

Medical intelligence.

Contributors

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MEDICAL INTELLIGENCE.

"The cure of diseases is our final object, and to this practical end all our learning and science should be ultimately directed. In order to become perfect masters of our profession, the history of the diseases, practice, and opinions, which have at different periods prevailed, should be well understood. For this purpose, a frequent reference to the past is necessary."—MINER.

EVERY intelligent physician will unquestionably admit that it is of the utmost importance to be conversant with the writings of the most eminent medical authors, both ancient and modern; but owing to the extreme difficulty of procuring some of these works, whilst others are as a sealed volume, being written in languages which the limited time and opportunities of many members of the profession, have prevented them from acquiring; it is proposed to abridge and analyse the works of the most distinguished ancient and modern writers, both in Medicine and Surgery, so as to constitute a *Medical Library*; thus presenting to the profession, in a clear and condensed view, the labours of several hundred writers of acknowledged eminence, [which are now scattered through an immense number of voluminous publications,] with notes and observations illustrating the progress of improvement, up to the present time.

A number of distinguished medical gentlemen have engaged to prepare the works for the press, whose names will be given with their respective labours.

The subscriber has been induced to engage in the above mentioned publication, from his personal knowledge of the difficulties which the profession, especially in the country, labours under, to obtain well selected Medical Libraries. They are generally composed of a few works recommended by some favourite Teacher, and afford no very correct views of the state of Medical science, either in past or present times. The large number of medical works now in the market, or daily issuing from the press, most of which are mere compilations from those which have preceded them, moulded to suit the views of their respective compilers, authors, or annotators, &c. &c. render it both difficult and irksome to the profession generally, to procure, much less to wade through even a small moiety of the publications offered for sale.

One of the principle objects of the intended publication, is to remove this diffi-

culty, by placing within the reach of every practitioner, at a reasonable price, the writings of the most distinguished ancient and modern medical authors, whose respective titles to certain theories and modes of practice, will be freely canvassed.

Many eminent medical gentlemen in this country, have offered it as their opinion, that a *Medical Library*, on the plan proposed, to cost about sixty dollars, will be of more intrinsic value to the profession, than one which would cost five hundred dollars, if selected from the present medical publications; but of this the profession at large, must be left to decide for themselves.

Should the undertaking be patronized by a liberal subscription, ample arrangements have been made, both in the literary and publishing departments, to render the undertaking efficient, the agency of which is placed in the hands of the subscriber, who holds himself pledged to use every possible exertion to render the work an honour to the country and the profession. A prospectus for the proposed work, was issued in the early part of last summer, with a view to ascertain the prevailing sentiment respecting its utility; and although but little exertion has been made to obtain subscribers, near five hundred have been received from a small section of the Union:—

Recommendations, approving of the proposed plan, could have been obtained from high authority; but as we entirely disapprove of that system of puffing, and are desirous that the work shall stand upon its own merits, they have been dispensed with.

It will be seen by the prospectus, that subscribers will not be bound for more than two volumes at a time, which condition is introduced to show that there is no intention to palm upon the profession, a work that is not worthy of its patronage.

JAMES WEBSTER, *Agent*

for the proposed Medical Library.

Philadelphia, March, 1830.

PROSPECTUS
FOR THE
AMERICAN MEDICAL LIBRARY.

JAMES WEBSTER,

(Agent for the proposed work,)

OF PHILADELPHIA,

PROPOSES TO PUBLISH A MEDICAL WORK,

To be entitled,

THE AMERICAN MEDICAL LIBRARY,

Upon a plan and arrangement, which he flatters himself will meet the approbation of the profession generally, by abridging and analysing the most approved ancient and modern works in Medicine and Surgery, thus presenting to the profession, in a clear and condensed view, the various theories and modes of practice that have, at different periods, prevailed; with Notes and Observations, illustrating the progress of improvement up to the present time; comprising, in about twenty volumes, a good Medical Library. It is confidently believed that the substance of all the useful medical information, now scattered through thousands of volumes, may be included within this compass.

The work will be put to press as soon as a sufficient number of subscribers are obtained to warrant the publication, and it is contemplated to publish four or five volumes a year.

CONDITIONS.

1. The work will be printed on good paper. The first volume to contain ancient, the second, modern authors.

2. A new type will be cast expressly for the work.

3. Plates will be given, when necessary to illustrate any part of the subject.

4. Each volume will contain double the quantity of matter to be found in the majority of medical books, to wit, upwards of five hundred (double column) large octavo pages, well bound in sheep. Price, \$3 per volume, delivered to subscribers, free of expense.

5. Two volumes will be delivered at one time; payment to be made on delivery; after which subscribers will be at liberty to withdraw their names, should they not approve of the work, provided notice of such intention is given to the publisher within one month from the time of delivery.

6. Care will be taken to have each volume complete within itself, and as a distinct work; so that the substance of every author, whose production comes under consideration, will be preserved entire, and no portion left for a subsequent volume.

7. During the publication, a general summary, presenting in one view, the practice pursued by the most eminent physicians, in the various diseases under consideration, will be given either at the end of each volume, or in a distinct volume at the conclusion, as may be deemed most advantageous to the profession.

8. The name of each gentleman engaged to write for the work, will be given with the respective author he is to analyze; being of undoubted competency to the task assigned.

Philadelphia, March, 1830.

PHILADELPHIA ANATOMICAL ROOMS,

IMMEDIATELY IN THE REAR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

DR. WEBSTER'S courses of lectures on Anatomy and Surgery, will commence in the following order:—

AUTUMNAL COURSE.

This course will commence on the fifteenth of September, and be continued until the twenty-fifth of October.

The demonstrations given during this course, will consist of the anatomy of the eye, brain, heart, arteries, &c.; together with occasional demonstrations of parts concerned in important surgical operations, such as those for hernia, aneurism, lithotomy, &c.—Tickets for the course, eight dollars.

WINTER COURSE.

The course of Demonstrations on Surgical Anatomy, and Operative Surgery, commences the second week in November, and continues until the first of March ensuing. The lectures will be delivered on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, at a quarter before five o'clock, P. M. The plan adopted is, first to demonstrate the Surgical Anatomy of the parts, then to perform the several operations on the subject; after which, the instruments are handed in succession to each of the class, who repeats it before the whole; by this means, each student, at the termination of the course whilst he has become acquainted with the Surgical Anatomy concerned, will also have performed most of the operations in surgery.

The Analytic Method of teaching anatomy, so successfully pursued by Dr. John D. Godman, is adopted.

SPRING COURSE.

The Spring Course of lectures will commence on the first Monday in March, and continue until the first of April. The lectures will be delivered every day at three o'clock.

This course is particularly intended for gentlemen who are preparing for graduation, as well as for those who are desirous of reviving their knowledge of some of the most interesting parts of Anatomy. Examinations on Anatomy and Surgery, will be given every evening during the first two weeks of the course.

Tickets for the course, ten dollars.

The Anatomical Rooms are fitted up with an especial attention to the comfort and convenience of the class, and the facilitation of their improvement. The instruments for the study of operative surgery; all those used in making anatomical preparations, and the privilege of dissecting, during each term, are allowed to the student free of additional charge.

Dr. Webster deems it proper to state, that neither do his lectures nor dissecting establishment interfere with the regulations, time, or duties of the University; Medical Students, in all Medical Institutions, are at liberty to pursue their dissecting studies under a private or public teacher, as they may please; it is thought advisable to mention these facts, the contrary having been stated.

Dr. W. would receive into his office a few young gentlemen, either for the term of their medical education, or for a shorter period; his pupils have the advantage of the Philadelphia Anatomical Rooms, without additional charge. Dr. W.'s library is extensive, embracing many of the most valuable ancient and modern medical works; his anatomical cabinet is not inferior to private cabinets generally.

No. 6, North Ninth street, near the University of Pennsylvania.

Philadelphia, June, 1829.

AMESBURY ON FRACTURES.

The following summary points out some of the advantages attending the use of A's apparatus.

"1st. It fixes the whole limb so as to admit of no motion whose centre is not in the hip joint. 2d. It maintains the fractured ends in a natural position, and in perfect coaptation. 3d. It lies upon the limb with ease to the patient. 4th. It enables the Surgeon to place the limb in any position the case may indicate. 5th. It allows of the application of extension, and counter-extension, when the limb is placed in the bent position. 6th. It is entirely passive to the motions of the limb. 7th. It admits of being adapted to limbs of different lengths and different sizes. 8th. It is applicable to fractures in any part of the limb, and of all kinds, whether simple, comminuted, or compound. 9th. In all fractures of the thigh, it allows the patient to be placed upon a soft feather bed; and in most cases it enables him to place the limb upon the heel, or upon the side, and to alter it from one to the other, at pleasure. 10th. When used for simple fractures of the leg, it enables the patient to leave his bed as soon as the inflammation produced by the injury is sufficiently got under, and this too, without any danger of displacing the fractured ends. 11th. With all these advantages, it insures to the patient a speedy recovery, and a straight and perfect limb."—*Reflections on the Treatment of Fractures, by J. AMESBURY, M. R. C. S. &c.*

A number of certificates, from some of the most distinguished surgeons in England, amongst them Sir Astley Cooper, approving of Amesbury's apparatus, might be given; but it is only deemed advisable to give the result of a few cases in our own country. For more information, see the American Medical Recorder, vol. vi. pages 65 and 773. vol. vii. pages 1 and 523—July number, 1828, page 207; also the North American Medical and Surgical Journal, for January 1830, page 74.

The following are copies of letters from General Dearborn, and Drs. Cheeseman and Smith.

Boston, June 15, 1825.

Before I received Amesbury's apparatus, I had been confined to my bed, between three and four weeks, and had not been able to be removed, or set up, but with great care and difficulty, and then but seldom. I was fortunate in finding an excellent surgeon in Hartford, Doctor Morgan, whose great experience, skill, and success, has justly rendered him celebrated, and my recovery was rapid under his care, beyond my expectations; still, from being large and heavy, it was fatiguing and dangerous to move on, or from my bed, until the new splints were applied, when I was taken from it with facility, without the risk of injury, and without fatigue or pain; and by the aid of crutches, the second day I walked about my chamber, and into the dining room: on the third day and after, I could get out of, and into bed, without assistance, and ride in a carriage, set up all the day and evening, with the exception of a short nap after dinner: and on the eighth day, I set out on my journey home. I rode with perfect ease, the whole distance of one hundred and twenty miles, in three days and a half.

I consider Mr. Amesbury's apparatus an invaluable invention, and that in all fractures of the lower limbs, I am confident surgeons and patients will find it, on trial, so *beneficial* and *comfortable*, that there can be but one opinion in relation to its utility.

I am satisfied it has facilitated my recovery, and enabled me to walk and ride four or five weeks sooner than I otherwise could have done, with safety and ease.

I can perceive no difficulty in a patient's walking and riding, as soon as the swelling and fever have abated. No surgeon should be without it, and those who are so unfortunate as to fracture a limb, will be astonished at the aid which will be derived from its application.

I deem myself most fortunate, in being able to obtain the splints.

HENRY DEARBORN.

2. Extract of a letter from Dr. Cheeseman, one of the surgeons of the New York Hospital, on the subject of Amesbury's apparatus.

NEW YORK, 12 Mo. 17th, 1825.

I feel pleasure in being enabled to state, that I have applied Amesbury's apparatus to several patients, both with simple and compound fractures, as early as the ninth day after the injury, and in every instance they have been comforted by its application, and the fractured bones have been more coaptated, and kept in their place, than by the use of those splints that surgeons have heretofore been in the practice of applying. But the above named advantages are not all—it enables a patient to be removed from his bed immediately after it is applied (in place of being confined almost to one position from four to six weeks, which, under ordinary treatment, is the case) and with the aid of crutches, he can transport himself wherever his general strength will enable him to go. In fine, I consider it of an invaluable acquisition in the treatment of those surgical diseases for which it was designed.

To James Webster, Jr. M. D.

BUSTLETON, Sept. 26th, 1826.

Dear Doctor, agreeably to your request, I transmit you some account of the case of fracture, in which I used Amesbury's apparatus with such complete success.

Daniel Stevenson, aged about 30, was thrown from his wagon on the 30th of March last, and both the wheels ran over his leg, one of which produced a fracture of the tibia, obliquely, near its middle; the other greatly contused the leg near the knee.

I coaptated the bones, and applied Hutchinson's splint, with loose dressings. On the day following, inflammation had run so high, that I removed all dressings, elevated the foot, and kept it constantly wet with an evaporating lotion, bled, purged, &c. Under this plan, for about a week, inflammatory symptoms had so far subsided, as to induce me to again apply the dressings, when Hutchinson's or Dessault's splint was kept on for about ten weeks, without any appearance of union of the bone. Being desirous that my patient should have the best possible chance for his recovery, I consulted some of my medical friends in Philadelphia. One of whom, Dr. T. Hewson, advised me to try the Amesbury apparatus, and knowing of none but what you had, you may recollect that on the 16th of July you brought them out, and we applied them upon his leg. He went on crutches, or rode about, attending to his farming affairs, for nearly six weeks before I examined the leg again, when I found it very much stiffened, but advised him to wear it a little longer; and you know that he called on you, in town, with a leg as firm as the other, in two months from the time of its first application.

In giving my testimony in favour of the apparatus, I say that it appears to me to be the best calculated to secure the two great objects in view, viz. the *comfort* of the patient and the *speedy union* of the broken bone, of any contrivance that I have ever seen.

Yours, &c.

M. B. SMITH.

N. B. James Webster has Amesbury's apparatus made under his own direction, the price is twenty-five dollars; orders from any part of the country, with the money, will be promptly attended to. A box, containing the apparatus, weighs only about *sixteen pounds*, therefore it can easily be sent by stage or otherwise, as may be required.