

An oration, delivered before the Medico-Botanical Society of London, at the commencement of its ninth session, Tuesday, 28th October, 1828 / by John Frost.

Contributors

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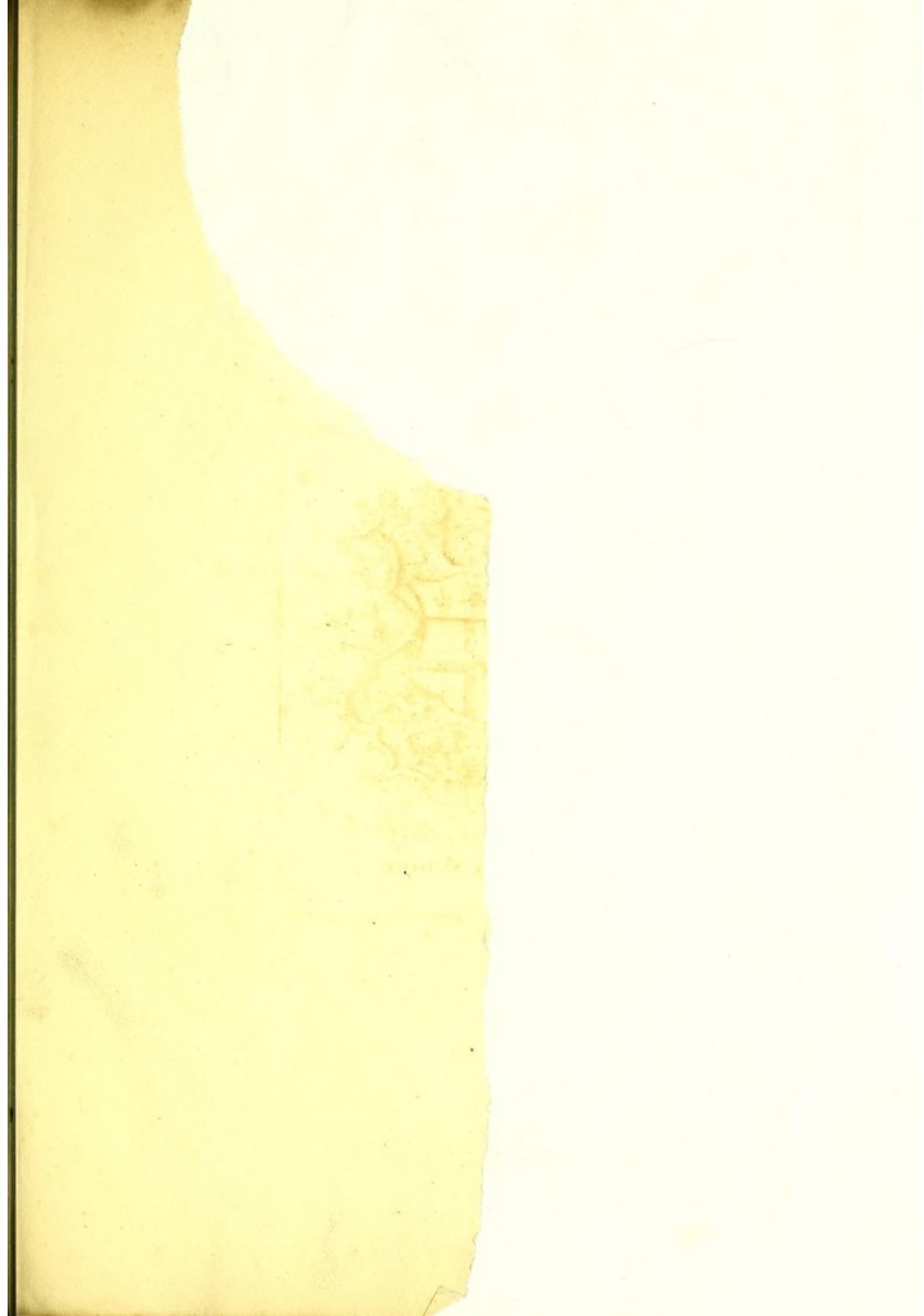
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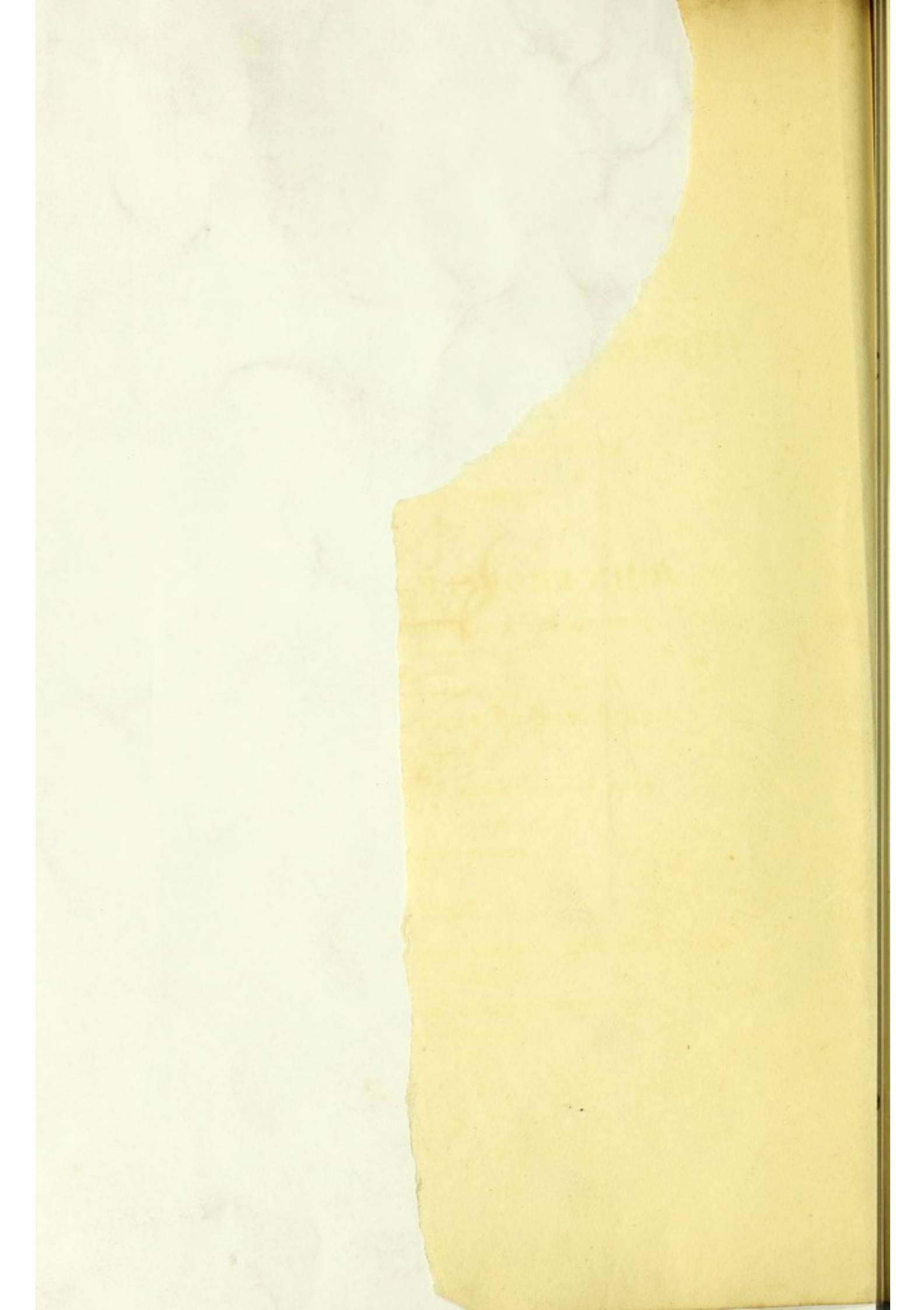
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St. Thomas's Hospital

MEDICAL SCHOOL.





p. Q. 2.

AN
ORATION,
DELIVERED BEFORE THE
Medico-Botanical Society of London,

AT THE
COMMENCEMENT OF ITS NINTH SESSION,
TUESDAY, 28th OCTOBER, 1828;

BY
JOHN FROST, F. R. S. EDIN. F. L. S.

DIRECTOR OF THE MEDICO-BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,
&c. &c. &c.

DEDICATED BY PERMISSION TO THE KING.

Medicus, notitiâ plantæ destitutus, de viribus ejusdem nunquam justè judicavit.
LINN. MAT. MED.

London:

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1828.

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TO
THE KING's MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

SIRE,

YOUR MAJESTY having been most graciously pleased to permit me to lay at Your Majesty's feet the following pages, I trust I may be allowed dutifully to express to **YOUR MAJESTY** the humble and most grateful thanks of the **Medico-Botanical Society**, for the distinguished mark of Royal favour which **YOUR MAJESTY** has deigned to confer on that Institution by becoming its Patron, which will pre-eminently tend to ensure its prosperity.

The labours of that Society cannot but be crowned with the most brilliant success under the fostering protection of **YOUR MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY**, in whom Your Majesty's loyal subjects behold the Father of Your Country, the Glory of the Nation, and the Revered Promoter and Munificent Patron of Science.

With the most fervent prayer for the continuance
of **YOUR MAJESTY'S** happy **Reign** in the hearts of **Your**
attached **People**, and for the long continuance of **YOUR**
MAJESTY'S good **Health**,

I have the honour to subscribe myself,
with the most profound veneration,

SIRE,

YOUR MAJESTY'S

Most devoted Subject and Servant,

JOHN FROST.

Bridge Street, Blackfriars,

October, 1828.



COPY.

" Apartments of the Medico-Botanical Society,

" 32, Sackville Street, Piccadilly,

" 29th October, 1828.

" SIR,

" WE have the honour to forward you a Copy of a Resolution,
" which was passed at the Meeting of the Society, holden yesterday, and to
" remain,

" SIR,

" Your obedient Servants,

" JOHN P. YOSY,

" HUMPHREY GIBBS,

" Secretaries.

" To JOHN FROST, Esq., F. R. S. EDIN.

" Director of the Medico-Botanical Society.

" *At a Meeting of the Medico-Botanical Society of London, holden on Tuesday,*
" *the 28th October, 1828,*

" PRESENT,

" SIR JAMES M'GRIGOR, M. D., F. R. S. L. and E., K. T. S., Director-
" General of the Army Medical Board, *President*, in the Chair ;

" The Right Honourable the EARL STANHOPE ; Their Excellencies the
" COUNT BJORNSTJERNA, Swedish Minister ; The COUNT DE LUDOLF, Nea-
" politan Minister ; and The BARON DE CETTO, Bavarian Minister ; The
" COUNT DE LA GARDE, The BARON DE RALAMB, Dr. JAMES DUNLAP, Dr.
" JOHN HANCOCK, Dr. GEORGE LEITH ROUPELL, Dr. MICHAEL SHORT, Dr.
" GEORGE G. SIGMOND, F. S. A., BENJAMIN HAWES, Esq., F. S. A., WIL-
" LIAM HUTTMAN, Esq., Sec. R. A. S., THOMAS JONES, Esq., M. R. I., JOHN
" SMIRNOVE, Esq., F. R. S., Secretary to the Russian Embassy, JOSEPH
" FITZWILLIAM VANDERCOM, Esq., M. R. I., and many other Fellows.

" On the Motion of the Right Honourable the EARL STANHOPE, F. R. S., Vice-
" *President*, seconded by MATTHEW CURLING FRIEND, Esq., Lieut. R. N., F. R. S.,

" IT WAS RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

" That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to JOHN FROST, Esq.
" *Director*, for his excellent Oration, and that he be requested to forward the Society
" a Copy of the same for publication.

(Signed,)

" J. M'GRIGOR, *President*."

ORATION.

MR. PRESIDENT and GENTLEMEN,

IN proceeding to address you on the commencement of the ninth session, I have the honour of announcing to you, in the first place, that the hopes and expectations which were entertained by your Council last year have happily been realized. Not only will it be seen, that much benefit has accrued to your Institution, by a steady adherence to the plans adopted by the Council; but also that they are constantly anxious to discharge the important duties which you have committed to their care, in a manner conducive to your satisfaction, to the welfare of your Society, to the advancement of science in general, and to their own reputation. They are ever desirous to consult the wishes of the Members; but as the execution of some suggestions has been attended with considerable expense, which has been defrayed from the annual income of the Society, it is recommended for the future, that any Member moving a resolution, which may involve considerable expense, will previously procure a subscription for the purpose. And I make

this observation at the onset of my discourse, as it is probable that additional arrangements, seemingly necessary, from the present prosperous state of the Society, may suggest themselves to some of the Members; and it is the intention of the Council, not to entertain in future any projects which may involve extraordinary expenses. This determination will, it is hoped, stimulate the Members to exert themselves with still greater activity; and it is with this view alone that your Council have determined to pursue such a course.

It will be unnecessary for me to say any thing as an exordium on the objects of the Medico-Botanical Society, the very name of which conveys to the mind its import, by pointing out the greatest utility of Botany in the application of plants to the purposes of medicine. That Botany was long considered merely as a branch of physic, is much to be regretted; and that regret must be increased, when we find that, in the present advanced state of knowledge, it is still left even as it was found, by those who ought to be aware, that the importance of a science consists in its practical utility and application. It is indeed said, that Botany fell into disrepute from its being considered as an inferior branch of medical education, without having any distinct claims to a science; and it is very evident that, unless some active means be employed to rescue it from such an undeserved stigma, it will again sink below its proper grade.

It was last year represented, that a knowledge of plants was important to the Physician, to the Surgeon, and to the Apothecary. The Royal College of Surgeons, at the suggestion of their present enlightened President,* Sir Anthony Carlisle, directed that Botany should form a part of the education of the candidate, in order to obtain a diploma; and the Company of Apothecaries ordered, that *Medical Botany* should be required of those persons who wish to be admitted Licentiates of their body. The intentions of both these corporations were excellent; but the execution of them would have been still more successful, if Botany and *Materia Medica* had not, in both cases, been united, as though they were only modifications of the same science, so that the physiology of vegetables, their natural affinities, their botanical characters, and their organization, are to be merged in the *art* of *Materia Medica*.

We could not unite together Chemistry and Medicine, because the one is dependent on the other; and in the same manner it appears improper to conjoin any other two distinct subjects, merely because it was an ancient usage; and I would most respectfully submit to you, that Botany should hold its proper rank and station, and that its application, either to medicine, the arts, agriculture, or horticulture, should not be permitted to interfere with its own distinct attributes.

* An interesting letter from whom will be found as an Appendix.

We are well assured, Gentlemen, that the various scientific bodies of this country are most desirous of promoting, by all the means in their power, the objects which they have in view; and it is to be hoped, that students in medicine will be required to attend a distinct course or courses of lectures on Botany, by which means they will receive much benefit, and have a correct idea of the science.

Your worthy President, Sir James M'Grigor, fully saw the necessity of placing Botany on the same footing as the other sciences; and when it is recollected how many medicines are supplied from the vegetable kingdom, such a noble branch of knowledge should not be degraded into a mere appendix to *Materia Medica*. The Animal or Mineral *Materia Medica* forms but a very scanty proportion of medicines; besides which, *Materia Medica* is nothing more nor less than a description of the various substances employed in Pharmacy, with respect to their preparation, doses, and modes of exhibition, and ought to be considered rather as an art than as a science. All this is urged because Botany may otherwise lose its importance, from the want of a proper plan of proceeding; and I am very certain, that when the matter is candidly considered, the claims of Botany will assume higher ground than they have done hitherto.

The hope expressed last year, that Botany would be made a part of the education required of the candidate for admission into

the medical department of the Royal Navy, has been realized by one of your most enlightened and zealous Members, Dr. William Burnett, one of His Majesty's Commissioners of the Victualling Board.

Agreeably to the promise held out, the Council have, during the past session, began, at considerable expense, to form a Library, which is intended for the use of the Members and their friends, twice a week, at stated hours; and the Herbaria are now under arrangement, previous to their being opened for inspection.

The pledge given, that regular courses of lectures should be delivered by the different professors, has been redeemed; and it has been determined, that two full and complete courses should be given yearly, both on Botany and on Materia Medica, to which not only the Fellows of the Society have a right of gratuitous admission, but also the privilege of introducing two visitors; besides which, persons not Members of the Society, may, by paying a stipulated sum, attend one or more courses, and afterwards obtain a regular certificate of such attendance; so that a systematic plan has been carried into effect, under the directions of the Council, which will ultimately be of the first importance, and establish a school of Botany and Materia Medica under the auspices of the Society; and thereby your Institution will fulfil a most important desideratum.

His Majesty's Secretaries of State for the Foreign and Colonial Departments, have most kindly afforded you every assistance, by

facilitating the foreign correspondence of the Society ; and I gladly seize this opportunity of expressing the gratitude of the Society for their very desirable and valuable support.

In relation to the circumstances which it is the intention of the annual Oration to enumerate, as having occurred during the past session, the most gratifying and distinguished event which I now have the heartfelt satisfaction of communicating to you on this occasion, and which is the most brilliant epoch in the annals of this Institution, is the Gracious Condescension of our Beloved Sovereign, in declaring Himself the Patron of the Medico-Botanical Society of London, and HIS MAJESTY was further pleased to insert His autograph in your signature-book.* This especial mark of The King's royal favour must be gratifying in the highest degree to the feelings of every Member. It is indeed a proud era to you to be under the benign auspices and paternal protection of a Monarch, under Whose Reign this country has risen to the pinnacle of glory, and science has pre-eminently flourished.

The benefits which HIS MAJESTY has conferred on His subjects

* It may not be known to every Member, that this book contains the autographs of their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of Clarence, Cumberland, Sussex, Cambridge, and Gloucester, Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg ; their Majesties Don Pedro, the Emperor of the Brazils ; Charles John, King of Sweden and Norway ; Lewis, King of Bavaria ; William, King of Würtemberg ; His Imperial Highness, Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany ; and His Royal Highness, Oscar, Prince Royal of Sweden.

will never be erased from their recollections; and in transmitting to posterity those royal endowments, that combination of talents and virtues, of goodness and of greatness, which have especially characterized **KING GEORGE IV.**, they will exclaim, in the beautiful language of that inimitable Roman poet,

“ ——— Monumentum ære perennius

“ Regalique situ pyramidum altius

“ Quod non imber edax non aquilo impotens

“ Possit diruere, aut innumerabilis

“ Annorum series, et fuga temporum.”

The kindness of the Right Honourable Robert Peel, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, in favourably laying the wishes of the Society before the King, deserves your most cordial and sincere acknowledgments, and is only to be equalled by the interest which Mr. Peel takes in promoting the cause of science in general.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland has, during the past session, been pleased to add his name to your list, which has been honoured by that of His Imperial, Royal, and Apostolic Majesty the Emperor of Austria; and the Society is indebted to His Highness the Prince Paul Esterhazy, the Austrian Ambassador in London, who is an active Member of your Institution, for obtaining the sanction of His Imperial Majesty.

His Majesty, Don Pedro, the Emperor of the Brazils, has, through his Minister the Viscount d' Itabayana, signified his pleasure to become a Member of the Society; and the lively interest which His Excellency takes in your welfare is manifested by his first becoming a Fellow, and then proposing, as Corresponding Members, Doctor Jean de Silveira Caldeira, the Director of the Museum, and Leandro do Sacramento, the Director of the Botanic Garden at Rio de Janeiro.

His Majesty, Charles John, King of Sweden and Norway, (whose Representative at the Court of London, the Count Bjornstjerna, now honours you with his company,) and His Royal Highness, Oscar, the Prince Royal, have severally been pleased, through His Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary at Stockholm, Lord Bloomfield, to allow their names to be enrolled in the list of your Society. His lordship renders constant service to the Society, by transmitting its correspondence to Sweden, and is ever desirous of promoting its important objects.

The Governor-General of India, Lord William Henry Cavendish Bentinck, desired me to assure you, that His Excellency would be happy to diffuse a knowledge of your objects in India; and the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company have ordered the Prospectus of the Society to be circulated throughout their vast territories.

The friendly and constant communication with the Royal

Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, must be a source of much gratification to you.

Your Council appointed a Committee to examine the Bye Laws, and report thereon to the Society, who unanimously approved and passed all the proposed alterations and amendments. Those Laws have been printed for the use of the Members, the privileges of whom have been extended, and the duties of the various officers defined.

It has been thought expedient to increase the number of General Meetings, and to hold them on Tuesday evenings, alternately, with those of the Linnæan Society, instead of Friday evenings, the latter having been found to interfere with the sittings of the Royal Institution, and of the Geological and Astronomical Societies. The attendance at the Meetings of your last session has been unprecedentedly large, at nearly every one of which the President filled the Chair.

That distinguished nobleman, the Duke of Somerset, whose exalted rank, scientific attainments, and patronage of the liberal arts, render his Grace's countenance and support so exceedingly desirable, honoured you, on two occasions, with his presence; and such marks of his Grace's favour must be most flattering.

The handsome terms in which Baron William Humboldt, Minister of State of His Majesty the King of Prussia, expressed himself before you, will be regarded as an earnest of his future intentions to promote your success.

I shall now proceed to bring before your notice the constant readiness with which several of your most active Members furnish considerable quantities of living plants for your Meetings; and conspicuous indeed was that Meeting which could boast of exhibiting thirty species of the *Genus Laurus*, of which eighteen magnificent shrubs of that family were kindly furnished by that able Botanist and excellent Member, William Townshend Aiton, Esq., to whom His Majesty has for many years confided the Royal Botanical Collections, and whose literary attainments and affability of manners endear him to all those who have the honour of his acquaintance.

I must not omit here to mention, the constant, active, and valuable services of Mr. William Anderson, whose scientific knowledge, unblemished integrity, and firm friendship, renders him beloved by those to whom he is known. His unremitting acts of kindness to the Society deserve its heartfelt thanks; and I can add, with great truth, that he is never more happy than when he is engaged in endeavouring to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge.

Mr. Thomas Gibbs's services are so apparent, and the labours of his family for your Society are so great, that daily experience confirms what his zealous wishes led us to anticipate. In addition to those services, I believe it is the intention of Mr. Thomas Gibbs to furnish the Society with a plot of ground, which he proposes to devote solely to the purposes of cultivating medicinal plants. To

this garden the Members will have admission, under certain regulations that will be duly notified to them, and they will have the additional privilege of introducing one friend. The want of a pharmaceutical experimental garden has long been felt, and this example, on the part of Mr. Thomas Gibbs, evinces his admirable liberality in promoting the views of the Society.

During the past year the first fasciculus of the first volume of your Transactions has been published. It contains two highly finished coloured engravings of the *Melaleuca Cajuputi*, and the *Melaleuca Leucadendron*, and illustrates a point which has been the subject of much dispute in the arrangement of the *Materia Medica*.

Communications have been read before the Society on the vegetable poisons used by the Bushmen of the Orange River, by Mr. Leslie, and transmitted by Sir James M'Grigor; a paper on the Chloride of Lime, as applicable to the preserving of seeds, by Mr. Frederick Fincham, who so meritoriously made public a most useful discovery.

His Britannic Majesty's Consul at the Azores, William Harding Read, Esq. has given you some valuable remarks on the plants of the Western Islands, and promises to be a very great acquisition to the Society.

That enterprizing traveller, able physician, and ardent cultivator of botanical science, Dr. John Hancock, after a residence

of five and twenty years in South America, has given you two important communications; the one on the properties of *Haimarada*, or *Vandellia Diffusa*, and the other on the tree which yields the Cusparia, or Angustura Bark of Commerce, and which has never been before satisfactorily described; the detail of which, together with an accurate engraving of the plant, will be published in the next part of your Transactions.*

Sir Henry Willock, K. L. S., His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at the Court of Persia, has forwarded an interesting paper on *Cichorium Intybus*, and is expected to become an active correspondent.

In respect to your correspondence with other countries, it will be satisfactory to you to know, that the Horticultural Society of Paris has requested, through the Chevalier Soulange Bodin, to correspond with your Society.

* Dr. John Hancock is a gentleman of respectable family in the West of England, (Wiveliscombe,) himself a native of Bath, in New Hampshire, North America. Having spent a quarter of a century in the practice of medicine within the Tropics, he has, through his devotion to Medical Botany, and frequent travels amongst the natives, been eminently successful in the discovery of the Indian secrets and vegetable remedies of that "terra incognita," the interior of Guiana. This is amply demonstrated by the extensive Herbarium and valuable notes which he has presented to the Medico-Botanical Society; and the mention of this is but a tribute of justice, due on the behalf of the Society to so indefatigable a cultivator of its objects: *Palmam qui meruit, ferat.*

The Société de Pharmacie has, through its Secretary, Professor Robiquet, signified a similar wish, and it regularly presents you with its monthly *Journal de Pharmacie*. Mons. Virey has reported to the Royal Academy of Medicine of Paris, that a connexion between it and the Medico-Botanical Society of London would be desirable.

The Philosophical Society of British Guiana, established under the presidency of that intelligent and indefatigable promoter of the views of science, His Excellency Lieutenant-General Sir Benjamin d'Urban, K. C. B., the Governor of Demerara, has tendered its friendly co-operation, and as an earnest of its good wishes, elected your President, Sir James M'Grigor, an Honorary Member.

The Prussian Minister in London, His Excellency the Baron von Bülow, has, at his own suggestion, placed you in correspondence with the Horticultural Society of Berlin.

In order more effectually to conduct your correspondence, both at home and abroad, and to promote generally the welfare of your Institution, your Council have appointed a Committee of Correspondence, consisting of fifteen Members of the Society. This plan was adopted from observing the great advantages which resulted to the Royal Asiatic Society from such a course. The Earl Stanhope presided at the first Meeting of that Committee, and was pleased to accept, at the unanimous wish of every Member of it,



the office of Chairman. The active and intelligent exertions of the Noble Earl in your behalf, are only to be surpassed by his lordship's philanthropic zeal in advancing whatever can promote science and the welfare of mankind.

His Majesty the King of Bavaria, whose Representative at the British Court, Baron de Cetto, is now present, has most munificently presented you with an Herbarium, consisting of more than six hundred plants indigenous to his and the neighbouring dominions, prepared by that eminent botanist Professor Martius, who, to his infinite credit, has succeeded in preserving them with their natural colours.

Dr. George Barclay has given you about one thousand dried specimens of tropical plants.

Dr. Benjamin Guy Babington has presented an excellent collection of plants indigenous to the Mauritius.

Dr. John Hancock has most liberally contributed the whole of the plants which he collected during his long residence in South America.

The Royal Asiatic Society has, at the suggestion of Sir Alexander Johnstone, one of your Vice-Presidents, given you a collection of Ceylonese plants.

Sir James M'Grigor has presented an Herbarium, which he himself made upwards of thirty years ago in the Island of Jersey, and which contains several hundred specimens.

Dr. James Woodforde has contributed a collection of British plants.

The Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company have, at the request of your Council, granted you the duplicate specimens of those medicinal plants which their extensive Herbarium may contain; and when it is recollected that that indefatigable successor of Dr. Roxburgh, in the Calcutta Botanic Garden, Dr. Nathaniel Wallich, has just arrived in this country, with no less than three and twenty tons of dried specimens for the Herbarium of the Honourable Company, and that the same indulgence will be extended to you in regard to duplicates of the medicinal plants which he has brought, you will obtain a very great addition to your collection. Dr. Thomas Horsfield has arranged the plants which have been presented by the Honourable Company, and is entitled to your thanks. Dr. Wallich, I need scarcely say, is a warm friend to your Institution, and has promised to communicate some important papers.

Your Herbarium, Gentlemen, has been established by the combination of all these collections, and much is to be anticipated from the collections which His Majesty the King of Würtemberg and His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke of Tuscany have severally been pleased to command to be prepared for you.

Not only does the Society enjoy the exalted patronage of the several Sovereigns, but They evince their anxiety to promote your

noble objects by such signal marks of Their favour ; and you will, it is to be hoped, possess, in a few years, one of the most splendid Herbaria in Europe.

Your Library has not, during the past year, been without its benefactors, amongst whom must be especially distinguished the Earl Stanhope, who purchased a copy of *Nees von Essenbeck's* expensive and excellent work on Medical Botany, which contains nearly four hundred splendidly coloured folio prints of officinal plants. The Noble Earl has also presented *Orfila's Toxicology* and a very fine copy of *Dodonæus*.

That valuable supporter of science, Sir John Edward Swinburne, Bart. one of your Vice-Presidents, has presented *Tournefort's Elemens de Botanique*, a duplicate from the Royal Library of France, and which is embellished with several hundred fine engravings. Sir John has also given you *Tournefort's Plantes de Paris*.

Sir Alexander Johnstone, to whose exertions the Society owes so much, and whose kind assistance was anticipated last year, has amply justified the hope then expressed, by presenting a manuscript *Catalogue of Plants*, by Dr. Rottler, which contains many unpublished descriptions. Sir Alexander also solicited the Royal Asiatic Society to present to you some rare Cingalese manuscripts on the *Materia Medica* of the natives, and at his earnest desire that body contributed them to you.

That renowned philosopher and munificent promoter of knowledge, Henry Thomas Colebrooke, Esq., has presented *six hundred* original coloured drawings of Indian plants, which for beauty of delineation and botanical accuracy are not, I believe, to be surpassed ; and the prompt assistance which that gentleman has uniformly given you, demands your grateful acknowledgments.

Dr. William Allman, the Professor of Botany in the Dublin University, has contributed his ingenious work, containing a new arrangement of plants.

Dr. W. F. Hornneman, the learned Professor of Botany at Copenhagen, has presented his work, entitled *Nomenclatura Floræ Danicæ*.

Dr. C. A. Agardh, the renowned Professor of Botany at Lund, begs your acceptance of several interesting works on Botany.

Professor Bertoloni, of Bologna, has forwarded, through an active friend of the Society (Mr. Favenc,) a copy of his *Prælectiones Rei Herbariæ, quæ et Prolegomena ad Floram Italicam*.

Mr. Frederick Otto, the Inspector of the Royal Botanic Garden of Berlin, has given you a handsome copy of his *Icones Plantarum Selectarum Horti Regii Berolinensis*, which contains nearly sixty accurate coloured engravings.

Your Council has spared no expense in purchasing the best works on Materia Medica, Medical Botany, and Pharmacy ; besides

which, several foreign periodical publications are taken in for the use of the Members.

The Society hopes to receive donations of books, which will be duly acknowledged and registered in the catalogue.

The Society is favoured by the ready assistance of most of the Foreign Ministers resident in London, who generously forward your communications free of expense to your Correspondents; and in consideration of these important services, your Council elected them Foreign Members of the Society.

Many noblemen and distinguished scientific characters have been elected into the Society during the past year.

We must pause a moment here, to pay a tribute of respect to the memory of those of whom Death has deprived us since our last Annual Meeting. The loss which this Society, and science in particular, has experienced by the decease of that profound botanist, and the founder of the Linnæan Society of London, Sir James Edward Smith, will be long felt; but his ill state of health, and the editing of the English Flora, which fully occupied the last years of his life, precluded the possibility of his devoting any time to your immediate objects. By the death of Daniel Moore, Esq., you and science have been deprived of a very liberal supporter and excellent Member.

The venerable Sir Charles Peter Thunberg, K. G. V., the

Principal of the University of Upsal, and the valued author of many works on Botany, and the successor of the younger Linnæus to the Chair of Botany in that University, and who was a warm friend to the Society, has lately paid the debt of Nature, at a very advanced age.

A band of assassins murdered one of your Corresponding Members, Mons. Choris, a young enterprizing traveller, whom that intelligent and active body, the Paris Geographical Society, sent out under its auspices, and at its recommendation your Council elected him. The detail of the circumstances will be found in the *Bulletin* published by that Society, and which it regularly presents for your Library.

During the past session a new Professor of Materia Medica has been appointed, and your choice of Dr. John Whiting to fill that important office, will, it is to be hoped, prove what, I am quite certain, the acquirements and assiduity of Dr. Whiting can justify. Dr. Whiting is well known as one of the Physicians to the Surrey Dispensary, and as a Lecturer on the Practice of Physic and Materia Medica in the Borough.

It is expected that every Member will exert himself to procure the co-operation of his friends, in such interesting and important objects as the investigation of the properties of every medicinal plant which may be found throughout the world.

If it should be supposed, that the term Medico-Botanical Society implies, that candidates for admission *must* belong to the medical profession, I would observe, that the Society does not consist exclusively, or indeed principally, of such Members. Nevertheless, the Council is always most happy to see Physicians, Surgeons, and Apothecaries, unite with them, and it anticipates the greatest advantage from their assistance and co-operation in such a national undertaking.

Any gentleman who may be desirous of being admitted into the Society may become a candidate by transmitting his name to one of the Secretaries, the Council being solicitous to receive the countenance and support of the Public, in aid of an object which so greatly concerns the well being of mankind.

Mr. PRESIDENT and GENTLEMEN,

I beg to be allowed to congratulate you on the attendance of so many illustrious and distinguished Members this evening, and on the manner in which you have especially marked this day in the annals of your proceedings, by several of your Members having purchased a gold chain,* which was worn by the late ever-to-be

* Dr. Michael Short, the indefatigable and zealous Conservator, in his speech before the Meeting, mentioned, that the fraternal attachment which existed between His Majesty and the late Duke of York, was intended to be symbolically represented by this chain and medallion, with which the Earl Stanhope invested Sir James M'Grigor, on

lamented Frederick, Duke of York and Albany, the first Patron of your Society, and attaching thereto a most splendidly executed medallion* of HIS MAJESTY, which is to be worn by your President, for the time being, as the badge of his office.

I cannot conclude this address without again offering you my warmest congratulations on the progress which the Medico-Botanical Society has made, on the prospects which it has now before it, and on the activity which has characterized the different officers of the Society, with whom I have had the honour of acting.

I beg, Gentlemen, to thank you very sincerely for your indulgent attention to the observations I have had to offer, and express my earnest hope, that success will always attend the labours of an Institution, to which Our Beloved Sovereign has been Graciously pleased to extend His August Protection.

the occasion of commencing the ninth session under the munificent patronage of Our Most Gracious Sovereign.

* The medallion was executed by Mr. Alfred John Stothard, Medal Engraver in Ordinary to the King.

lamented Frederick, Duke of York and Albany, the first Patron
of your Society, and attaching thereto a most splendidly executed
medallion* of His Majesty, which is to be worn by your Pre-
sident for the time being, as the badge of his office.

I cannot conclude this address without again offering you my
warmest congratulations on the progress which the Mission-
ary Society has made on the prospects which it has now before
it, and on the activity which has characterized the different officers
of the Society, with whom I have had the honor of acting.

I beg, Gentlemen, to thank you very sincerely for your in-
dugent attention to the observations I have had to offer, and
express my warmest hope, that success will always attend the in-
dorse of an Institution, to which Our British Sovereign has been
Graciously pleased to extend His Royal Protection.

I am, Gentlemen, with great respect,
Your obedient servant,
John Gorton, Secretary.

* The medallion was executed by Mr. Alfred John, of Northampton,
Oxford to the King.

The medallion was presented to the Society by Mr. John Gorton, Secretary,
and is now in the possession of the President.

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APPENDIX.

*The following is a Copy of a Letter, addressed by SIR ANTHONY CARLISLE,
F. R. S., the President of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Surgeon-
Extraordinary to the King, to the Director.*

“ Langham Place, 16th October, 1828.

“ MY DEAR SIR,

*“ As the Medico-Botanical Society have done me the honour to approve of
“ a former letter addressed to you, I send some further general observations.*

*“ It is the province of experienced minds to abridge and arrange those details of
“ knowledge which the better physical abilities, and the more active industry of youth,
“ may collect. If the classifications of medical literature were allotted to men of ma-
“ tured judgments, our publications would not be so often disparaged by transient hy-
“ pothesis, and by imposing assumptions, which sink into contempt as soon as their
“ projectors have reaped the harvest of popular credulity. Perhaps this insidious craft
“ may be gradually repressed by the disinterested control of scientific men, associated to
“ promote the auxiliary elements of physic, and to check the audacity of worldly ad-
“ venturers.*

“ On the present occasion, I solicit the attention of philanthropists to the dietetic

“ and medicinal influences of certain vegetables, which are ordinarily employed as
 “ aliments or condiments. In a communication, not specially written for the medical
 “ profession, it is doubtful whether any preliminary notices of the structure and offices
 “ of particular parts of the human body may be eligible, because a brief technical dis-
 “ play would be mere pedantry, and an attempt to render the subject familiar might
 “ fail. I must, however, crave indulgence, while I submit some of my own physio-
 “ logical views appertaining to dietetic vegetables, and to those medicinal herbs which
 “ may be regarded as correctives, alteratives, or wholesome seasonings. The improve-
 “ ments in Chemistry, and a more exact observance of living bodies, have lately shown,
 “ that digestion is not a complete change in the elementary materials of food or drink,
 “ but that many things are allowed to pass into the sanguiferous system, without under-
 “ going a chemical revolution; and long experience convinces me, that the presence of
 “ certain undecomposed parts of our food and drink, have very important effects upon
 “ health, and upon all diseases, whether chronic or acute; indeed, common sense tells
 “ us, that the constitutional effects of all medicines entirely depend on this compre-
 “ hensive fact. Practical observations, and the recorded histories of medicine, amply
 “ support this doctrine, although, in former ages, the insufficiency of chemical tests,
 “ the less exact discrimination of diseases, and the frequent changes of medical theories,
 “ have justly abated our reliance on those testimonies. When, however, the divine art
 “ of healing shall be established upon a broad scale of natural evidences, and upon well-
 “ directed and faithfully-reported researches, the whole profession must rise above the
 “ scoffs of those who only see it in the condition of a money-making mystery.

“ Since animal life may be continued under a manifest adulteration of the peculiar
 “ and essential compounds, intended by Nature to constitute the living creature; it fol-
 “ lows, that all such extraneous admixtures will disturb the offices of health according
 “ to their potency; and hence, a scientific humoral pathology, founded on those circum-

stances, may be usefully adopted in modern medical philosophy, conformable with rational inductions from practical facts, and applicable to a large class of disorders.

It cannot be doubted, that muriate of soda, the odorous oils of turpentine, of asparagus, and colour of rhubarb, escape the digestive decomposition, circulate in the blood, and resist the secretory power of the kidneys. In like manner, several odorous articles of diet, and particular drugs, may be often detected in the perspiration, or in the vapours exhaled from the lungs. Nitrate of silver, or mercury, may also be diffused among the living solids and fluids, and the most acrimonious of animal secretions, the bile, is mingled with the blood in the jaundice, and it may even dye the brain throughout, while a deteriorated existence is permitted to linger, far beyond theoretical expectation. Many distinct maladies are clearly imputable to errors in diet, and yet the articles which produce them sometimes remain unnoticed and unprohibited by medical men. In Sedillot's *Journal General de Medicine*, vol. xxxviii, 1810, Dr. B. Moreau relates many examples of the noxious effects produced by eating water cress, *Sisymbrium nasturtium*. In several instances, violent affections of the brain and nerves, attended with fever, oppressed breathing, and copious red eruptions over the skin, occurred within a few hours after taking water cress; and similar effects have followed the eating of horseradish, or *Cochlearia armoracia*. A prevalent disorder in Scotland, called Water Brash, is occasioned by oatmeal diet; and yet, in cases of weakened digestion, we find ignorant persons ordering watergruel, although heartburn and disordered stomach are the certain consequences. Many herpetic, and other cutaneous eruptions, are produced and maintained by crude fruits, and by acid or acidifiable vegetables. These domestic errors are excusable, as they commonly depend on the notorious efficacy of fruits and vegetable acids in remedying the scurvy, with which all herpetic diseases are vulgarly confounded, but the mistake is most injurious.

“ The healing art can only deserve the confidence of an enlightened public, through
 “ its scientific and rational claims. The practice of Surgery demands an exact know-
 “ ledge of the structure of the human body, and its ministrations are exposed to common
 “ observation ; hence it follows, that more implicit reliance is placed on that branch of
 “ the faculty. A bewildering metaphysical superstition prevails among some ill-informed
 “ physiologists about the attributes of vitality, yet few of them pretend to manage this
 “ illusory power by any other than physical means.

“ Whether as preventives or curatives, I am anxious to commend vegetable dietetics ;
 “ for by their habitual influences, more unalloyed benefit is to be expected than from
 “ deleterious or violent minerals, which are too often rashly given to produce sudden or
 “ striking effects, regardless of their injurious consequences.

“ The necessary connexions between the constituent materials of our bodies, their
 “ organized structures, and their several natural offices, are of the first importance in
 “ medical studies ; and the vegetable creation supplies the greatest diversity of ali-
 “ mentary, medicinal, or stimulating articles, whether they are to be directed as re-
 “ medies, or prohibited as improper for food.

“ Medicinal herbs have been employed in the diet of valetudinarians since the first
 “ dawning of medical science ; and I am satisfied, that in chronic disorders this natural
 “ adaptation of alteratives will become permanent after a few more discoveries in organic
 “ chemistry and in physiology. To illustrate this assumption, I will now present a brief
 “ account of scrofula, one of the severest penalties inflicted upon artificial life. That
 “ scrofula does not depend on hereditary taint is proved by its frequent occurrence
 “ among tropical animals and birds in the menageries of London ; and also by its affect-
 “ ing the natives of the East Indies and of Africa, when they become settled in this
 “ climate. It must be admitted, that some families are more liable to scrofula than
 “ others, and that when persons with such aptitude are exposed to the noxious effects of

“ local damp, cold, unsuitable dress, or bad diet, they become the preferable victims.
 “ Scrofula appears to depend mainly on imperfect digestion, and consequent depraved
 “ nutriment; both being produced by crude unsuitable diet. The disease is a chronic
 “ inflammatory affection, generally invading structures which have an inferior degree of
 “ vascularity. In its first stage, effusions of the coagulating portion of the blood cause
 “ local swellings, but the enfeebled arteries of the part are inadequate to organize those
 “ depositions, and after a time they become spontaneously vitiated, and irritate the ad-
 “ jacent structures into a more active degree of inflammation: this seems to be the
 “ order of progress in consumptive tubercles of the lungs, and in suppurating lymphatic
 “ glands. The living functions, whether constitutional or local, are natural and healthy,
 “ as long as the elementary materials of the body are of a wholesome kind, and duly dis-
 “ tributed; nor is it reasonable to suppose, that any deterioration of structure or of
 “ action should occur, unless excited by some noxious agency. An elucidation of this
 “ doctrine may be found in the anatomy and diseases of absorbent glands. Those organs
 “ are placed in the course of many lacteal and lymphatic vessels; they are composed of a
 “ peculiar parenchyma or matter, intersected by membranous vesicles, into which the
 “ entering branched tubes open, termed *vasa inferentia*, and from the same vascular
 “ structure other tubes issue, termed *vasa eferentia*. The parenchyma and membranous
 “ portions of these glands have more blood-vessels than the coats of the lacteal or lym-
 “ phatic tubes, and hence those organs often exhibit a state of inflammation, arising from
 “ the contact of irritating substances, which pass with impunity through their absorbing
 “ vessels. A ruinous instance of this kind happens in the morbid enlargement and
 “ obstruction of the lacteal glands, whereby the nutritious fluid is gradually impeded,
 “ until the emaciated victim perishes. It would far exceed the bounds of this letter to
 “ enumerate the dietetic errors which first occasion, and afterwards maintain or ag-
 “ gravate, this chronic inflammation of lacteal glands; yet I will venture to mention

“ some vegetable aliments, which, according to my experience, are the ordinary, if not the
 “ chief, provocatives. The presence of vegetable acids, or of acidifiable substances, in
 “ combination with food, always seem to disturb digestion, and when such acids pass
 “ into the lacteals they necessarily irritate the blood-vessels of the lacteal glands; and
 “ the frequent repetition of those excitements swell and obstruct all their vessels, until
 “ the organ falls into suppurative dissolution. The morbid progress of all animal poisons,
 “ and of other absorbed acrimonies, betray similar evidences, and from thence the use
 “ of the lymphatic glands may be inferred; namely, to intercept the introduction of
 “ noxious materials into the blood.

“ My best endeavours to penetrate these subjects lead me to conclude, that a
 “ vitiated state of the blood is a more common source of constitutional disease than
 “ those alleged errors of the living functions, for which no reasonable cause can be as-
 “ signed. Further advances in medical philosophy promise a better direction of the
 “ regimen, suited to maintain the vigour of those who labour for society with the mind,
 “ as well as those perhaps more happy persons who work with their hands; it being the
 “ duty of the medical cosmopolite to guard the community against the baneful influences
 “ of abused luxury or injurious vocations, since they equally tend to spoil the succession
 “ of both classes.

“ Wishing your Society ample prosperity to do good,

“ I am, my dear Sir,

“ Very faithfully your's,

“ ANTHONY CARLISLE.

“ To JOHN FROST, Esq.”

FINIS.



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