle berries and lay them in honey, and then take the berries and lay them to the eyes, that the eyes may swell; then take rue and pound it, and mix ashes therewith, and lay them to the eyes, at first it biteth them; swill the eyelids; and after that it cleverly healeth them;

For those who cannot see from sunrise to sunset.

For nyctalopia, that is in our language, those who are able to see nothing after sunrise, till he again go to his setting. This then is the leechcraft which thereto belongeth. Take a knee cap of a buck, and roast it, and when the roast sweats, then take the sweat, and smear therewith the eyes, and after that let the blind eat the same roast; and then take a new asses tord, and squeeze it, and then let him take the ooze, and smear the eyes therewith and it will soon be better with them.

For sty. Take barley meal and knead it with honey, lay it to the eyes: this leechcraft has been tested by many men. Eftsoons, take bean meal and soap, mix, and lay to the eyes.

The dreams contain little of ophthalmic interest. To see oneself blind, betokens hindrance. To see onions betokens sore of eyes.

The last nostrum I propose to transcribe is as follows:—

This eye salve is good for annoyance of every sort in the eyes, for pin, and for web, for dimness, for wateriness, for insects and for dead flesh. Take a new crock; let it be set in the earth up to the brim, and these worts, minced very small be put into the crock, and on the top of these grout (?) or some liquid, that they may be thoroughly moistened; that is to say, bishopwort of two kinds, and glap, and ribwort and yarrow, and cinquefoil, daisy, and sinfull, and brown hove. After that let a brazen vessel, a dish, or bowl, be scoured in the lower part, till it quite shine; smear all the shining surface lightly with virgin honey. Then put this upon the crock, so that the vapour may strike upwards, then within three days wet thy finger with thy spittle and spatter the dish by little and little. And thence take a good eye salve.

Let virgin honey, and wine, and juice of rue be mixed together, and in equal quantities be put into a copper vessel, or a latten or a brazen one. Thence take a good eye salve.

It may be that the learned will scoff at these extracts from an Anglo-Saxon Leechbook; but I would ask any who are inclined to do so, to remember that we are dealing with the ophthalmology of more than nine hundred years ago. It is, to me, extraordinarily interesting to trace the immense antiquity of such procedures as keeping the eye open under water. It is quite possible that nine hundred years hence, our treatment of to-day will seem ludicrous to our ophthalmological descendants. I shall be glad of any suggestions as to the possible condition spoken of in those who see badly after the tenth hour of the day. The treatment outlined in volume III for those who are day-blind is exceedingly nasty. One wonders what virtue an ass's excrement possessed over that of any other quadruped.