

in the space of twenty-four hours; this cannot be ascertained as a fact, but nothing is more true than that the moment the nit, which is no other than the egg of the louse, gets rid of its superfluous moisture, and throws off its shell, it begins to breed in its turn. Nothing so much prevents the encrease of this nauseous animal as cold and want of humidity; the nits must be laid in a place that is warm and moist to produce any thing.

This nauseous insect is equally troublesome on every part of the human body, and among the ancients what is called the *phiriasis* or *lousy disease*, was not uncommon; Antiochus, Herod Epiphanes, Alcman, the poet, Pherecydes, Cassander, Callisthenes, Sylla, and several others are said to have died of that disorder. The use of mercury, which was unknown among the ancients, may probably have relieved the moderns.

So general is this tribe of insects, that there is scarcely an animal or vegetable which does not suffer the persecutions of its own peculiar louse. The sheep, the horse, the hog, and the elephant are all teized by them: the whale, the shark, the salmon, and the lobster, are not without their company; while every hot-house, and every