Art and epigram regarding science and medicine in relation to death : being a reprint of a communication from the Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine (Section of the History of Medicine), 1914, Vol. VII, pp. 192-217 : together with an addition on epigram and art in relation to the excessive fear of death / by F. Parkes Weber.

ART AND EPIGRAM REGARDING SCIENCE AND MEDICINE IN RELATION TO DEATH

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Together with an Addition on

EPIGRAM AND ART IN RELATION TO THE EXCESSIVE FEAR OF DEATH

BY

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ART AND EPIGRAM REGARDING SCIENCE AND MEDICINE IN RELATION TO DEATH.

"NEC SILET MORS" was the motto of the Pathological Society of London on its foundation in 1846—a motto which might fitly be applied to much recent scientific work carried out in connexion with Egyptian mummies, &c. Death, however much grief it causes, will often, if properly questioned, teach us something about the cause, course, and prevention of a disease, which may be helpful for the preservation of human life and health. The Cheselden and Bristowe prize medals of St. Thomas's Hospital, London, bear to some extent on this aspect of death, especially the former and more beautiful of the two, on which is the inscription, "Mors vivis salus." A medal of J. B. Morgagni (by T. Mercandetti, of Rome) has the inscription, "Saluti scientia," referring to his necropsy work.

The equally beautiful Fothergillian medal of the Royal Humane Society, London, may likewise be mentioned in this connexion, since a specimen struck in gold, now in the British Museum, was awarded in 1845 to Sir John Erichsen for his "Experimental Enquiry into the Pathology and Treatment of Asphyxia." This medal, like the above-mentioned Cheselden medal, was the work of William Wyon, R.A. (1795-1851).

Here also properly belong all medals commemorating life-saving scientific discoveries. I will only instance those made by Augustin Dupré (the foremost medallist of the great French Revolution), relating to Benjamin Franklin's discovery of lightning conductors, with the famous hexameter epigram: "Eripuit coelo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis" ("He snatched the thunderbolt from heaven and the sceptre from tyrants"). With reference to a French translation of this epigram, Franklin is said to have written: "Notwithstanding my experiments on electricity, the lightning continues to fall before our

noses and our beards, and as regards the tyrant there were more than a million of us engaged in tearing the sceptre from his hands."[1] The Latin epigram was first applied to Franklin by the French statesman Turgot (1727-81), and was probably suggested by a hexameter line (Manilius, *Astronomicon*, i, 104) relating to the influence of the teaching of Epicurus against superstitious fears. The indirectly life-saving discovery of how to produce anæsthesia (the "death of pain," as S. Weir Mitchell called it) for surgical operations is, I believe, commemorated by minor works of art as well as by some pictures.

Many paintings, drawings and prints relating to anatomical dissections and demonstrations, and dead bodies for anatomical or pathological examination, including Rembrandt's famous "Anatomical Lecture," old and modern portraits of Vesalius and others dissecting, or about to dissect or demonstrate, fall under this heading. A great number of famous dissection pictures (chiefly Dutch "anatomies" of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) are beautifully illustrated in the second edition of E. Holländer's "Die Medizin in der Klassischen Malerei" (Stuttgart, 1913, pp. 15-87). They help to illustrate the life-work of anatomists, physiologists, pathologists and anthropologists. An interesting contemporary painting in the Hunterian Library at Glasgow pictures John Banister (1533-1610) delivering the "Visceral Lecture" at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall in London, 1581.[2] There exist likewise various satirical or comical representations (including "initial letter" subjects, &c.) relating to anatomical demonstrations, dissections and post-mortem examinations.[3]

In this group I would likewise place the medals (bearing the device of human skulls) of F. J. Gall (1758-1828), the founder of the "phrenological doctrine," those of J. F. Blumenbach (1752-1840), the anatomist and anthropologist, and of the naturalist, Professor Karl Vogt, of Geneva (1817-95); and certain medals (with skulls or skeletons on them) relating to medical and allied sciences—for instance, the medals of the Company of Surgeons and the present Royal College of Surgeons of England, representing the story of Galen and the skeleton of the robber. The reverse of the original medal of the Company of Surgeons (1767)

[1] See *Brit. Med. Journ.*, 1914, i, p. 549.

[2] *See* D'Arcy Power, *Proc. Roy. Soc. Med.* (Section of the History of Medicine), 1913, vi, p. 19.

[3] Representations on old illuminated manuscripts of the removal of the heart or intestines from dead bodies previously to burial, may be mistaken for early pictures of post-mortem examinations.

was made by Thomas Pingo, who, for that purpose, as Mr. T. E. James observed to me, evidently to a large extent copied the design of the frontispiece of William Cheselden's "Osteographia" (London, 1733). In Galen's time it must have been very difficult to get the opportunity of studying from actual skeletons—even at medical schools skeletons were rare, and it may be called to mind that Apuleius (the author of the "Metamorphoseon," or "Golden Ass" romance), who, like Galen, was born about 130 A.D., was accused amongst other things of possessing a skeleton—*for purposes of magic*. There was, therefore, some danger in possessing a skeleton in those days.

No medals have as yet been designed referring to death from the standpoint of the doctrine of the immortality of germ-plasm (August Weismann, &c.).

Various commemorative medals of medical men and their life-work, and medals relating to sanitation and public health, illustrate to some extent medical, sanitary and social attitudes towards death. Certain coins[1] of Selinus in Sicily (of the period *circa* 466-415 B.C.) may likewise be referred to in the same connexion, since their types commemorate the freeing of Selinus from a pestilence of some kind (malaria?) by the drainage of the neighbouring marshlands. They therefore illustrate a grand and public-spirited "hygienic" attitude towards preventible death from endemic infectious disease in the fifth century B.C. The spreading devastating epidemics of the dark ages of hygienic knowledge are abundantly illustrated in art, epigram and poetry. An engraving by the "Meister H. W.," dated 1842, of Death striding through the country, is apparently emblematic of such a visitation. This and a drawing of similar significance by Dürer, dated 1505, I have elsewhere alluded to,[2] but many other illustrations of the same kind might be adduced. For medals and medal-like tokens bearing on this subject the little work entitled "Pestilentia in Nummis," by L. Pfeiffer and C. Ruland (Tübingen, 1882), should be consulted. Very interesting are the medals, &c., on which fatal epidemics of plague and other infectious diseases are referred to as punishments or retributive calamities, visitations or manifestations of the Divine wrath on account of the wickedness of the people.[3]

[1] *See* F. P. Weber, "Aspects of Death in Art and Epigram," Lond., 2nd ed., 1914, pp. 222-224.

[2] Loc. cit., pp. 31-33, and fig. 5.

[3] Loc. cit., pp. 302-304.

Acute epidemic diseases, such as plague, "cholera morbus," "typhoid" fever ("typhus abdominalis" of German physicians), "typhus" fever ("typhus exanthematicus" of German physicians), have been often represented emblematically as demons in works of art. Some modern weird and fanciful designs, representing the deadly power of infectious diseases, I have mentioned elsewhere,[1] and many others of various periods exist, especially in regard to cholera epidemics. In this connexion an amusing article is that by Dr. J. H. Alexander, in the *Medical Press* (London, 1913, vol. cxlvii, p. 229), headed "Are Micro-organisms the Demons of the Ancients?" He points out how strongly the facts now proved to be true about pathogenic and other micro-organisms resemble what was believed by the ancients to be true regarding demons, and what is still believed to be true regarding them by the superstitious of modern times in various parts of the world. Amongst their remarkable characteristics in common might be instanced: their universal presence, especially about decaying bodies and dark, damp, sunless places; their power of entry into living bodies; the minuteness of the space taken up by them; and their invisibility to ordinary eyes.

The ravages of more chronic infections and other diseases, such as tuberculosis, syphilis and cancer, have been similarly fancifully represented, and in this connexion it may be recalled that from Babylonian and Assyrian times (cf. Professor Morris Jastrow, jun., Lecture at the Royal Society of Medicine, London, October 10, 1913[2]), all kinds of diseases, but especially acute disease, were regarded as caused by demons.

Some violent, painful, non-infectious diseases, such as an acute attack of gout, have, like infectious diseases, been symbolized as a demon attacking part of the body—witness James Gillray's famous coloured print of the "demon of gout" attacking the ball of the big toe, one of the most popular of this caricaturist's works, published in 1799 by Mrs. H. Humphrey, at 27, St. James's Street, London. Amongst satirical representations of deaths from non-epidemic diseases, that by Ch. Aubry, 1822, entitled, "L'Apoplexie foudroyante" (a bloated-looking, thick-set man, stretched out on a couch in the dining-room), may specially be noted.[3] This may be compared to Grand-

[1] *See* F. P. Weber, "Aspects of Death in Art and Epigram," Lond., 2nd ed., 1914, pp. 84-90.

[2] *Proceedings*, p. 113.

[3] *See* Holländer, "Die Karikatur und Satire in der Medizin," 1905, plate iii.

ville's design[1] of the apoplectic-looking baron after his good dinner, telling his servant to say that he is "not at home" to a visitor (Death), who is, however, entering the room without waiting for permission. (This design seems to have inspired one of Death being asked to "come in," by Willibald Krain, in *Jugend*.) Alfred Rethel has pictured Death, as a cook, in the kitchen of a rich gourmand's house. Hogarth's "Gin Lane," and "La Vice Suprême," by Félicien Rops, should also be mentioned.[2]

Certain medals[3] relate to the sanitary disposal of the dead—e.g., to the cremation of corpses and to the prohibition of burials within cities and towns or inside churches and other closed buildings. A not uncommon device which relates to medical work is that of a skeleton-like figure (representing Death or Disease) being withheld or driven back as the result of hygienic work or medical skill and devotion; for instance, the obverse design on the military-like medals awarded to all those who helped in sanitary work, &c., during the epidemic of bubonic plague in Hong-Kong, 1894. Similarly, Æsculapius is represented warding off a figure of Death on a medal commemorating the epidemic of cholera in Paris, 1832. The device on certain medals of the Royal Humane Society, London, is much more pleasing. A child is pictured endeavouring to rekindle a torch with its breath, and the accompanying inscription is "Lateat scintillula forsan." Many of the great advances in medical knowledge and surgery in opposing disease and unnecessary death are commemorated or alluded to on medals (there is, for instance, a medal recording the recent triumph of Paul Ehrlich and S. Hata) and minor works of art; but, to take one instance alone, the account of the medals relating to Edward Jenner and the discovery of vaccination would use up more space than I have the command of. Such discoveries and, especially, the modern scientific and practical work of Pasteur, Lister, Koch, Ehrlich, E. von Behring, Ronald Ross, Patrick Manson, W. C. Gorgas, &c., have helped Medicine to climb the lowest rungs of the endless ladder of progress, and have encouraged the application of cheering lines from Arthur Hugh Clough's well-known poem, "Say not the struggle nought availeth," to the steadfast hope and striving advance of the still very youthful sciences of Hygiene and Therapeutics.

[1] *See* F. P. Weber, loc. cit., p. 89.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 86, 87, 89.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 314, 325, 326.

To my mind the life-saving progress of the medical sciences should be symbolized by the *infant* Hercules in his successful struggles, rather than by the frequently repeated device of the *adult* Hercules attacking the Lernean Hydra. In this connexion one naturally thinks of Sir Luke Fildes's beautiful and very popular picture of "The Doctor" (1892). For the description of medals of medical interest, I would refer especially to the writings of Dr. H. R. Storer, in the *American Journal of Numismatics* and elsewhere.

I have referred elsewhere to medals relating to the saving of life at great personal risk and to death for the sake of medical duty or medical investigation.[1] But for the ordinary medical man "Aliis inserviendo vivo" is surely as good a motto as "Aliis inserviendo morior" or "consumor" (the motto of Tulpius, whose features Rembrandt's art has made familiar).[2]

Here, perhaps, may likewise be mentioned the gem-stones (often engraved with special devices), the finger-rings, the coins, the coin-like tokens, the medalets and medals, and the talismans and amulets of all kinds, which, at various times and various parts of the world, have been worn, and even nowadays still are carried about the person or somehow employed as supposed means of prevention—as "charms" to ward off disease, the effects of poisons, accidents, the "evil eye," and death. A description of all the objects which have been used for supposed protection against the "evil eye" would alone take up too much space; and amulets of this class are still employed by ignorant peasants of Italy and the South of Europe—vide S. Seligmann, "Der böse Blick," two volumes, Berlin, 1910. On this whole subject *see* also "The Evil Eye," by F. T. Elworthy, London, 1895, and "Horns of Honour and Other Studies," by the same author, London, 1900. In the last-mentioned work special information is given in regard to antique "symbolic hands" and the curious terra-cotta "magic" or "sacred" disks met with in many museums of Greek and Roman antiquities. The "symbolic hands" are amongst the most interesting "magic"

[1] Very interesting in this connexion, though of doubtful significance, are the medals on the death of Dr. Wenzel Beyer of Karlsbad (1526). *See* F. P. Weber, loc. cit., pp. 245-248; *see* also *ibid.*, p. 170.

[2] N. P. Tulpius (1593-1678), physician and Burgermeister in Amsterdam, whose portrait is so well known nowadays owing to Rembrandt's famous picture (1632), called "The Anatomical Lecture" (Hague Picture Gallery), had as a motto, "Aliis inserviendo consumor"; it is inscribed on his portrait by N. Elias, in the Six Gallery, Amsterdam. This motto occurs also on coins of Julius, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel (1568-89).

objects which were supposed to serve as a protection against the "evil eye"; they are always covered over with the attributes of deities and other symbols. Amongst the Greek and Roman antiquities in the British Museum, arranged to illustrate the daily life of the ancients, there are fine specimens in bronze of such "symbolic hands." Phallic and other "charms" worn by women desirous of becoming mothers constitute of themselves a large minor class, and their use has not yet been altogether given up. The New Zealand Maori charms, called "Tikis," of bone or finely polished green jade, with inset circles of mother-of-pearl for the eyes, are some of the most curious of amulets from the collector's point of view. Occasionally a special virtue has been popularly attributed to certain coins, and they, like "cramp-rings" (finger-rings sometimes made out of old coffin-nails, &c.), have been worn as charms against cramp, epilepsy and convulsions.[1] We need scarcely here allude to the gold "angels" and their connexion with the royal ceremony of "touching for the king's evil" in England, or to the so-called "touch-pieces" which afterwards replaced them.[2] A Greek bronze coin of Laodicea, in Phrygia (136 to 138 A.D.),[3] which I presented to the British Museum, had in ancient times been pierced and furnished with a bronze ring for suspension, probably to be worn as a "charm" against sickness or death, on account of the figures of Asklepios and Hygeia represented on the reverse.

Strictly speaking, an *amulet* was supposed to protect the possessor, whilst a *talisman* gave him some magical power (like the lamp and ring

[1] In England, in the seventeenth century, there was a special *office* (ecclesiastical ritual) for the consecration of "cramp-rings."

[2] For medals, coins, and coin-like tokens used as amulets, talismans, or charms against the plague, cholera, and other deadly epidemic diseases, accidents in travelling, &c., see the section, "Auf Pest und pestartige Krankheiten und deren Abwehr geprägte Medaillen, Jetons, &c.," in "Pestilentia in Nummis," by L. Pfeiffer and C. Ruland, Tübingen, 1882, pp. 73-126; also the section on cholera, *ibid.*, pp. 153-69. Amongst the best-known pieces of the kind are the various so-called "Wittenberger Pestthaler" of the sixteenth century, with Moses' brazen serpent on the obverse and the Crucifixion on the reverse; some of these Pestthaler were perhaps really made at Joachimsthal, the flourishing mining town of Bohemia. The series of St. Benedict amulets, or "Benedicts-Pfennige (cf. F. P. Weber, loc. cit., pp. 301-02) are likewise very interesting. The earliest pieces are doubtless of the seventeenth century, but the type has been more or less preserved to modern times on medalets sold to credulous pilgrims at various popular shrines of Southern Germany and Switzerland. *See* also Karl Domanig, "Die Deutsche Medaille," Vienna, 1907, plates 92 and 93, for figures of "Georgsthaler," and pest-medals and amulets of various kinds.

[3] Described by Mionnet, "Description de Médailles Antiques Grecques," Par., 1807-37, iv, No. 743.

of Aladdin in the "Arabian Nights"), but the two terms have become practically synonymous.

In regard to antique and mediæval talismans and amulets of all kinds, against the "evil eye," diseases, &c., *see* also C. W. King's volume, entitled "Early Christian Numismatics and other Antiquarian Tracts," London, 1873, pp. 173-247. On p. 202 King narrates a remarkable story regarding one kind of "medical" amulets: "Ismayl Pasha, son of Mohammed Ali, on his return from his expedition to Meroë, took up his quarters with a small guard in a hut at Chendy, Sennaar, imagining the country quite reduced to subjection. But Nimir, the former king, came by night, placed combustibles round the hut, and consumed it, with all those inside. The guard was cut to pieces by these Nubians, with the exception of the pasha's physician, a Greek, who was carried off for the more evil death. His captors drew out all his teeth, which they divided amongst themselves to sew up in their *grigri* bags, it being their firm belief that whosoever carries about him the tooth of a physician (drawn whilst *living*) secures himself thereby from all diseases for all time to come." The kind of African amulet termed a *grigri*, *greegree*, or *griggory*, is generally a little leather bag enclosing passages of the Koran or other charm-like objects. One grigri is supposed to protect the wearer from shot, another from poison, another from venomous beasts, another from evil spirits and witches, and so on.

On p. 316 of the same work King adds the following interesting note regarding another kind of "medical" amulet: "Mightily esteemed during the Middle Ages as a prophylactic against all disease was the *Sign of Health*—the 'masonic pentacle,' or *Solomon's Seal*, having in each of its exterior angles one of the letters of the word SALVS, thus arranged for the sake of mystery: V.A.L.S.S. It became the badge of the medical profession, and was regularly carried by physicians engraved on their rings. A grand example of the fashion I observed in that treasure-house of similar rarities, the dactyliotheca of Mr. Octavius Morgan, a gold ring of extraordinary weight, bearing the life-giving symbol elegantly engraved in a circle formed by the coiled serpent of the god of health. Marguerite de Valois adopted this for her device, perhaps induced by the analogy of the word to her own family name."

On Mithraic and the various classes of Gnostic amulets and talismans, *see* Franz Cumont, "Textes et Monuments figurés relatifs aux Mystères de Mithra" (Bruxelles, 1899), and his "Die Mysterien des

Mithra" (German edition by G. Gehrich, Leipzig, 1911); and C. W. King, "The Gnostics and their Remains," second edition, London, 1887. Especially interesting is King's account (op. cit., p. 195) of the explanation of the mode of action of the "evil eye" or the "envious eye," as given in the "Aethiopica" (iii, 8) of Heliodorus, in a passage which is likewise interesting with regard to theories current at the time (fourth century A.D.) on the communicability of infectious diseases: "The air which surrounds us passing through the eyes, as it were through a strainer, and also through the mouth, the teeth, and the other passages, into the inward parts, whilst its external properties make their way in together with it—whatever be its quality as it flows in, of the same nature is the effect it disseminates in the recipient, so that when anyone looks upon beauty with envy, he fills the circumambient air with a malignant property, and diffuses upon his neighbour the breath issuing from himself, all impregnated with bitterness, and *this*, being as it is of a most subtile nature, penetrates through into the very bone and marrow. . . . Consider also, my Charicles, how many people have been infected with ophthalmia, how many with other pestilential diseases, not from any contact with those so affected, or from sharing the same bed or same table, but merely from breathing the same air. . . . And if some give the stroke of the Evil Eye even to those they love and are well disposed towards, you must not be surprised, for people of an envious disposition act not as they wish, but as their Nature compels them to do." Even amongst non-superstitious moderns the "evil eye" (in the form of a disagreeable "stare") has sometimes been potent enough to produce death (by a duel!) The old saying, "A cat may look at a king," should not be acted on when persons pathologically sensitive to being looked at ("ophthalmophobia") are concerned.

The medical profession has always been and will always be peculiarly exposed to satire, because it struggles against disease and death, and because death, by the inexorable laws of Nature, must in every case, sooner or later, win the battle. The old proverb, "Physician, heal thyself" (St. Luke iv, 23), is indeed unanswerable, for in the end Death always comes for the physician himself, as he is represented doing in the various famous "Dance of Death" series. In reality, however, St. Luke's Ἰατρὲ θεράπευσον σεαυτόν only meant, "Physician, *treat* yourself," like the Vulgate version, "Medice, cura teipsum." (Similarly, the saying, "Medicus curat, Natura sanat," means, "The physician

treats—*cares for;* Nature heals—*cures.*")[1] In regard to the physician being fetched by Death in the various "Dance of Death" series, an anonymous Dutch engraving of the seventeenth century may be mentioned, in which Death is depicted conducting a sick man to have his urine examined by a doctor (as in one of the Holbein woodcuts), but Death has doubtless come for the Doctor himself. In a "Dance of Death" scene, engraved by Zimmermann in a Swiss almanac, Death brings his urine to the doctor for inspection, whilst in the "Totentanz" (where the physician is pictured wearing eye-glasses), printed by Jacob Meydenbach, at Mainz, in 1491, and in the "Danse Macabre," by Cousteau, published by Antoine Vérard in 1492, and in some other series, Death calls for the doctor just as the latter is engaged in inspecting a flask of urine; in a French eighteenth-century series (1788) the doctor lets the flask of urine fall to the ground when Death catches hold of his coat.

As Shakespeare ("Cymbeline," act v, scene 5) says: "By medicine life may be prolonged, yet death will seize the doctor too." Hans Sachs, the "Meistersänger" of Nürnberg, in his poem, "Der Tod ein End aller irdischen Ding," describes the position of medicine towards death at somewhat greater length. He makes the Healing Art say:—

> "Ich bin nur ein Hilf der Natur,
> Die Krankheit zu arzneien nur.
> Wo Glück mitwirkt, da hab ich Kraft;
> Sunst hilft kein Fleiss noch Meisterschaft."

We need not here allude to all the proverbs, epigrams, epitaphs, witty tales, and cheap jokes of the "chestnut" kind—ancient and modern—that exist in dispraise of the doctor. They mostly hint at the cure (i.e., "cura" = treatment), or the doctor, being as bad as, or worse than, the disease ("Pessimus morbus est medicus"—so, also, "Young doctors kill their patients, and old doctors allow them to die"),[2] and suggest that the doctor sometimes, from ignorance or carelessness, does more harm than good, and thus unwittingly plays into the hands of Death. We have the modern epitaph on the quack doctor whom Charon did not wish to ferry across the Styx, because in the upper

[1] A favourite phrase in the writings of the famous French sixteenth century surgeon, Ambroise Paré, was: "I treated him, God cured him."

[2] Compare, farther on, the difference made between allopathy and homœopathy.

world he was so useful in sending down passengers for Hades ("Nugæ Canoræ," by the London surgeon, William Wadd, 1827, epitaph 55) :—

"This quack to Charon would his penny pay :
The grateful ferryman was heard to say—
'Return, my friend ! and live for ages more,
Or I must haul my useless boat ashore.'"[1]

A similar German epigram by G. E. Lessing refers to Laïs and other beautiful courtezans, and to physicians, as being all of them too useful to Death to be allowed to die young.

Martial's satirical epigrams (for excellent English versions of most of Martial's epigrams relating to medicine, *see* Raymond Crawfurd's recent paper) on "Diaulus"(book i, 31 and 48), on an oculist who became a gladiator (book viii, 74), and on Hermocrates (book vi, 53), are typical examples of the kind—

"Chirurgus fuerat, nunc est vespillo Diaulus :
Coepit quo poterat clinicus esse modo."

"Nuper erat medicus, nunc est vespillo Diaulus :
Quod vespillo facit, fecerat et medicus."

"Hoplomachus nunc es, fueras ophthalmicus ante.
Fecisti medicus quod facis hoplomachus."

"Lotus nobiscum est, hilaris cenavit, et idem
Inventus mane est mortuus Andragoras.
Tam subitæ mortis causam, Faustine, requiris ?
In somnis medicum viderat Hermocratem."

[1] This uncomplimentary epitaph was doubtless suggested by the very complimentary lines on a physician, by Lucilius, or by similar lines on various physicians, in the "Greek Anthology." An English translation from Lucilius is given in H. P. Dodd's "Epigrammatists," Lond., 1870, p. 50 :—

"When Magnus passed below, Dis, trembling, said,
'He comes, and will to life restore my dead.'"

This Magnus was probably a physician at the Roman Imperial Court. J. D. Rolleston, *Proc. Roy. Soc. Med.* (Section of the History of Medicine), 1914, vii, p. 8, quotes three epigrams from the "Greek Anthology," illustrating this idea of the physician depopulating Hades. The first ("Anth. Graec. Plan.," 270) is an epigram by Magnus (? the above-mentioned physician) on a statue of Galen : "There was a time when, thanks to thee, Galen, the earth received men mortal and reared them up immortal, and the halls of Acheron were empty owing to the power of thy healing hand." The second is an epigram by an anonymous writer ("Anth. Graec. Append.," Tauchnitz edition, 1829, 119) at the end of an hexameter poem on Asklepiades : "The physician Asklepiades has gone to the home of the blessed, and has left desolation and solitude among the dead." The third epigram is by Crinagoras on the statue of Praxagoras ("Anth. Graec. Plan.," 273) : "The son of Phœbus implanted in your breast, Praxagoras, the knowledge of the healing art. All the ills which arise from long fevers and the balms to place on the wounded skin, thou has learnt from his gentle wife, Epione. If mortals had a few physicians like thee, the barque of Charon would not have to cross the Styx."

This last one (cf. the similar epigram by Lucilius, "Anth. Graec." Tauchnitz edition, xi, 257) is outdone by the Greek lines which have been attributed to Nicarchus ("Anth. Graec.," Tauchnitz edition, xi, 118) on a (doubtless imaginary) doctor named Phido ("drawing-room equivalent" given in Dodd's "Epigrammatists," 1870, p. 52)—

> "Phido nor hand nor touch to me applied;
> Fever'd, I thought but of his name—and died."

Amongst the many epigrams in dispraise of physicians or quacks cited from the "Greek Anthology" by Dr. J. D. Rolleston[1] are several which bear on the present subject. An anonymous epigram ("Anth. Graec.," Tauchnitz edition, 1829, xi, 125) describes a compact between a doctor and a gravedigger, whereby the gravedigger supplies the bandages stolen from the corpses, in return for which the doctor sends all his patients to the grave. An epigram of Nicarchus says (*ibid.*, xi, 115): "If you have an enemy, Dionysius, don't call down on him the wrath of Isis, nor of Harpocrates, nor of any god that makes men blind, but invoke Simon, and you will learn what a god can do and what Simon." Two epigrams (Rolleston writes) allude to artistic tastes combined with the swift dispatch of patients. One is by Nicarchus (*ibid.*, xi, 113): "The physician Marcus touched the statue of Zeus yesterday, and though it is stone and Zeus, it has gone to-day (like his patients)." The other is by Ammianus (*ibid.*, xi. 188): "Nicetas when he sings is an Apollo of song, and when he practises medicine he is a slayer [there is a pun in regard to the Greek word *ἀπολλύων* meaning *slaying*] of his patients." Palladas (*ibid.*, xi, 280) describes the surgeon Gennadius as one who, after exacting his fee, conducts his patients to Hades. Rolleston states further that the readiness and impunity with which physicians and surgeons have been said to kill their patients (a favourite theme for the satirist throughout all ages) are exemplified in many of the Greek epigrams. The mere touch ("Anth. Graec.," Tauchnitz edition, 1829, xi, 114), sight (*ibid.*, 123), thought (*ibid.*, 118), or dream (*ibid.*, 257) of the doctor was said, in satirical epigrams, to have proved fatal. Lucilius, for instance (*ibid.*, 257), wrote: "Diophantus saw the doctor Hermogenes in a dream, and never woke again, although he wore an amulet" (? an amulet against the "evil eye"). "An anonymous poet stigmatizes Damagoras as outweighing plague in the balance (*ibid.*, 334); and

[1] *Proc. Roy. Soc. Med.*, 1914, vii (Section of the History of Medicine), pp. 3-13.

Nicarchus compares another doctor, Zopyrus, to Hermes (Psychopompos), the guide to the infernal regions (*ibid.*, 124); but perhaps the wittiest epigram on the wholesale destruction of the sick is one which has been variously attributed to Lucian, Lucilius, and Agathias (*ibid.*, 401). A doctor sends his son to a tutor, but when the boy had learnt the first three lines of the 'Iliad' [which tell of the Trojan war sending many souls to Hades], his father said this lesson could be learnt at home, as he himself sent many souls to Hades, and for that had no need of a tutor."

Joseph Zabara, the Jewish author of the "Book of Delights" (finished about the year 1200), indulges in many gibes against the medical profession, though he himself was apparently a doctor. Thus, the following saying occurs in one edition: "A doctor and the Angel of Death both kill, but the former charges a fee." Another little story is typical of its kind: "A philosopher was sick unto death, and his doctor gave him up; yet the patient recovered. The convalescent was walking in the street, when the doctor met him. 'You come,' said he, 'from the other world.' 'Yes,' rejoined the patient, 'I come from there, and I saw there the awful retribution that falls on doctors; for they kill their patients. Yet, do not feel alarmed. You will not suffer. I told them on my oath that you are no doctor.'" [1]

To enumerate all the ancient and modern satirical sayings [2] of this kind and describe their artistic representatives, in the way of coloured prints, &c., would be too great a task. The satirical writings of Molière against the medical profession of the seventeenth century have their analogues in modern times in England as well as in other countries.

[1] *See* Israel Abrahams, "The Book of Delights and Other Papers." The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1912, p. 12.

[2] *See* especially the extensive collection entitled, "Le Mal qu'on a dit des Médecins," by Dr. G. J. Witkowski, of Paris; on the second series of this work is the appropriate device of a physician riding, with Death mounted on the same horse behind him. Several typical German epigrams of the kind are given by E. Holländer, "Die Karikatur und Satire in der Medizin," Stuttgart, 1905, pp. 175-177. A clever English one is that by "A. C." (*Spectator*, 1897), for which I am indebted to Sir William Osler:—

> "Wise Arruns, asked 'How long will Caius live?'
> Replied, 'Three days the fatal sisters give':
> And Arruns knew the prophet's art. But lo!
> Stronger than gods above or gods below,
> Euschemon comes: his healing art he tries,
> And in a single day poor Caius dies."

About the end of the eighteenth century in England a medical epigram could apparently hardly become popular unless it referred in one way or another to death. Witness the following

Amongst the bitterest attacks in France may be mentioned Léon Daudet's "Les Morticoles," in which much of the medical teaching in Paris during the last decade of the nineteenth century is held up to ridicule and even to abhorrence.

To some extent, a doctor having the care of an acute and serious case may be likened to a whist-player, who, however well he plays, may yet have such bad cards that it is impossible for him to win the game. Yet in other cases his cards may be so good that mistakes in playing do not cause him to lose the game. In yet other cases, however, the playing of one wrong card will give the game into Death's hands. The design of a very striking modern German drawing is, I believe, Death playing a game of chess with a doctor for a human life (unless I am really thinking of Moritz Retzsch's drawing of 1831—the devil playing a game of chess with a young man for his soul, an angel looking on). A modern satirical cartoon by "Cynicus" (Martin Anderson) represents "Death and the Doctor" playing cards over a coffin. The rather corpulent doctor, seated in a comfortable armchair, plays deliberately without the least appearance of excitement, whilst Death seems eager to finish the game. On the coffin are bags of gold, suggesting the financial importance of the result to the doctor. (Cartoon No. 22 of "Cartoons, Social and Political," by Cynicus, published at 59, Drury Lane, London, 1893.)

There exist, of course, a very large number of satirical designs

very popular ones on the physicians of King George III, namely, William Heberden the younger, Matthew Baillie, and Francis Willis, men at the head of their profession in England, and on the Quaker physician and philanthropist, John Coakley Lettsom, the founder of the Medical Society of London:—

"The King receives three doctors daily—
Willis, Heberden, and Baillie:
Three distinguished clever men—
Baillie, Willis, Heberden;
Doubtful which more sure to kill is—
Baillie, Heberden, or Willis."

"When patients sick to me apply,
I physics, bleeds, and sweats 'em;
Then—if they choose to die,
What's that to me?—I lets 'em."

These humorous lines, with Lettsom's signature at the end, have been (doubtless incorrectly) attributed by some to the physician himself. Several slightly different versions exist.

The version which I have given above is the one authorized by J. C. Jeaffreson, in his very popular "Book about Doctors," but Mr. G. Bethell has kindly drawn my attention to three other versions quoted on equally good authority in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for August,

(sketches, engravings, coloured prints, &c.) in dispraise of physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, and naturally quacks and charlatans also. Several of those which are figured in Dr. Eugen Holländer's work, "Die Karikatur und Satire in der Medizin" (Stuttgart, 1905), suggest that the drugs and medical treatment, and not the diseases, kill the patients. There is, for instance, a sketch (Holländer, op. cit., p. 223)

1904 (pp. 133, 134). In all of them the ending imitates Lettsom's signature to his prescriptions, namely, "I. Lettsom." The first is taken from "Old and New London," vi, p. 279—

"When any patients call in haste,
I physics, bleeds, and sweats 'em.
If after that they choose to die,
Why, what cares I?
I lets 'em."

The second claims to be the version told by Lettsom himself to the father of Mr. H. S. Cuming—

"If any folk applies to I,
I blisters, bleeds, and sweats 'em.
If after that they please to die,
Well, then I lets 'em."

The third version was obtained from Mr. Gorton, of the "Golden Sun"—

"I, John Lettsom,
Blisters, bleeds, and sweats 'em.
If after that they please to die,
I, John, lets 'em."

In *Notes and Queries* for March 10, 1906, p. 191, sent to me also by Mr. Bethell, an epigrammatic reply by a friend of Lettsom's is referred to—

"Such swarms of patients do to me apply,
Did I not practise, some would surely die.
'Tis true I purge some, bleed some, sweat some,
Admit I expedite a few, still many call.
I. Lettsom."

Mr. Bethell likewise refers me to *Notes and Queries* for March 17, 1906, p. 210, where a quotation is given from *The Wonderful Magazine and Marvellous Chronicle* for the year 1793, i, p. 346, ending as follows:—

"You say I'm dead, I say you lie,
I physicks, bleeds, and sweats 'em;
If after this my patients die,
Why, *verily*——
J. Lets—'em."

Of only one of these four physicians, namely, Francis Willis, does a portrait-medal exist. The medal in question, of which I had a good specimen in my collection, was struck on the recovery of King George III in 1789, and on the obverse bears a bust of Willis in low relief, with the medallist's signature, C. I. (and a little serpent) on the truncation (the medallist's name is, I believe, unknown). Good portraits exist, however, of the others. Of William Heberden the younger there is a painting by Richard Bothwell, and of Matthew Baillie there is one by John Hoppner, whilst Lettsom occupies a conspicuous place in Samuel Medley's picture of the early members of the Medical Society of London.

of the famous "Doctor Requiem, who cured all those that died" there is the caricature of a charlatan (*ibid.*, p. 162), exhibiting triumphantly the hide of his "last radically cured patient"; there is Daumier's (modern) design of a doctor wondering why all his patients leave him, whilst "imagination" shows a queer procession of imps carrying coffins and the dead bodies of his patients, headed by Death (see *ibid.*, p. 173). Then there is W. Hogarth's "The Company of Undertakers" (1736), with the crowded caricature-portraits of doctors and quacks of the time, and, to complete the satire, the motto, "Et plurima mortis imago" (Virgil, "Aen.," lib. ii, 369), between two pairs of crossed bones (see *ibid.*, p. 179). An older print (*ibid.*, p. 178) shows a doctor inspecting the urine of a dead patient, illustrating the saying, "Après la mort, le médecin." A lithograph by Adolf von Menzel, of about 1832 (*ibid.*, p. 290)—"The Difference between Allopathy and Homœopathy"—shows the allopath and the homœopath both holding banners with the device of a skull and crossed bones; between them are Mephistopheles and Death, the latter grasping both the banners and saying, "Seid einig! einig!" Another caricature (*ibid.*, p. 337), by Th. Heine, shows two very modern looking ghosts floating over a cemetery. One of them apparently is saying, "That's all the difference: With homœopathy one dies of the disease, with allopathy one dies of the treatment."[1] A little German painting (in the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, 1913) shows a doctor studying in a room overlooking a crowded graveyard. Death (a skeleton) is visiting the doctor as a friend and colleague, and (according to the paper which he holds) is saying, "Mein lieber Herr Collaborator, Sie sind gar zu fleissig" (referring doubtless to the overfull graveyard towards which his left hand is turned). By D. N. Chodowiecki (1726-1801), who likewise made a series of "Dance of Death" designs, there is a small engraving of Death appearing to a medical student, with the following inscription underneath:—

"De grâce épargne moi, je me fais médecin,
Tu recevras de moi la moitié des malades."

One of Thomas Rowlandson's "English Dance of Death" series (first volume, London, 1815) shows Death and the quack doctor "Nostrum," outside the shop of the undertaker, "Ned Screwtight";

[1] Compare the saying already quoted, "Young doctors kill their patients, and old doctors allow them to die."

and the letterpress (by W. Combe) describes how grieved the undertaker was when his friend Nostrum died so suddenly at his door. His wife explained that it was another job for him, and nothing to be sorry about, but—

> " ' You foolish woman,' he replied,
> ' Old Nostrum, there, stretched on the ground,
> Was the best friend I ever found. . . .
> How shall we undertakers thrive
> With Doctors who keep folks alive? . . .
> We've cause to grieve—say what you will;
> For, when Quacks die, they cease to kill.' "

Similar allusions to the undertaker are of course very frequent. Thus, in "The Apothecary's Prayer," by G. M. Woodward (engraved by Thomas Rowlandson in 1801, and published by R. Ackermann, at 101, Strand, London), the Apothecary prays to Aesculapius that people may be ill and require medicines, and mentions that his neighbour, Crape, the undertaker, is suffering considerably by his (the Apothecary's) want of practice. I have seen two little English engravings, signed "W. E. G.," not dated, but apparently of the early part of the nineteenth century, which might be mentioned in this connexion. One of them depicts an apothecary on a horse which is running away and knocking people over. The inscription below is, "What could be expected of a horse with an apothecary on his back?" Below this are the words "Newcastle Apothecary." The other shows a huge widely open mouth, into which a funeral procession of medicine bottles is entering; at the rear of this procession come little figures of Death and the Doctor, apparently good friends, and chatting with each other. The title "A Medical Allegory," is inscribed below this print, on a mortar made out of a human skull with a long bone in it as pestle.

Amongst the caricatures of Medical Consultations (e.g., by L. Boilly, 1760) a remarkable one figured, after C. Motte, by Lucien Nass ("Curiosités Médico-Artistiques," Paris, first series, p. 6), represents four consultants seated in the patient's room. One of them, with much gesticulation, is explaining his views of the case in an excited manner; his discourse has had a soporific effect, not on his patient, but on his colleagues, and even Death (represented as a skeleton holding a scythe), comfortably seated on the ground behind the chair of one of the physicians, appears to have fallen into a doze.

An eighteenth century print of John Lightbody constituting the frontispiece to "A Physical Vade Mecum" (London, 1741), by Theophilus Philanthropos (Robert Poole, 1708-52), illustrates the

curious admixture of theology in some medical writings of the time. The physician (apparently a portrait of Dr. Robert Poole, the author) and patient are seated facing each other; the doctor feels the patient's pulse and prescribes for him. In the foreground are a skeleton and a coffin, the latter bearing the inscription: "As now I am, so must you be. Therefore prepare to follow me." On the right in the distance, Death (as a skeleton) threatens the patient with his dart, telling him: "Prepare to die, for behold Death, and Judgment is at hand." The various figures are connected by bands of inscriptions with a triangle (on which is the word ΘΕΟΣ) amidst clouds and cherub-heads in the sky. One of these bands explains what God is saying to Death: "Hold, stay thy hand, and give space of repentance." Below this whole complicated design are the verses—

> "In the midst of Life Death doth us pursue,
> Let us therefore with Speed for Mercy sue."

In further illustration of the stories current in dispraise of physicians, I will refer to certain little bronze coins struck in the island of Cos, bearing the portrait of Xenophon, a Coan physician, and a descendant of the family of the Asclepiadae, who practised at the Imperial Court of Rome in the time of the Emperor Claudius. Of three of these pieces in my father's collection the inscription accompanying the portrait on two (possibly of the second century A.D.) is ΞΕΝΟΦΩΝ; on the third (apparently of the first century A.D.) it is ΞЄNOΦΩN IЄPЄTC, showing that Xenophon was apparently a priest of Aesculapius, as well as a physician. This Xenophon, according to Tacitus ("Annal.," xii, 61), obtained certain privileges for his native island from his patron, the Emperor Claudius. According to Tacitus also ("Annal," xii, 67), he had the ingratitude to allow himself to be induced by the Empress Agrippina to help her to murder his patron (54 A.D.) by means of a poisoned feather which he was stated to have introduced into his mouth under the pretence of making him vomit. (For other references on the subject, see the notes in Orelli's second edition of the works of Tacitus, Zürich, 1859, vol. i, p. 388; also Pauly and Wissowa, "Real Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft," Stuttgart, 1899, vol. iii, column 2815.) The account of Tacitus runs as follows (Bohn's Oxford translation, London, 1854, i, p. 311): "In fact, all the particulars of this transaction were soon afterwards so thoroughly known, that the writers of those times are able to recount 'how the poison was poured

into a dish of mushrooms, of which he was particularly fond; but whether it was that his senses were stupefied, or from the wine he had drunk, the effect of the poison was not immediately perceived'; at the same time, a relaxation of the bowels seemed to have been of service to him: Agrippina, therefore, became dismayed; but as her life was at stake, she thought little of the odium of her present proceedings, and called in the aid of Xenophon the physician, whom she had already implicated in her guilty purposes. It is believed that he, as if he purposed to assist Claudius in his efforts to vomit, put down his throat a feather besmeared with deadly poison; not unaware that in desperate villainies the attempt without the deed is perilous, while to ensure the reward they must be done effectually at once." From this account of Tacitus it is clear that Xenophon was called to his Imperial patient when the latter appeared to have eaten some poisonous food. He, as a physician, immediately did what would have been expected of him—namely, he endeavoured to induce vomiting (by tickling the patient's fauces with a feather). It is unlikely that any real evidence was forthcoming that he assisted the murder by introducing poison on the feather, or that he was in any way an accomplice in the crime.

Strictly speaking, under this paper's title, one might refer to various memorials and sepulchral monuments bearing inscriptions of medical interest. The famous epitaph on Dame Mary Page, in Bunhill Fields Burial Ground (London) records that she died in 1728, at the age of 55, and that she was tapped (*paracentesis abdominis*) sixty-six times in sixty-seven months, and "had taken away 240 gallons of water, without ever repining at her case, or ever fearing the operation." A similar epitaph on Mrs. Susanna Wood, in the graveyard of Bermondsey parish church, records that that lady died in 1810, aged 58, after a long illness, which she bore with the greatest fortitude: "she was tapped ninety-seven times, and had 461 gallons of water taken from her, without ever lamenting her case or fearing the operation." There is a sepulchral marble at Senlis, commemorating the death, in 1673, after the Cæsarean operation, of a woman who saved the life of her unborn child by voluntarily undergoing that operation; she herself died as the result, and thus by her death for the sake of her child, as the inscription states, "she succeeded in uniting Love and Death." Much grim humour of a homely sort has been displayed in epitaphs relating to the causes of death, but the genuineness of many of them may be doubted. There is, for instance, that on the poor old body, who "had two sore legs and a baddish cough,

But her legs it was that carried her off." Then there is one on the old woman who appeared "so cunning, While one leg kept still, the other kept running." The following are "chestnut" examples:—

"This little hero lying here
Was conquered by the diarrhœa."

"Here lie I and my four daughters,
Killed by drinking Cheltenham waters.
Had we but stuck to Epsom salts,
We wouldn't have been in these here vaults."

The next epitaph (on a baby) might well be applied to examples of excessive infantile mortality, of specific origin:—

"Since I am so quickly done for,
I wonder what I was begun for."

Death from gangrene of the foot commencing after the careless cutting of corns (which has not rarely occurred in senile diabetics and arteriosclerotics) is commemorated by a fanciful epitaph, beginning:—

"Here lie the bones of Richard Lawton,
Whose death was strangely brought on,
Trying one day his corns to mow off,
The razor slipped . . ."

J. D. Rolleston[1] refers to several strange causes of death mentioned in epigrams from the "Greek Anthology." A grimly humorous example of such epigrams is the following ("Anthol. Graec.," Tauchnitz edition, 1829, ix, No. 67): "A young man hung a garland on the column of his stepmother's tomb, thinking that in death her character had changed. But the column fell on the tomb and killed the young man. Children of a former marriage, beware your stepmother's grave!" The epigram by Diogenes Laertius (*ibid.*, vii, No. 112) on the peripatetic philosopher Lycon (third century B.C) is thus given by Rolleston: "No, by Zeus, we will not forget Lycon, whom gout killed; but what I marvel at most is that he who could only walk with the feet of others, traversed in a single night the long road to Hades."

One or two epitaphs refer to the "resurrectionist" period in the history of medical and surgical anatomy[2]:—

[1] *Proc. Roy. Soc. Med.*, 1914, vii (Section of the History of Medicine), pp. 34 *et seq.*

[2] See *Brit. Med. Journ.*, 1908, i, p. 1340, and *Lancet*, 1903, i, p. 899.

"Though once beneath the ground this corse was laid,
For use of surgeons it was thence conveyed.
Vain was the scheme to hide the impious theft—
The body taken, shroud and coffin left.
Ye wretches, who pursue this barbarous trade,
Your carcases in turn may be conveyed
Like this to some unfeeling surgeon's room;
Nor can they justly meet a better doom."

"Her body dissected by fiendish men,
Her bones anatomized.
Her soul we trust has risen to God,
A place where few physicians rise."

With these epitaphs referring to the old "body-snatching" days of the "resurrectionists" Hogarth's "Reward of Cruelty" (1751) may be compared, as it well illustrates the popular horror of the idea of post-mortem examinations in England during the eighteenth century. It is the caricature of the dissection of a criminal's body at Surgeons' Hall in Old Bailey, London. The rope by which the murderer ("Tom Nero") was hung at Tyburn is still around his neck, his intestines are being placed in a pail below the dissecting table, and a dog has taken possession of his heart. The skeletons of two recently executed criminals, labelled respectively "Macleane" (James Maclaine or Maclean, a noted "gentleman highwayman," hung at Tyburn in 1750), and "James Field" (executed for highway robbery early in 1751) adorn niches in the walls. Clearly, in this caricature the anatomists and surgeons who dissect the criminal's body were held out to youthful hooligans as bogies to children—namely, as additional instruments of (post-mortem!) punishment for the crimes committed by murderers, highwaymen, &c. This popular dread of being subjected to dissection after death recalls the mediæval horror of the body being "tortured" after death by being "eaten by worms"—a subject frequently referred to in mediæval and later poetry and art. An engraving of about 1480 by the "Meister I. A. M. von Zwolle" (the "Meister mit der Weberschütze") pictures Moses with the tables of the Ten Commandments in an upper compartment, and a skeleton-like corpse being "eaten by worms" in a lower compartment. The design was evidently intended to illustrate certain passages in "Ecclesiasticus" (x, 11, and xxviii, 6): "For when a man is dead, he shall inherit creeping things, beasts, and worms"; "Remember corruption and death, and abide in the commandments." To increase the horror of the subject mediæval and later art often magnified the worms into serpents. In a short Latin poem by Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (died 1109), included

in Migne's "Patrologiæ Cursus Completus," the poet speaks of a man dying "a second death" when his body is thus tortured ("cruciatur") after his "death proper":—

> "Nam caro mortalis, et quisquis ei famulatur
> Morte perit duplici, quia post obitum cruciatur."

After all, this idea of a "double death" is scarcely more far-fetched than Petrarch's poetical idea of a great man's "second death"—that is, when his tomb and monument decay and fall to pieces—and his "third death"—that is, when his writings are destroyed or forgotten. In his third dialogue "De Contemptu Mundi," Petrarch makes Saint Augustine quote the passages in question from his own (Petrarch's) Latin epic poem, "Africa":—

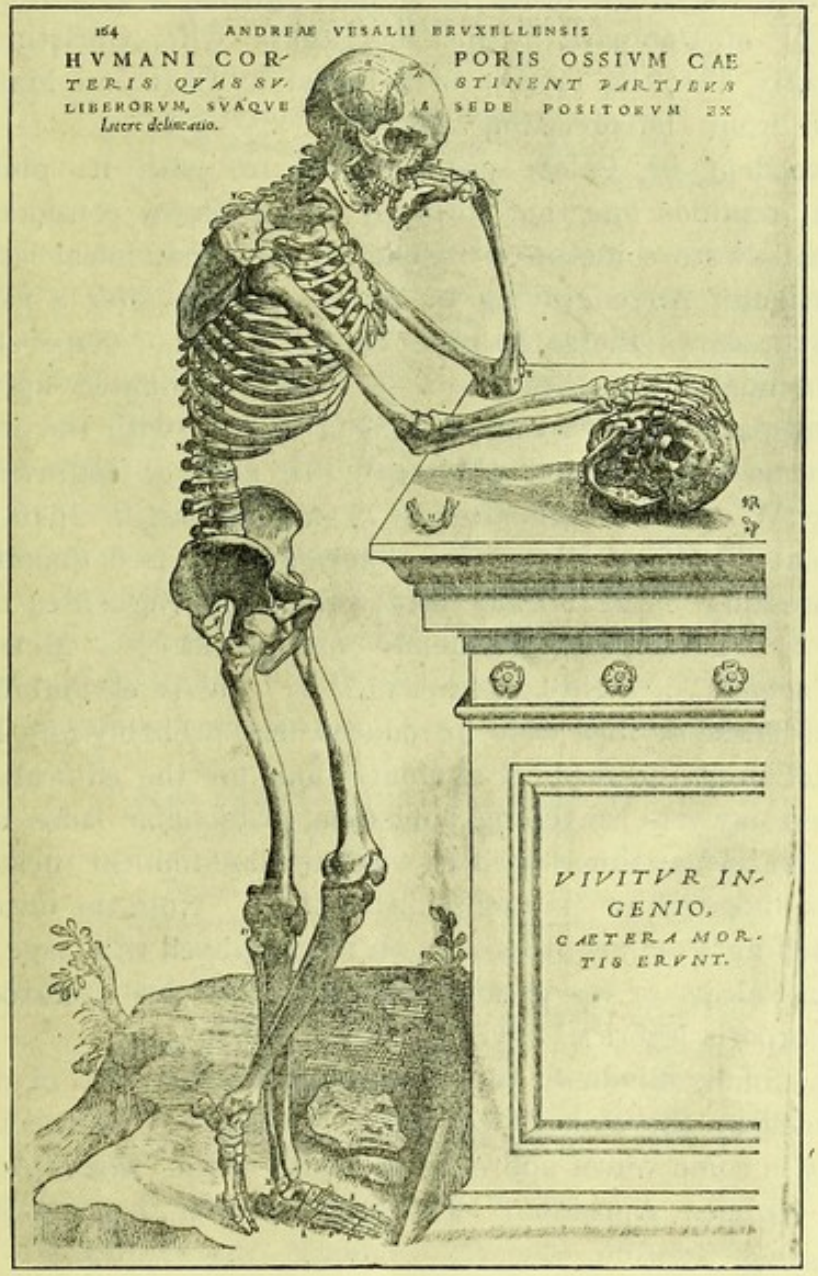
> "Mox ruet et bustum, titulusque in marmore sectus
> Occidet, hinc mortem patieris, nate, secundam.
> . . . . . libris autem morientibus, ipse
> Occumbes etiam: sic mors tibi tertia restat."

In works of art representing death-bed scenes the medical attendants have frequently been represented, and by caricaturists (Hogarth, &c.) not always in a light very creditable to the profession. But in one of the illustrations to the mediæval religious "text-book," entitled the "Ars Moriendi," or "Speculum Artis bene Moriendi," the doctor is depicted under very peculiar circumstances. The patient on his death-bed is being tempted by impatience, which for a time he cannot resist. In the British Museum block-book (printed in the Netherlands about 1460) he is shown as having already upset the table with the food and medicine on it, and is unceremoniously pushing the doctor away with his foot, whilst a lady (his wife?) appears (according to the words on the label) to be excusing him on account of his suffering. A demon with bat's wings, by the bed, rejoices at having been successful.[1]

A curious connexion between medicine and death is that illustrations of skeletons in medical anatomical works have sometimes been utilized by artists in designing figures of Death for medals and other works of art. Particularly employed in that way was a certain woodcut in Vesalius's famous anatomical work, "De Humani Corporis Fabrica," printed by J. Oporinus, at Basel, 1543 (p. 164). It represents a skeleton meditating over a skull and leaning on an altar, inscribed: "Vivitur

[1] Cf. F. P. Weber, loc. cit., pp. 48-55, also fig. 13 (after Lionel Cust), showing the "temptation by impatience," by the Master E. S.; the design is quite similar to the corresponding illustration in the British Museum block-book version of the "Ars Moriendi."

ingenio, caetera mortis erunt" (*see* figure). This design is by Jan von Calcar, a pupil of Titian, whose paintings were said to be almost indistinguishable from those of Titian himself. Jan von Calcar's design



Anatomical woodcut by Jan von Calcar, on p. 164 of the "Anatomy" of Vesalius, 1543.

evidently suggested the figure of Death (meditating over the apple of the garden of Paradise) in a stone relief of the Renaissance period, figured by J. von Schlosser ("Werke der Kleinplastik," Vienna, 1910, i,

plate 2). It likewise suggested the skeleton leaning on an altar on the reverse of certain medals of the Adolph Occos, especially the third physician of that name at Augsburg (died 1606)[1]; also the skeleton on the reverse of a Danish *memento mori* medal, dated 1634, supposed to commemorate the tragic death of Anna Cathrina, a daughter of King Christian IV of Denmark by his morganatic wife, Christina Munk; and indirectly, also, the reverse of a medal by Christian Maler, which was copied from the preceding medal.[2]

The woodcut by Calcar just referred to, with its philosophical inscription, reminds one that formerly philosophical considerations on life and death were sometimes introduced into anatomical lectures and demonstrations. An engraving by Andreas Stock after a painting by J. de Gheyn, shows Pieter Paaw or Pauw (Pavius), demonstrating in the Leiden anatomical theatre; a skeleton is mounted upright in a conspicuous part of the room, holding a banner with the inscription, "Mors ultima linea rerum" (Horace). In another engraving of the theatre, by W. Swanenburg after J. C. Woudanus, in 1610, skeletons are represented holding up *memento mori* and kindred quotations such as the aforesaid "Mors ultima linea rerum"; "Nascentes morimur" (Manilius); "Principium moriendi natale est"; "Mors sceptra ligonibus aequat"; "Nosce te ipsum"; "Pulvis et umbra sumus" (Horace). These sayings were introduced less probably for the benefit and instruction of the medical students than for the edification of the learned men, lawyers, travelling noblemen, fashionable ladies and sight-seers, who in former times used to visit the anatomical theatres out of curiosity or in search of emotional distractions. Note the miscellaneous crowd watching Vesalius dissecting, on the engraved title-page (designed by Jan von Calcar) of his great anatomical work, just referred to, "De Humani Corporis Fabrica" (Basel, 1543).

I might finally allude to the consolation for the idea of death said to be afforded by the evils of old age and disease. Gout is mentioned in this way in some verses addressed to Death in the "Greek Anthology" ("Anthol. Graec., Appendix," Tauchnitz edition, Leipzig, 1829, No. 196):—

Ἦλθες ἐμῆς ζωῆς γλυκερώτερος ὅς μ' ἀπέλυσας
Νούσων, καὶ καμάτων, καὶ μογερὰς ποδάγρας.

[1] *See* F. P. Weber, loc. cit., pp. 267, 268, and fig. 122 on p. 443. Adolph Occo III (1524-1606) was a numismatist as well as a physician, and was doubtless a friend of the princely and art-loving Fuggers, of Augsburg, of his time.

[2] Cf. F. P. Weber, loc. cit., pp. 273-276; also figs. 56 and 57.

Compare the lines by Agathios ("Anthol. Graec. Palat.," x, 69) and the following Latin epitaph inscriptions:—

"Quod superest homini, requiescunt dulciter ossa,
Nec sum sollicitus ne subito escuriam,
Et podagram (*sic*) careo, nec sum pensionibus arra,
Et gravis aeterno perfruor hospitio."
("Corp. Inscr. Lat.," vi, No. 7193*a*.)

"Morborum vitia et vitae mala maxima fugi.
Nunc careo poenis; pace fruor placidâ."
("Corp. Inscr. Lat.," v, No. 5278.)

If we pass on to Christian writings we find that Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (died 1109), in the longer poem, "De Contemptu Mundi," printed in Migne's "Pathologiae Cursus Completus," almost overdraws the ills that human flesh is heir to. But we must remember that very much less was known in Anselm's days than now in regard to the medical and surgical relief of aches and pains of all kinds. Nowadays pain can frequently be removed by ordinary rational methods which formerly lasted very long, or was only escaped from by death. Surgical anæsthesia—the "death of pain"—together with surgical asepsis and antisepsis—the "death of microbes"—often enables modern healing art to ward off death and "kill" the cause of pain. Following is the portion of Anselm's poem to which I wish to draw attention:—

"Si nunc aspicias animalia caetera quaeque;
Invenies tantis subdita nulla malis.
Nos capitis laterumque dolor, febrisque fatigat:
Totum hominem tollit lepra, chiragra manus,
Dira podagra pedes; oculos ophthalmia caecat:
Obsidet arctati pectoris asthma vias.
Laesa suos claudit lithiâ vesica meatus:
Viscera torquentur, parsque pudenda, colon.
Dens dolet, aut cervix; os torpet; lingua ligatur.
Splen tumet; aegrotat pulmo, laborat hepar.
Cor marcet; renes patiuntur; solvitur alvus;
Brachia nil possunt; languida crura jacent."

In like manner, Pope Innocent III (died 1216), in his prose writing, "De Contemptu Mundi" (Migne's edition), pictures (with some humour) the supposed evils of old age. In fact, he gives us a kind of caricature of its infirmities: "Si quis autem ad senectutem processerit, statim cor ejus affligitur, et caput concutitur, languet spiritus et fetet anhelitus, facies rugatur, et statura curvatur, caligant oculi, et vacillant articuli, nares effluent, et crines defluunt, tremit tactus, et deperit actus, dentes putrescunt, et aures surdescunt. Senex facile

provocatur, difficile revocatur; cito credit, et tarde discredit, tenax et cupidus, tristis et querulus, velox ad loquendum, tardus ad audiendum, sed non tardus ad iram: laudat antiquos, spernit modernos: vituperat praesens, commendat praeteritum, suspirat et anxiatur, torpet et infirmatur. Audi Horatium poetam: 'Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda.' Porro nec senes contra juvenem glorientur, nec insolescant juvenes contra senem, quia quod sumus iste fuit, erimus quandoque quod hic est."

Note (p. 22).—In regard to Petrarch's curiously far-fetched idea of a great man's second and third deaths, the following simple passages may be quoted by way of contrast:—

"And though long sunk from sight, I know
The Glory of your afterglow
Will never wholly fade."

"So, when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men."

EXCESSIVE FEAR OF DEATH AS A MORBID PHENOMENON.

La Rochefoucauld said that man could no more look steadily at death than at the sun. But certainly man may, without harm to himself, see death or ideas on death reflected in works of art. Just so, in the ancient legend, Perseus was able, without being turned into stone, to behold the head of the Gorgon Medusa, reflected in the mirror given to him by Athene; and thus he succeeded in slaying the dreadful monster.

A study like the present one to some extent increases one's knowledge and brings with it a certain amount of satisfaction, though neither this nor any other study can quite place one in the position described by Virgil:—

> "Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas;
> Atque metus omnes, et inexorabile fatum
> Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari!"

The fancied terrors of death have been naturally more frequently illustrated by engravings, drawings, and paintings than by medals, engraved gems, &c. The idea of representing the decaying body as being occupied by long worms, snakes, toads, &c. (i.e., as being "eaten by worms," according to a phrase still in use in some countries), was doubtless chiefly derived from Ecclesiasticus (x, 11), "For when a man is dead he shall inherit creeping things, beasts, and worms." An engraving (alluded to on p. 21) of about 1480, by the "Meister I. A. M. von Zwolle" (the "Meister mit der Weberschütze"), represents Moses with the tables of the ten commandments in an upper compartment, and a skeleton-like corpse being "eaten by worms" in a lower compartment. This design is evidently meant to illustrate another particular passage in Ecclesiasticus (xxviii, 6), "Remember corruption and death and abide in the commandments." Snakes were preferred to worms in order that the artist might magnify the horror of

his subject.[1] Even when Death was represented by a skeleton or a shrivelled figure of skin and bones (the German *Hautskelett*) in life-like attitude, the snakes and toads were often not omitted. Thus, in a German fifteenth century woodcut (by an unknown artist) of "Death in the Jaws of Hell" (reproduced in the "Catalogue of Early German and Flemish Woodcuts in the British Museum," by Campbell Dodgson, 1903, vol. i, pl. 2), Death, who is represented by a shrivelled figure of skin and bones (in the mouth of a monster who is vomiting up flames), is accompanied by a snake and has a toad in place of the conventional fig-leaf.[2] So also, in the fifteenth-century engraving of "Death warning a Youth," by the "Meister des Amsterdamer Kabinets,"[3] the lifelike shrivelled figure representing Death is accompanied by a toad and snake.

I have elsewhere[4] referred at some length to the horror-inspiring aspect of *memento mori* religious art and to the ghastly spectacle of decay and putrefaction revealed in pictures by Valdes-Leal, &c. A small panel-painting in the possession of Dr. Pietro Capparoni, of Rome,[5] seems to rival all others in this respect. It represents a man's head in a state of putrefaction and being "eaten by worms" and coleoptera. The head rests on a closed book; by the side is a winged hourglass, and above is suspended a small iron lamp, such as might be used to illuminate a dismal vault. In the upper right corner is the inscription from Ecclesiasticus xli, 1, "(Mors) amara habenti pacem in substantiis suis." The picture does not seem to me a very early one. In this connexion one may well remember the lines of Edward Young ("Night Thoughts," 1742) :—

> "The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;
> The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;
> These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
> The terrors of the living, not the dead."

[1] In regard to the spontaneous generation of worms and snakes from decaying corpses, an interesting passage is that quoted by Jules Guiart from Pliny the Younger ("Hist. Nat.," lib. x, cap. 66): "Anguem ex medullâ hominis spinale gigni, accepimus a multis. Pleraque occultâ et caecâ origine proveniunt, etiam in quadrupedum genere." Guiart thinks that the mediæval representation of decaying corpses being "eaten by worms" was preferred by the artists of the time as being more horror-inspiring (and therefore having a more powerfully *memento mori* admonitory effect) than the representation of dry skeletons. This is extremely probable, and moreover, the artist's deficient anatomical (osteological) knowledge was somewhat hidden by the ragged skin which covered the skeleton and partially concealed such mistakes as those of the Meister von Zwolle, who, in the above-mentioned design, placed the shoulder-blades of the skeleton-like figure in front of the thorax instead of on the back.

[2] *See* F. P. Weber, loc. cit., p. 209, fig. 32.

[3] *See* F. P. Weber, loc. cit., p. 34.

[4] *See* F. P. Weber, loc. cit., pp. 56-68.

[5] *See* F. P. Weber, loc. cit., p. 211, fig. 33.

The attributes and pomp of death may frighten more than death itself. Cf. Bacon's "Essays": "Of Death," and his reference to a supposed passage on the terror of the pomp of death in the writings of an ancient philosopher: "Pompa mortis magis terret quam mors ipsa." Yet the "pomp of death," in the form of a funeral or funeral procession, has been appreciated by great rulers (the Emperor Charles V, &c.); it is a spectacle still dearly loved by a certain class of the community, and in the hearts of many servant-girls and others is only rivalled by the pomp of weddings. The immense importance attached to burial and funeral rites by the ancient Greeks and Romans can hardly be realized nowadays. Thus, it was considered a man's supremely "pious" duty to see to the burial of relatives, friends, and companions in arms. The idea of Pompey's corpse lying (for a time) unburied on the Egyptian shore formed the subject of a fine Latin epigram by the Italian poet, Francesco Molza (died 1544). Of this John Fiske quoted the following (somewhat defective) paraphrase:—

> "We grieve not, Pompey, that to thee
> No earthly tomb was given;
> All lands subdued, nought else was free
> To shelter thee but Heaven!"

The relative fear or fearlessness of death has formed the subject of many epigrams and passages from famous authors. Casca, in Shakespeare's "Julius Cæsar," says: "Why, he that cuts off twenty years of life, cuts off so many years of fearing death." Again, in the same play (act ii, scene 2), Cæsar says:—

> "Cowards die many times before their deaths;
> The valiant never taste of death but once.
> Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
> It seems to me most strange that men should fear,
> Seeing that death, a necessary end,
> Will come, when it will come."

Lucilius, the Latin satirical poet of the second century B.C., wrote (translated by W. Cowper):—

> "Far happier are the dead, methinks, than they
> Who look for death, and fear it every day."

Seneca (Epist., 69) spoke of the folly of dying from the fear of death ("Stultitia est timore mortis mori"), and Robert Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy" (1621), quoted as a "true saying," "Timor mortis morte pejor." This particular point is well illustrated by one of Thomas Rowlandson's coloured caricatures (1792), entitled "The Hypochondriac." The miserable patient, seated in a chair, is a prey to

fears. He sees a hearse and a skeleton (Death) threatening to spear him, whilst a ghastly figure personifying Suicide offers him a pistol or a rope to kill himself with. Francis Bacon (in the essay already referred to) allows that the pomp and circumstance attending deaths make the idea of death terrible; "groanes and convulsions and a discoloured face, and friends weeping and blackes (i.e., hired mourners?) and obsequies, and the like"; but he also reminds one that the fear of death is not strong enough to prevent it being mastered by various human passions, including revenge, love, and honour.

In regard to the fear of death, much depends on a man's philosophical and religious ideas on life and death, but very much depends also on his age, his aims and aspirations, his surroundings, his means and opportunities for (and power of) enjoyment, his sensibility towards pain and grief, and lastly, not least, his present mental and bodily state of health. Sir Richard Baker (1568-1645) said, "Health is the wealth of wealth"; and Ralph Waldo Emerson's exclamation—"Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of kings and emperors look ridiculous"—conveys much the same meaning as Martial's well-known line, "Non est vivere sed valere vita."[1]

I have alluded[2] elsewhere to the English finger-ring inscription—"Breath paine, Death gaine"—and to the great fresco painting (fourteenth century) of the "Triumph of Death" in the Campo Santo of Pisa, where the poor and wretched are represented praying to die, but invoking death in vain. The same idea is expressed on the fifteenth-century fresco of the "Triumph of Death" in the Palazzo Sclafani at Palermo. There Death is represented triumphing over pope, kings, and the great of the world. With his darts he has just struck down a lady and a youth in the midst of social festivities, but the poor and wretched implore him in vain to release them from their misery. With such ideas and designs the following Latin inscriptions on sundials might be compared: "Afflictis lentae, celeres gaudentibus horae," and "Felicibus

[1] This hendacasyllabic line from Martial ("Epig." vi, 70, 15) was adopted as a motto by the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London (afterwards merged into the Royal Society of Medicine); but, like many aphorisms, it is neither true in the literal sense nor altogether true in the sense which was originally intended—namely, "Real life is the being in health, not merely the being alive." How far, in this latter sense, it is a true saying depends, of course, on what is meant by "health" and "real life." Some persons are satisfied with life, and make it not only enjoyable to themselves but even useful to others, though they can hardly be said to possess "health." To such persons, indeed, it seems as if, owing to their physical deficiency, more of the stream of vital energy has been directed into intellectual channels, thus increasing their powers of observation, their love of Nature, their sympathy with others, and their highest mental enjoyments of life.

[2] *See* F. P. Weber, loc. cit., p. 123.

brevis, miseris vita longa." Cf. also: "O Death, acceptable is thy sentence unto the needy, and unto him whose strength faileth, that is now in the last age, and is vexed with all things, and to him that despaireth and hath lost patience" (Ecclesiasticus xli, 2); "It is better to die once for all (ἅπαξ) than to suffer all our days" (Aeschylus, *Prom. Vinct.*, lines 769, 770); and various epigrams from the "Sinngedichte" (seventeenth century) of Friedrich von Logau:—

"Ich fürchte nicht den Tod, der mich zu nehmen kümmt;
Ich fürchte mehr den Tod, der mir die meinen nimmt."

"Tod ist ein langer Schlaf; Schlaf ist ein kurzer Tod.
Die Noth, die lindert der, und jener tilgt die Noth."

"Der ärgster Tod ist der, der gar zu langsam tödtet;
Die ärgste Noth ist die, die gar zu lange nöthet."

"Der Tag hat grosse Müh, die Nacht hat süsse Ruh;
Das Leben bringt uns Müh, der Tod die Ruhe zu."

The last couplet may be compared with the well-known lines of Heinrich Heine:—

"Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht,
Das Leben ist der Schwüle Tag.
Es dunkelt schon, mich schläfert,
Der Tag hat mich müd' gemacht."

It is, however, by no means true that aged infirm persons and weary labourers, who believe they are tired of life, always welcome the approach of death. Amongst ancient writings, Aesop's fable of "Death and the Woodcutter" may be remembered in this connexion, and so may the passage in Homer's "Odyssey" (Book xi), where the shade of Achilles in the nether world tells Ulysses that it were better to be a poor labourer's hireling amongst the living than a king amongst the dead. Compare also La Fontaine's fable, "La Mort et le Mourant"; in his "La Mort et le Bûcheron" he writes:—

"Plutôt souffrir que mourir,
C'est la devise des hommes."

J. S. Le Fanu, in a beautiful passage of one of his best known novels, likens the unwillingness of the old persons to die and their clinging to a sometimes even painful life to the unwillingness of tired-out children to say good-night and go to bed; and on the same subject one may call to mind the lightly written introductory chapter of Claude Tillier's ever-popular novel, "Mon Oncle Benjamin." Thomas Moore's lines ("Odes of Anacreon") were, however, not meant to refer specially to aged persons—

"Still as death approaches nearer,
The joys of life are sweeter, dearer."

A great deal has been written by ancient and modern authors in various languages and in various parts of the world to remedy unreasonable fear and to offer consolation for the idea of one's own approaching death and for the death of one's friends. Fortunately (as already mentioned), the near approach of natural death is generally by no means so terrible to the dying individual himself as it is still popularly supposed to be, and as it often is to his loving friends at the death-bed. All physicians, nurses, and others, whose duties have necessitated their frequent presence at death scenes, more or less strongly corroborate this statement; and to support it I need only refer, amongst others, to the writings of Sir Henry Halford, Sir Benjamin Brodie, Sir W. S. Savory,[1] Sir William Osler,[2] Professor H. Nothnagel,[3] and Professor C. A. Ewald,[4] as well as to Colonel T. H. Lewin's work, "Life and Death: being an authentic Account of the Deaths of One Hundred Celebrated Men and Women," Lond., 1910. Very different is all such testimony from many modern ideas about "last hours" ("Mourir n'est rien, c'est notre dernière heure!"), and from those suggested by the illustrations of the "Ars Moriendi" (the mediæval religious handbook on how to "die well,") and other orthodox teaching of the mediæval Christian Church.

[1] *See* "On Life and Death," Lond., 1863, p. 178.

[2] *See* "Science and Immortality," Lond., 1904, p. 36.

[3] *See* "Das Sterben" (2nd ed., Vienna, 1908, p. 52) by Professor Hermann Nothnagel. His own last illness in 1905 was apparently attended by much distress, but in "angina pectoris," from which he suffered, the ending is sometimes so sudden that, in reference to it, Sir W. Osler (in one of his writings) has quoted Newman's lines on the sudden death of his mother:—

"One moment here, the next she trod
The viewless mansions of her God."

Nothnagel kept a diary of his last hours, and another medical sufferer from "angina pectoris," Dr. G. H. R. Dabbs (died 1913), did so also.

[4] Ewald, "Ueber Altern und Sterben," 1913, p. 30.

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