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THE MEDICINE AND DOCTORS OF HORACE

BY EUGENE F. CORDELL, M. D.



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THE MEDICINE AND DOCTORS OF HORACE.

BY EUGENE F. CORDELL, M. D.

(Read before the Johns Hopkins Hospital Historical Club, November 12, 1900.)

In all ages of the world the doctor and his practice have [233] been the shuttlecock of the wits and satirists. That medicine has not perished under these assaults must be ascribed to the unlimited faith of the human mind and to the leaven of good that even in the darkest period of its history has been mingled with its shortcomings and errors. In selecting an author of the Augustan age as representative of its sentiment and inspiration, none occurs to us with more convincing readiness than the great wit and lyric poet, the satirist of Roman manners and morals, the boon companion of Augustus and his prime minister, whose name heads this page. What has Horace to say of the doctors and medicine of his day?

It is a singular fact that nowhere in all his extant writings is there a word of unkindness or ridicule of the professors of medicine. Of few writers of his stamp could such a statement be made. His allusions are always kindly and breathe unfeigned respect and confidence. This will surprise us the more, when we reflect upon the character of the Roman profession of his day, just emerging from obscurity and chiefly in the hands of slaves and foreign adventurers, bent in most cases solely upon self-aggrandizement. Writing to a friend,¹ he gives this advice: "If your side or kidney should be attacked with an acute disease, seek a remedy for the disease," or as Sir Theodore Martin puts it:²

"If spasms of pain assail your sides or back,
Send for the doctor; set him on the track
The mischief's cause and cure upon the spot."²

¹ Epist. I, 6, 28.

² Metrical translation.

[234] In another place he says:³ "If no quantity of water would put an end to your thirst, you would tell it to your physicians."

And again:⁴ "The false modesty of fools will conceal ulcers rather than have them cured."

During the latter half of the poet's life his health was poor, the first evidence of failure manifesting itself on the journey to Brundisium, when he was 28, in an inflammation of the eyes: "Here, having got sore eyes, I was compelled to smear black ointment on them."⁵ He was also, like Virgil, a martyr to weak digestion. It is probable also that he had some affection of the chest, as in addressing his mistress Lyce, he says:⁶ "This side of mine will not always be able to endure your threshold and the rain," and in Epist. I, 7, 26, he speaks of his "*non forte latus*."

He must, therefore, have been brought into frequent contact with physicians in a professional way and it must be considered indeed remarkable that no word of blame or reproach of them escapes him. Take the case of the court physician, Antonius Musa. Horace was in the habit of spending his winters at Baiae, a beautiful seaside resort in Campania, not far from Naples. Here were hot medicinal waters, pleasant and wholesome, and a mild air. The wealthy Romans built their villas around and the brilliant society of Rome was transported thither during the cold weather. Horace never tires of singing the delights of "watery Baiae."

"Baiae's waters fair
With happy heart I hail."⁷

"No bay in all the world so sweet, so fair,
As may with Baiae, Dives cries, compare."⁸

"Should winter swathe the Alban fields in snow,
Down to the sea your poet means to go,
To nurse his ailments and in cosy nooks,
Close huddled up, to loiter o'er his books."⁹

Now imagine this small, frail, prematurely gray poet, with his weak digestion, his sore eyes, his "*non forte latus*,"

³ Epist. II, 2, 46. ⁴ Epist. I, 16, 24. ⁵ Sat. I, 5, 30. ⁶ Od. III, 10, 19.

⁷ Martin, Od. III, 4, 24. ⁸ Martin, Epist. I, 1, 83. ⁹ Martin, Epist. I, 7, 10.

and his nervous temperament, "one to whom warmth is life,"¹⁰ ordered by the medical autocrat of Rome, to give up his dear Baiae and go to take the cold baths at Velia or Salernum and this in midwinter. Ugh! he shivers at the thought, and yet no word of reproach escapes him—he has no thought of disobeying.

Horace also seems to reprobate ignorant handling of drugs in the following quotation:

"Where is the man * * *
Who ventures to administer a draught,
Without due training in the doctor's craft?
Doctors prescribe who understand the rules,
And only workmen handle workmen's tools,"¹¹

or to use a literal translation (and more fully):

"He that is ignorant of a ship is afraid to work a ship; none but he who has learned dares administer (even) southernwood to the sick; physicians undertake what belong to physicians; mechanics handle tools, but we learned and unlearned, promiscuously write poems."

Horace, evidently speaking from his personal experience, inculcates a sparing and plain diet. To his friend, Iccius, he says:¹²

"Si ventri bene, si lateri est, pedibusque tuis, nil
Divitiæ poterunt regales addere majus,"

or, as Theodore Martin translates it:

"Let your digestion be, but sound,
Your side unwrung by spasm or stitch,
Your foot unconscious of a twitch,
And could you be more truly blest,
Though of the wealth of kings possessed?"

This definition of health corresponds nearly with the soundness of "limb, wind and pizzle," which traders in horses are used to demand.

The word *medicus* occurs nine times in the writings of Horace. Addressing an imaginary miser, in Satire I, 1, 80, he says: "If your body should become disordered by being

¹⁰ Epist. I, 20, 24.

¹¹ Martin, Epist. II, 1, 114.

¹² Epist. I, 12, 5.

[234] seized with a cold, or any other casualty should confine you to your bed, is there any one upon whom you can rely to stay with you, prepare the fomentations and beseech the doctor to bring you back to health and restore you to your children and dear relatives?" This passage recalls a letter written by Cicero to his learned freedman, Tiro, in which he urges the invalid to spare no expense—"another fee to the doctor may make him more attentive."¹³

Opimius, another miser, who thinks himself poor, although surrounded by heaps of silver and gold, is seized with a prodigious lethargy.¹⁴ His heir, with unconcealed joy, is scouring about the house in search of keys and coffers. Then the quick-witted and faithful physician rouses his patient in the following way: He orders a table to be brought in and the bags of money to be poured out upon it and several persons to begin counting it. At the ring of the coin, the sick man jumps upon his feet, whereupon the doctor addresses him thus: "Do you not know that your ravenous heir will carry off your treasures unless you watch them?" "Not while I am still alive?" "Why, certainly; rouse yourself, man!" "But what must I do?" "Why, you must have food and restoratives; you are almost bloodless, already. Come no foolishness, take this bowl of gruel." "How much did it cost?" "Oh, a trifle." "But tell me exactly." "Two pence." "Alas! what does it matter whether I die of disease or by robbery and extravagance?" The disinterested character of the doctor is well brought out in this scene.

"O Jupiter!"¹⁵ thou who causest men to suffer and removest their afflictions (cries the mother of a boy confined [235] to bed for five months), if this quartan chill shall at thy command leave my child, on thy fast day he shall be placed naked in the Tiber.' Should chance or the doctor relieve the patient from his imminent danger, the superstitious

[234] ¹³ "Roman Life in the Days of Cicero," by Prof. Church, 1881.

¹⁴ Sat. II, 3, 142. See Celsus Lib. III, 20, who says it is a dangerous acute disease with paroxysms and fever, probably congestive chill.

¹⁵ Sat. II, 3, 88.

mother will destroy her child by placing him on the cold [235] bank and bringing back the fever."

"A new disorder expelled the old in a miraculous manner, as it is accustomed to do, when the pain of the afflicted side or head is turned upon the stomach; or as it is with a man in a lethargy, when he turns boxer and attacks his physician."^{15a}

To Maecenas, he writes:¹⁶ "In this case" (*i. e.*, where the judgment is disordered), "you think me mad, only as the generality of men are mad, and you do not laugh or believe that I stand in need of a doctor, or of a guardian assigned by the praetor."

To his friend Celsus, he writes,¹⁷ more of his mental than his physical troubles, "Diseased as I am, I am willing to hear nothing which may relieve me, I am displeased with my faithful physicians and am angry with my friends for their unceasing efforts to rouse me from my fatal lethargy."

To Augustus, he writes:¹⁸ "He that knows naught of ships will be afraid to work one; none but those who have been taught will dare administer to the sick even a dose of southernwood; mechanics handle tools, doctors stick to their medicines, whilst we poets write verses whether we are learned or unlearned."

To his friend, Julius Florus,¹⁹ he writes: "If no abundance of water should relieve your thirst, you would tell it to your physicians."

Horace mentions by name two physicians—Antonius Musa and Craterus; perhaps a third person of distinguished medical attainments is named—I will discuss this question later.

Antonius Musa, a highly educated Greek freedman of Augustus, was led to the study of medicine by a desire to relieve his father, who suffered from great infirmities. He acquired very great honor and distinction by curing his master of a severe attack of illness, which had resisted all previous attempts at cure, and seemed likely to prove fatal. Of the nature of this attack we are not posi-

^{15a} Sat. II, 3, 27.

¹⁶ Epist. I, 1, 101.

¹⁷ Epist. I, 8, 7.

¹⁸ Epist. II, 1, 114.

¹⁹ Epist. II, 2, 146.

[235] tively informed (some say gout) but it had been treated by hot fomentations and sweating without relief. The case seeming so desperate, a change of physicians was determined upon and Musa was placed in charge. Bold and decisive action seemed to be demanded and consequently the entire previous method of treatment was reversed. Cold douches were freely applied and the august patient was drenched with draughts of cold water. With these measures, whether *post* or *propter hoc*, he recovered and, although his health was always delicate, he lived for 36 years after this critical illness. By this happy termination, the physician reaped a rich reward. He was invested with citizenship and the order of knighthood; a large sum of money was bestowed upon him by Augustus and the Senate, and his statue in brass, erected by public subscription, was placed by the side of that of the God of Medicine, in the temple of Aesculapius, which stood on an island in the Tiber. Nor did he alone profit by his good fortune; it was shared in large measure by all the disciples of Hippocrates in Rome, who now, for the first time, acquired citizenship, and were relieved from all civil burdens. The Methodists—the sect to which Musa belonged—naturally profited most by this elevation and became the predominant body in the profession of the Roman capital. Cold bathing became of course the fashionable fad, and winter offered no bar to its use. In Epist. I, 15, Horace asks his friend Caius Neumonium Vala about Velia and Salernum, two winter resorts; he wants to know about their climate and air, their people, roads, water, corn, fish, hares and boars. He had long been in the habit of spending his winters at Baiae, where there were warm sulphur springs famous in the treatment of nervous disorders. But now that delightful resort is deserted, its myrtle groves are silent and the villagers are murmuring against the fashionable physician, who has deprived them of their patronage and Horace is preparing to follow Musa's directions and the crowd, and seek waters less relaxing and of lower temperature. Musa was also the physician of Maecenas, and it is related that he employed the distant murmuring of falling water for that statesman's terrible in-

somnia, obtaining, however, only temporary relief by this [235] measure for his patient, everything failing at last. He was the intimate friend of Virgil, who praises his taste and skill in an epigram, affirming that he was loaded with all the favors of Apollo and the muses.²⁰ He is spoken of by Dion Cassius, Caius Plinius Secundus and Galen. The last-named quotes him frequently. Strange to say he is not mentioned by Celsus. He introduced into practice the lettuce, chicory and endive and was the author of several pharmaceutical works of which only a few fragments remain. These were collected and published by Flor. Caldani, in 8vo, Bassano, 1800. Several medicinal compositions bearing his name enjoyed celebrity for a long time. Musa had a brother, Euphorbus, who was physician to Juba, King of Mauritania, and who discovered and gave his name to the plant Euphorbia.

In the imaginary conversation in which Damasippus maintains that most men are mad,²¹ the philosopher Stertinius is represented as saying: "Suppose that Craterus" [the physician] "should pronounce a patient free from disease of the stomach" [*non cardiacus*],²² "is he therefore well and shall he get up? No, the doctor will forbid that because he is suffering from an acute pleurisy or nephritis." And so he argues, if a man is not insane in one direction, he is in another. Craterus was likewise a Greek, and stood in high repute in Rome; Sir Theodore Martin calls him the "Aber- [236] nethy of his day." He is mentioned a number of times by Galen. Cicero writes to his friend Pomponius Atticus (B. C. 45) upon hearing of the illness of the latter's daughter: "*De Attica doleo*"—"credo autem Cratero." Persius writes:²³

"Venienti occurrere morbo,

Et quid opus Cratero magnos promittere montes,"

"meet the disease at its first stage and what occasion is there to promise Craterus gold mines for a cure?" Porphyry²⁴

²⁰ Virgil's Catalecta.

²¹ Sat. II, 3. [235]

²² Hecker believes that the disease known as "*Cardiacus*" has disappeared and that it was peculiar to antiquity. Védrenès, *Traité de Celse*, Paris, 1876.

²³ Sat. III, 64.

²⁴ *De Abstinencia ab Animalibus*, I, 17, 61. [236]

[236] gives an account of the cure by him of a slave attacked with a horrible disease, in which the flesh separated from the bones. He also invented an antidote against the sting or bite of venomous animals.

The name Celsus occurs twice in the writings of Horace—Epist. I, 3 and Epist. I, 8. The first is addressed to Julius Florus, who has gone to Asia Minor, 20 B. C., A. U. C. 733, as companion of Claudius Tiberius Nero, Augustus' stepson and successor in the imperial chair. Tiberius, who was himself but 22, was accompanied on this occasion (his Armenian expedition), by a number of young Romans of taste and genius—the “*studiosa cohors*,” as Horace calls them—among whom were philosophers, historians, orators, poets and doubtless a physician or two. “What works is the studious train pursuing?” asks the poet. Among others he refers to one named Celsus, and in the following words: “What is my dear Celsus about? already advised he shall be advised again and again,²⁵ to collect treasures of his own, and to let alone writings, which are stored in [the library of] the Palatine Apollo, lest, if it should chance that the flock of birds should hereafter come to claim their feathers, he, like the jackdaw, should be stripped of his stolen colors and become the subject of ridicule.” The reference is to the well-known fable of Aesop. The library here referred to was one which had been founded by the Emperor Augustus in his palace on the Palatine Hill, next to the temple of the god. It was designed for the use and encouragement of literary men and is several times referred to by Horace.²⁶ Here was collected the literature of the world, all the writings which were judged worthy of “cedar and immortality.” Hither gathered scholars of every kind to consult the literary treasures, and it is said that the physicians here gave instruction to their pupils. The question naturally arises—may not the great medical writer Celsus have here prepared

²⁵ Of the use of the verb *moneo* here I find this in Gulielmus Braunhardus, “*Quinti Horatii Flacci, Opera Omnia*,” Leipzig, 1835: “*monemus jure quodam nostro et auctoritate; hortamur fere argumentis, Cruq.*”

²⁶ Sat. I, 4, 22; Sat. II, 10, 38; Epist. II, 1, 216; Epist. II, 2, 94.

those compilations of philosophy and medicine, of which the [236] eight books "*De Medicina*," written in most elegant Latin alone survive to this day? May not the young Celsus mentioned by Horace have been the great author himself?

Epist. I, 8 was addressed to *Celsus Albinovanus*, whom Horace describes as the attendant and secretary of Tiberius Claudius Nero, the general in the Armenian campaign already referred to. The use of medical terms in this epistle is somewhat significant: "I will hear nothing, learn nothing that may alleviate my sickness; I am displeased with my faithful physicians, I am angry with my friends who are striving earnestly to rouse me from my fatal lethargy." The whole tenor of these letters shows that the greatest intimacy must have existed between the writer and young Celsus, and that the former entertained for the latter an interest which was both fatherly and disinterested, for the language, as has been remarked by Orelli and others, was not intended in any offensive sense.

Now we know almost nothing about the medical writer Celsus. The date and place of his birth, residence and death, are alike unknown. Even his name is in doubt, some maintaining that the first initial "A," stood for Aulus, others that it meant Aurelius. That he was a member of the Cornelian family, to which so many illustrious men belonged, indicates a patrician rank. It is uncertain whether he was a practicing physician, with the probabilities much in favor of the negative; yet his minute and accurate descriptions of diseases, instruments and operations, his profound and independent judgment and his frequent references to his personal experience, show a practical knowledge of the subject which could only have come from prolonged observation and actual participation.

What we do know of him is that he compiled a great encyclopædic work on various branches of learning of which his eight books on medicine alone survive to this day. The extent of this work, and the versatility of its author, are shown by its embracing elaborate treatises on rhetoric, philosophy, military science, agriculture (including a section

[236] on veterinary science) and medicine. According to Gurlt,²⁷ this compilation occupied some fifty or more years of the author's life, the part on rhetoric having been written in the last decennium before Christ and that on medicine at the beginning of the fifth decennium after Christ under the Emperor Claudius. The treatise on medicine was the first medical work written in the Latin language and the most important one of antiquity after Hippocrates. To it we owe almost all that we know of the previous 400 years, and of the great Alexandrian School of anatomists and surgeons. Our high estimate of it is not invalidated by the fact that it was written for laymen, or by the neglect which it met at the hands of Celsus' contemporaries and successors for many centuries, in fact until the revival of learning in the 15th century. Its purity of style and literary excellence render it a worthy companion of the great non-medical classics of the Augustan age and have caused Celsus to be termed the "*Cicero Medicorum*." That it was not appreciated by the profession of Rome is probably to be attributed to two circumstances: 1, That it was addressed to laymen; 2, that the profession of Rome was made up almost entirely of Greek physicians.

[237] Is it possible to identify the Celsus of Horace with the Celsus of medicine? It would have been nothing unusual, if the young courtier, who had been honored by Tiberius with the appointment of secretary, were well acquainted with medical science, for it constituted, no less than philosophy, a part of the education of all high-born Romans, who often found in the "*ampla valetudinaria*,"²⁸ upon their large country estates, abundant opportunities for the practical exercise of such knowledge. Again, to write such a work as that of A. Cornelius Celsus, required access to a very large collection of books, such as he would have found nowhere in Italy except in Rome. He must therefore have repaired to Rome, if not already a resident of the metropolis, in order to carry on his researches, and if this be granted,

[236] ²⁷ *Geschichte der Chirurgie*, Vol. 1. See also Bähr, *Geschichte der Röm. Literatur*.

[237] ²⁸ *Celsus*, Praefatio.

where would he have found such opportunities for work as [237] in the great collection of Augustus—the public library on the Palatine Hill? Here then, we find two men of the name of Celsus, simultaneously engaged in transcribing and compiling, not once but habitually and evidently for publication. What is the inevitable inference? That they are one and the same person.

The name, *Albinovanus*, seems at first sight to offer an insurmountable obstacle to this theory. Let us consider, briefly, the nomenclature of Roman proper names. Every free-born Roman of the higher class had three names, I. an individual name or prænomen, as Aulus, Caius, Marcus, Publius, Quintus, etc. The number of these was limited. They were considered titles of honor and as such were highly prized, as Horace says: “*gaudent prænomine molles auriculae.*”²⁹ II. The gens name or nomen, as Claudius, Cornelius, Julius, Tullius, Virgilius. III. The individual family name or cognomen, as Crispus, Maro, Naso, Plautus, Seneca. The cognomen was sometimes assumed, “*optivum cognomen*”; often it was conferred by the public:

“*frequentia Mercuriale*
Imposuere mihi cognomen compita,”³¹

“the crowded streets gave me the surname Mercurial.” I imagine that such cognomina as *canis*,³² *pinguis*,³³ *Asina*^{33a} and *Asellus*,^{33b} were rather in the nature of nicknames; they would hardly have been adopted voluntarily by their holders. An additional cognomen was often added to a name to indicate some circumstance of life, or character. In later times this was called “*agnomen.*” Such were Africanus, Asiaticus, Numantinus, Capitolinus, Torquatus, Germanicus, Justus, Felix, Declamator. Thus are Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus, Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus, Publius Aemilianus Scipio Numantinus, Lucius Annæus Seneca Declamator, Lucius Calpurnius Piso Frugi, Decius Junius Brutus Scaeva and Albinus, Quintus Fabius Maximus Cuncta-

²⁹ Sat. II, 5, 32.

³⁰ Epist. II, 2, 10.

³¹ Sat. II, 3, 25.

³² Sat. II, 2, 56.

³³ Sat. I, 3, 58.

^{33a} Epist. I, 13, 8.

^{33b} Sic. & Liv.

[237] tor, Spurius Postumius Albinus Magnus and Regillensis, and many others. Sometimes in the case of very distinguished men there was more than one of these additional cognomina or titles, and it was no unusual thing for names to undergo change in course of time, old titles being dropped and new ones assumed. Among friends, the mode of address was usually by the gens nomen or the cognomen, the prænomen being reserved for formal or polite address, something like Mr., Rev., Dr., Sir. In eight of the epistles of Horace, omitting doubtful ones, his correspondents are addressed by their cognomina; in six the gens name is used and in one both; not once is the prænomen used. The same rule prevails throughout the entire work, the prænomen never being employed. The poet refers to himself most often as Horatius, once only as Flaccus and once as Quintus. Of Latin authors who mention him, according to Horace Delphini, eight speak of him as Horatius and five as Flaccus. From all this, we may conclude that in "*Celsus Albinovanus*" the poet has omitted part of the name of his friend, quite certainly the prænomen and most probably the gens name also, especially as we never find "Celsus" used in this sense. "Celsus," then being the cognomen or third name, what shall we say of "Albinovanus." Its position here, as well as in the names Marcus Tullius Albinovanus, Caius Pedit Albinovanus and Publius Tullius Albinovanus also mentioned in the literature, show that it was a cognomen and not a family or gens name, one therefore least important and most liable to change. It may have been an accidental name, by which he was known to his intimate friends or in early life, but dropped later when he achieved reputation and literary renown, the other three containing all that a Roman patrician required.³⁴

I have examined a great many editions, lives, translations, etc., of Horace with reference to this theory, and have found it mentioned but once³⁵ and then with disapproval. It seems to have been first brought forward and

³⁴ Orelli regards "*Albinovanus*" as an "agnomen;" 3d ed. (Baiterus), 1852.

³⁵ Orellius, *op. cit.*

championed by Bianconi, an Italian author, in 1779.³⁶ I [237] have not been able to find Bianconi's work in the libraries here and have therefore not been able to avail myself of his arguments. Targa, the author of the best text of Celsus,³⁷ and Sprengel in his great history of Medicine,³⁸ both agree with him.

Finally, a possible explanation of "Albinovanus" is found in a German translation of the Epistles of Horace by Carl Passow, Leipzig, 1833. He translates Celsus Albinovanus, "*C. of Albinova*," thus implying that this term indicated the place of his birth or residence. This would assimilate it still closer to the accidental cognomina, to which I have referred. I have met with this explanation nowhere else, and I have not been able to find any such place as Albinova in any of the geographical dictionaries, but it appears both plausible and reasonable. The termination "anus" would correspond with Romanus, Trojanus, Albanus, etc., and the [238] name Albinovanus certainly suggests place, "albi" or "albia nova." There were several towns of the name albi or albia, and there was an Alba Longa, an Albamarla, an Albamala, an Albamana, and many similar combinations. The termination "anus" indicates a double word since the adjective termination of polysyllables was not "anus" but "ensis."

It is pleasant, thus, to contemplate Horace as the friend of our Roman Hippocrates, and I feel sure that the works of the genial poet will afford us increased delight from the contemplation of this tie between our profession and him.

The following diseases are mentioned in Horace: dropsy, *dirus hydrops*; consumption, *macies*; malaria, *quotidiana*, *quartana frigida*; fever, *febris*; pleurisy, *dolor laterum*, *dolor miseri lateris*, *morbis lateris acutus*; *polypus nasi*; headache, *dolor capitis*; dyspepsia, *dolor cordis*; lethargy, *lethargus*,

³⁶ Bianconi, *Lettere sopra A. Cornel. Celso*, Rom, 1779, 8°, deutsch von [237] S. Ch. Krause, Leipz., 1781.

³⁷ Targa, Leonard, 1st ed., Padua, 1769; 2d, 1810; 3d, 1815.

³⁸ Sprengel (French trans., Paris, 1815, 9 vols.) says "infinitely probable." Targa devoted 70 years to the study of Celsus; all authors since his day have adopted his text.

[238] *veternus*; insanity, *iracunda Diana, furor, insania, rabies*; ulcer, *ulcus, ulcera incurata*; hydrophobia, *rabies canis, rabiosa canis*; diabetes [if the lines

“Si tibi nulla sitim finiret copia lymphæ,
Narrares medicis;”

justify this diagnosis]; wound, *vulnus*; itch, *scabies*; jaundice, *morbis regius*; cold, *frigus*; conjunctivitis, *lippitudo*; strabismus, *strabo*; club-foot, *male pravæ tales, crura distorta*; wart, *verruca*; protuberance, *tuber*; a horny growth on the forehead, *frons exsecto cornu*; fracture of the leg, *crus fractum*; Campanian disease, *morbis Campanus* [a skin eruption accompanied by pimples or warts]; mole, *nævus*; gout, *nodosa* (knotty) *chiragra, tarda* (crippling) *podagra*; cough, *tussis*; wax in the ear, *auriculæ dolentes collecta sorde*; plague, *pestis*; canities, and bites of dogs and serpents.

The allusion to dropsy is strikingly graphic: As the love of money increases with its gratification, so “the direful dropsy increases by self-indulgence, nor does it extinguish its thirst, unless the cause of the disease has departed from the veins, and the watery languor from the pallid body.”³⁹ There is an allusion to this affection also in Epist. I, 2, 34: “*Si noles sanus, curres hydropicus,*” “although you are unwilling to move when well, you will run fast enough” [to the doctor], “when you get the dropsy.” The origin of consumption and fevers, as a retribution for the theft of fire from heaven by Prometheus, is strikingly put—

“macies, et nova febrium
Terris incubuit cohors,”⁴⁰

as if they were swarms of noxious winged creatures. The polypus of the nose,⁴¹ resembled more ozæna, from the fetid odor which accompanied it, than what we know as polypus. The word *scabies* occurs three times. “*Occupet extremum scabies,*”⁴² “the devil take the hindmost!” The jaundice is called “*morbis regius,*” not because like scrofula in later times, it was curable by the king’s touch, but because, in its treatment, it required care and delicacies which are supposed

³⁹ Od. II, 2, 13.

⁴⁰ Od. I, 3, 30.

⁴¹ Epod. XII, 5.

⁴² De Arte Poet.

to be attainable only by royal personages.⁴³ *Colligere frigus* [238] is "to catch cold"; *tentatus frigore*⁴⁴ is "seized with a cold." "*Hic oculis ego nigra meis collyria lippus illinere,*"⁴⁵ "here I anointed my inflamed eyes with black ointment." What this black ointment was is not stated in any of the commentaries; Celsus gives the formulæ for several, among which this may possibly be. Again we have "*lippus inungi,*"⁴⁶ "*Crispinus lippus,*"⁴⁷ and "*oculis lippus inunctis.*"⁴⁸ The crippling effects of gout are portrayed at Sat. II, 7, 14: "That buffoon Volanerius, when the deserved gout had crippled his fingers, maintained a fellow, hired by the day, to take up the dice and put them into a box for him." The removal of the horny growth from the forehead of Messius, spoken of in the description of the journey to Brundisium,⁴⁹ was doubtless effected by some surgeon; an ugly scar attested the operation. The Cæsarean operation is clearly referred to in the *De Arte Poet.*, 339: "Nor take out of a witch's belly" [*alvo*], "a living child, that she had dined upon." In Sat. II, 3, we have a discussion of insanity, with a description of various types. It enumerates many well-known forms but omits others. There is no mention, *e. g.*, of general paralysis of the insane (referred to by Pliny), nor of alcoholic, puerperal or epileptic insanity. Although but a desultory description, it is worth a closer study.

In Horace's physiology, the liver secreted bile as now, but figuratively it was also the seat of anger and lust.

" meum
Fervens difficili bile tumet jecur,"⁵¹

"My inflamed liver swells with bile difficult to be repressed."

" libido
Saeviet circa jecur ulcerosum,"⁵²

"And hot lust shall rage about your ulcerous liver." "*Non ancilla tuum jecur ulceret ulla,*"⁵³ "let no young slave inflame your liver." "*Meum jecur urere bilis,*"⁵⁴ "anger galled

⁴³ See Celsus, lib. III, 24.

⁴⁴ Epist. I, 2, 13.

⁴⁵ Sat. I, 1, 80.

⁴⁶ Sat. I, 5, 30.

⁴⁷ Epist. I, 1, 29.

⁴⁸ Sat. I, 1, 120.

⁴⁹ Sat. I, 3, 25.

⁵⁰ Sat. I, 5, 58.

⁵¹ Od. I, 13, 3.

⁵² Od. I, 25, 15.

⁵³ Epist. I, 18, 72.

⁵⁴ Sat. I, 9, 66.

[238] my liver" [because his dear friend Fuscus Aristius would not take the hint, when he was tormented by the bore on the Via Sacra].

"Exucta uti medulla et aridum jecur
Amoris esset poculum,"⁵⁵

"that they" [the witches] "might have a love-filter from the parched marrow and dried liver" [of the boy]. At Od. IV, 1, 12, the poet advises Venus to seek Paulus Maximus, "if she desires to inflame a suitable liver:" "*si torrere jecur quæris idoneum.*" In Od. III, 4, 77,

"nec Tityi jecur
Relinquit ales,"

"the vulture feeds continually on the liver of Tityus" [the giant, who had attempted violence upon Latona]. And finally, we find this mention of the bile in Sat. II, 2, 75:

"Dulcia se in bilem vertent, stomachoque tumultum
Lenta feret pituita,"

[239] which Martin translates—

"what tasted so sweet
Will be turned into bile, and ferment, not digest, in
Your stomach, exciting a tumult intestine."

The spleen is not once mentioned, and with Horace it was "to vent the bile," not "the spleen."

Cor is used for heart or stomach, *præcordia* for heart, chest or intestines. *Iliæ* is also used in the last-named signification. "*Vitio tumidum cor,*"⁵⁶ "heart swollen with vice"; "*tetigisse cor querela,*"⁵⁷ "to move the heart with complaint"; "*corde tremit,*"⁵⁸ "trembles in her heart"; "*in cor trajecto dolore,*"⁵⁹ "the pain being transferred to the stomach." "*Iliæ rhombi,*"⁶⁰ "the entrails of a turbot"; "*O dura messorum iliæ,*"⁶¹ said of those who eat garlic; *ducere iliæ,*"⁶² "to become broken-winded." "*Humana exta*"⁶³ is "human viscera." "*Tenta spiritu præcordia,*"⁶⁴ "my chest strained with gasping"; "*condita cum verax aperit præcordia*

[238] ⁵⁵ Epod. V, 37.

⁵⁹ Sat. II, 3, 28.

⁶³ De Arte Poet., 186

[239] ⁵⁶ Sat. II, 3, 213.

⁶⁰ Sat. II, 8, 30.

⁶⁴ Epod. I, 18, 25.

⁵⁷ De Arte Poet., 98.

⁶¹ Epist. III, 3, 4.

⁵⁸ Od. I, 23, 8.

⁶² Epist. I, 1, 9.

Liber,"⁶⁵ "when truth-telling Bacchus opens the secrets of [239] his heart";

"leni prœcordia mulso
Prolueris melius,"⁶⁶

"you will with more propriety wash your stomach with soft mead"; "*quid hoc veneni saevit in prœcordiis*,"⁶⁷ "what poison is this that rages in my entrails?" [said of the garlic]; "*et inquietis assidens prœcordiis*,"⁶⁸ "and brooding upon your restless breasts"; "*inœstuit prœcordiis*,"⁶⁹ "boils in my breast."

The lungs are not mentioned once, and the medulla [besides the quotation already given] only in this passage: "*certius accipiet damnum propiusve medullis*,"⁷⁰ "and nearer to his marrow."

Disease of the nerves is referred to once only,⁷¹ but "*nervi*" is to be understood rather as signifying tendons and muscles than nerves. "*Cerebrum*" is used for brain or head: "*truncus illapsus cerebro*,"⁷² "*felix cerebri*,"⁷³ "*putidius multo cerebrum*,"⁷⁴ "*Cerebrosus*"⁷⁵ indicates "a choleric fellow."

"Foul lust" inflames the veins⁷⁶ as well as the liver. Wine flows into the veins.⁷⁷ The cause of disease resides in the veins.⁷⁸ "To commit to the empty veins."⁷⁹ There is no mention of the arteries (Celsus uses "*venæ*" as a general term for both).

"*Venter*" is used almost always for the organ of digestion, but in Epod. XVIII, 50, it signifies the womb, and in Epist. I, 15, 36 the abdomen, "*urere ventrem*," "to brand the abdomen." "*Stomachus*" also generally implies the organ of digestion, but once it is used to signify "anger," once "breast" and once "disposition."

"*Guttur frangere*"⁸⁰ is to break one's neck; "*cervicem frangere*"⁸¹ is used in the same sense.

⁶⁵ Sat. I, 4, 89.

⁶⁶ Sat. II, 4, 26.

⁶⁷ Epod. III, 5.

⁶⁸ Epod. V, 95.

⁶⁹ Epod. II, 15.

⁷⁰ Epist. I, 10, 28.

⁷¹ Epist. I, 15, 6.

⁷² Od. II, 17, 27.

⁷³ Sat. I, 9, 11.

⁷⁴ Sat. II, 3, 75.

⁷⁵ Sat. I, 5, 21.

⁷⁶ Sat. I, 2, 33.

⁷⁷ Epist. I, 15, 18.

⁷⁸ Od. II, 2, 14.

⁷⁹ Sat. II, 4, 25.

⁸⁰ Epod. III, 2.

⁸¹ Od. II, 13, 6.

[239] The midwife is referred to once:

" et tuo
Cruore rubros obstetrix pannos lavit,
Utcunque fortis exsilis puerpera,"⁸²

"and the midwife washes the rags, red with your blood, as often as you bring forth, springing up with unabated vigor." This is said in derision of Canidia the witch. "*Laudantur simili prole puerperæ*,"⁸³ "mothers are praised for the resemblance of their offspring," an allusion to the blessings Augustus had conferred upon his country.

" Diana, quae laborantes utero puellas,
Ter vocata, audis, adimisque letho,"⁸⁴

"Diana, who when thrice called, hearest young women in the throes of childbirth and snatchest them from death."

Constipation is referred to in the words, "*dura morabitur alvus*."⁸⁵

Horace's materia medica is singularly limited. Of drugs he mentions the following only: "*malva*,"⁸⁶ mallows; "*lapathum*,"⁸⁷ sorrell; "*elleborum*,"⁸⁸ hellebore; "*abrotanum*,"⁸⁹ southernwood; "*cicuta*,"⁹⁰ hemlock; "*papaver*,"⁹¹ poppy.

The mallow was used for food and also as a remedy for various disorders, as indigestion, irritation of the kidney and bladder, etc.: "*gravi malvæ salubres corpori*."⁹² Celsus recommends it frequently as an emollient and laxative.

There were two varieties—the cultivated, *sativa*, and the wild, *silvestris*. The mallow ("*althæa*") is still employed in medicine as a demulcent and emollient. The root of the plant which grows in salt marshes and other moist places is alone officinal. It is obtained from Europe.

The sorrel, known among the Greeks as "*lapathon*" and among the Romans as "*rumex*," grows also in swamps. It was described by Pliny and Dioscorides, according to the latter being stomachic, laxative and diuretic. Celsus recom-

⁸² Epod. XVII, 50.

⁸³ Od. IV, 5, 23.

⁸⁶ Od. I, 31, 16; Epod. II, 58.

⁸⁷ Sat. II, 4, 29; Epod. II, 57.

⁹⁰ Epod. III, 3; Sat. II, 1, 56; Epist. II, 2, 53.

⁹¹ De Arte Poet., 375.

⁸⁴ Od. III, 22, 2.

⁸⁵ Sat. II, 4, 27.

⁸⁸ Sat. II, 3, 82; Epist. II, 2, 137.

⁸⁹ Epist. II, 1, 114.

⁹² Epod. II, 57.

mends it as a laxative. It is still embraced in our materia [239] medica, having an agreeable sour taste (due to acid oxalate of potassium) and valuable antiscorbutic properties.

Hellebore was in great repute in the treatment of insanity. According to Pliny,⁹³ it will cure paralysis of the insane (“*paralyticus insaniens*”), expelling bile, fæces and mucus and with these “the melancholy humor.” The same author states that the illustrious tribune, Drusus, was cured by it of epilepsy. Celsus does not mention it. The plant was found in great abundance on the island of Anticyra, in the Aegean Sea, and thither wealthy patients with mental disorders were sent to undergo courses of treatment with it. Hellebore (known as “*Helleborus Orientalis*”) is still found growing in the Island of Anticyra. It is distinct from the black hellebore, which is also found in Greece, though probably possessing similar properties.

The *abrotanum* (southernwood) was an evergreen plant, of [240] very bitter taste; both leaves and seed were employed and were considered by Pliny and others to be highly useful in diseases of the nerves, coughs, lumbago, urinary difficulties, poisoning, etc. Celsus recommends it as a diuretic in dropsy. In the last edition of the U. S. D., the leaves of *Artemisia Abrotanum*, L., or southernwood, are said to have a fragrant odor and a warm, bitter, nauseous taste and to have been formerly employed as a tonic, deobstruent and anthelmintic. It is allied to the *Artemisia Absinthium*, from which the intoxicant absinth is derived.

The *cicuta* (hemlock) was a painless poison, producing narcotism with coldness of the body. Among the Athenians, those condemned to death were compelled to drink its juice; thus perished Socrates and Phocion. It is mentioned twice by Celsus. The effects of the modern conium which is supposed to be identical with it, are anodyne, soporific and antispasmodic. “After toxic doses, the muscular prostration is extreme, the eyelids drop from weakness, the voice is suppressed, the pupils dilated, the light almost lost; consciousness is usually preserved to the last and life is finally ex-

⁹³ Lib. XXV, ch. 15.

[240] tinguished without a struggle. . . . Probably the most frequent use of it is by alienists for the production of calm in maniacal excitement." (U. S. D.)

"*Sed mala tollet anum vitiato melle cicuta,*"⁹⁴ "the deadly hemlock in the poisoned honey will take off the old dame"; *cicutis alium nocentius,*"⁹⁵ "garlic more baneful than hemlock."

The poppy is mentioned in "*De Arte Poet.*," 375: "*Sardocum melle papaver,*" "the poppy mixed with Sardinian honey," rendering it very bitter and therefore cheap. The papaver, both "*album*" and "*nigrum*" is often spoken of by Celsus in connection with its hypnotic effects.

"*Fomenta,*" both hot and cold are mentioned: "*Fomenta vulnus nil malum levantia,*"⁹⁶ "applications that give no ease to the desperate wound"; "*fomenta parare*";⁹⁷ "*frigida curarum fomenta,*"⁹⁸ "the cold fomentations of care." In *Epist.* I, 2, 52, fomentations are said to be "as useful to the gout as paintings to the blind or music to the deaf," from which we may infer that they were not in much esteem in that disease.

Baths, cold, hot and sulphur, are frequently referred to. It is well known how large a part they took in Roman life, both in health and disease. It is singular that there is no mention of blood letting or cups which were then in frequent use. The leech (first recommended by Themison, Horace's contemporary) is mentioned once and is the very last word in the book:

"*Non missura cutem, nisi plena cruoris, hirudo,*" "a leech that will not quit the skin till saturated with blood"; this is said of the "*recitator acerbus,*" "the merciless reciter of verses," "the mad poet." It is not mentioned by Celsus.

There are several allusions to the unhealthfulness of the autumn season at Rome; "the sickly hours of September";⁹⁹ "the sickly season of autumn";¹⁰⁰ "the undertaker with his

⁹⁴ Sat. II, 1, 56.

⁹⁶ Epod. XI, 17.

⁹⁸ Epist. I, 3, 26.

⁹⁵ Epod. III, 3.

⁹⁷ Sat. I, 1, 82.

⁹⁹ Epist. I, 16, 16.

¹⁰⁰ Sat. II, 6, 19.

black attendants, active in autumn,"¹⁰¹ or as Martin interprets it:

"this deadly time of year,
When autumn's clammy heat and deadly fruits,
Deck undertakers out and inky mutes;
When young mammas, and fathers to a man,
With terrors for their sons and heirs are wan,
When stifling anteroom or court distills
Fevers wholesale, and breaks the seal of wills."

Again

"the southern breeze
That through the autumn hours wafts pestilence and bale."¹⁰²

From line 302, *De Arte Poet.*, there would seem to have been a custom among certain of the Romans of submitting to an annual vernal purgation:

"O ego laevus
Qui purgor bilem sub verni temporis horam."

In Epod. XVIII, 35, Horace calls the witch Canidia, a shop or laboratory of poisons, "*venenis officina Colchicis*," just as we now say a man is "an encyclopædia of knowledge."

In Sat. II, 5, 7, Ulysses finds neither his "*apotheca*," *i. e.*, "cellar" or "storehouse," nor his flock, untouched by the suitors of Penelope.

Among those who grieve over the death of the singer, Tigellius, are the "*pharmacopolæ*,"¹⁰³ a term which Smart says was a general appellation for all dealing in spices, essences and perfumes. It is probable that they also dispensed drugs to the poorer classes.

¹⁰¹ Epist. I, 7, 6.

¹⁰² Martin, Od. II, 14, 15.

¹⁰³ Sat. I, 2, 1.





