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Contributors

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CHAPTER VII.

AMONG THE FACULTY.

"An ignorant doctor is the aide-de-camp of death."

ABU AVICENNA.

"En fait de médecine, nous sommes tous des aveugles,
Mais les médecins sont les *quinzevingts*."

CHAMFORT.

"His pills as thick as hand-grenades they flew,
And where they fell as certainly they slew."

ROSCOMMON.

FORTUNATELY for myself, I have had so little to do practically with medical men, or—*absit omen*—with medical women, that it is little personal information I can impart as to bygone M.D.'s.

My early recollections of a "doctor," as such, are associated with the periodical nursery visits of Mr. (by courtesy, Dr.) Pullen, a typical country practitioner, who would probably be still remembered, if there were any surviving frequenters of Tunbridge Wells of that date, as having his *habitat* on the Pantiles. He was a heavy-looking man, past middle age, always wore black clothes and a white "choker," and used to drive a gig, with a small boy to hold the horse when he got down. To the best of my recollection, his countenance was the reverse of intelligent, and he made himself obnoxious to us, as children, because he arbitrarily pronounced against the use of boiled milk as nursery diet, in consequence of which we were condemned, even in winter, to cold raw milk.

Doctors on
the Pantiles.

If I mention this little matter, it is to show up the

absurdities of medical opinion; because at the present day it is the other way up, and doctors forbid the consumption of any milk that is *not* boiled.

"Doctor"
Prince.

The medical responsibilities of Tunbridge Wells after Pullen's departure were shared between Dr. Mayo and Mr. Prince; the former seldom sent for, probably because of his fee; and the latter,—styled "doctor" by courtesy, as before,—took (perfectly fair) advantage of the practice thus thrown in his way. Prince was rather below the middle height, and by no means stout, so that, being quick and active, he was not inaptly likened to a parched pea. Though not quite a youth, he was of a younger, brisker, more wideawake type than his predecessor Pullen. He was also more gentlemanly, and got on much better, both socially and professionally, with the elderly ladies, who formed so large a contingent in the society of the place. Men being at a premium, a man whom it was possible for them to ask to afternoon tea-fights, "smalls-and-earlies," little card-, and gossip-parties, and the other mild amusements in which they indulged, was an acquisition, and thus Prince soon obtained an advantageous position in the "Wells" society, as well as in local medical practice; it was, therefore, at least partly, through favourable circumstances that Prince became *facile princeps* in this undisputed field. He was clever enough, too, to make the most of his opportunity, and diplomatically assumed the knowing air and self-reliant tone which generally succeed in inspiring a corresponding degree of confidence.

But, alas! for those who put their trust in princes, the Prince of the Pantiles, though he reigned for some time, finally disappeared in *his* turn, and was succeeded by a Dr. Hargreaves, another of the parched-pea type, and quite as assumptive of importance and experience as Prince.

Hargreaves soon ingratiated himself into favour, and became popular in "the Wells." One wealthy old lady, widow of a large landed proprietor in the immediate neigh-

bourhood, took to him at once, constantly invited him to her house, and having a morbid dread of being buried too soon, chartered his services—against the time when she should be *supposed* defunct—to cut off her head before she was put into her coffin; for this precautionary operation she left him a specified sum in her will. She was a charming old lady, and her children's parties—partly within doors, partly in her grounds—are among my earliest and pleasantest recollections. Sad to say, these and their giver came to an end one day, and she went where good old ladies go!

Now, let testators and testatrixes note that the law knows much better than they, what they themselves want, and although (happily, perhaps, for her) the old lady went out of the world in peaceful confidence that Mr. Hargreaves would decapitate her according to their mutual understanding, the law interposed, and said the thing could not be done. I will not positively assert how the matter was compromised, but I think the law conceded the tip of the little finger, and this probably answered all the purpose.

A representative physician of the past, tolerably well known in London, and our family-doctor, was Dr. Samuel Merriman—too dignified to be a merry man in any other sense, though, to do him justice, he was always cheerful and pleasant. He figures in my recollection as “one of the olden time,” and rigidly maintained all the distinctive insignia of his profession—the gold-rimmed spectacles and gold-headed cane*—the staff of medical propriety,—the traditional gold repeater, with its “pulse dial,” its bunch of gold seals and chain attached; and he sported the white tie and frilled shirt-front, as well as the thin white hair,

Dr. Samuel
Merriman.

* The original intention of the medical gold-headed cane was to provide a protection from infection; the knob, which contained aromatic vinegar being perforated so that the doctor could hold it to his nose while at the patient's bedside. This vinegar was called *Vinaigre des quatre voleurs*, from the confession of four miscreants,—who sacrilegiously plundered the corpses of persons who died of the plague

Sir Henry
Holland.

which helped to make him venerable. You would have known him for a doctor anywhere; and he drove about in the legendary chariot and pair.* Dr. Merriman's manner was as professional as the rest of him; it was wonderful how accurately were adjusted in it, due proportions of "the grave and gay, the lively and severe." Sir Henry Holland married his daughter, and he and Sir Astley Cooper were occasionally called in for consultations at our house. They, too, adhered to the prescribed conventionalities of their profession; but Sir Astley (probably thinking himself distinguished enough to mark out a deviation of his own) occasionally manifested a sense of humour, though he kept it strictly within becoming limits. He had the advantage of an imposing presence and of a fine intelligent-looking head, which had drawn to him the notice of George IV., who thought a great deal of him; and the Royal confidence, together with his frequentation of the Court, no doubt contributed to the ascendancy he assumed among his colleagues, and the importance attached to his opinion by the public. As a rule, he assumed a grave and important air, and when he joked, it was with lofty condescension.

at Marseilles—that they had escaped contagion by covering their noses and mouths with cloths saturated with aromatic vinegar. A doctor of that day is thus described:—

"Physic, of old, her entry made
Beneath the immense full bottom's shade,
While the gold cane, with solemn pride,
To each sagacious nose applied,
Seemed but a necessary prop
To bear the weight of wig a-top."

Dr. Paris used to wonder why the gold-headed cane had become so rare, and used to say he had seen but one, which had originally belonged to a celebrated physician at Exeter, under James I., and later to Dr. Wm. Musgrave of Exeter, at the end of the seventeenth century. Physicians' wigs came in with Charles II. and lasted to a late period of George III.'s reign, the last who wore one, being Dr. Revell Reynolds, who died 1811.

* There is a story of an M.D. who was starting a new yellow chariot, of which he was not a little proud. Calling a friend's attention to it, he asked him how he liked the colour. "Ah!" said he, "I saw you driving in it the other day, and thought it looked very much like a mustard-pot with the spoon inside!"

One day, when he was at our house, mention happened to be made by some one of a wonderful cure effected by a quack; "in fact, so wonderful," added the narrator, "that it reads like the invention of some penny-a-liner."

Sir Astley
Cooper.

"Say penny-a-liar," retorted Sir Astley, irritated perhaps by the imputed success of a pirate on the high seas of medical enterprise.

My father had a great opinion of Sir Astley's ability, and consulted him in preference to any other medical man of the time; but it was in the days of "bleeding," and Cooper seems to have had frequent recourse to it as a remedy. He once fetched him down into Herts to attend one of his brothers, who had been thrown from a chaise, remaining insensible for several hours. Perhaps this *was* a case for the lancet; anyway, Sir Astley immediately produced his, and I am afraid to say how many ounces of blood he thought it necessary to take; *but* the patient ultimately recovered! and lived forty or more years after. The recovery may have been due to the treatment, or to the resistance of an excellent constitution; but whether as an effect of the concussion, or as a result of the bleeding, from that time to the day of his death, my uncle entirely lost the senses of taste and smell, and could not distinguish between the scent of a rose and the odour of an onion.

George IV. seems to have discovered the surgical proficiency of Sir Astley (or, as he then was, Mr.) Cooper, and kept his eye on him; for, on his desiring a professional opinion as to the safety of removing a tumour from the crown (not of England, but) of his head, he sent for Cooper in preference to any other surgeon. To that gentleman's surprise, the King said to him, "I know you, Mr. Cooper; I have seen you in your little chariot."

After a consultation with Sir Everard Home and Brodie, for whom His Majesty had sent to meet Cooper at Windsor, it was decided that the operation should be deferred. At this, the King was much disappointed, as the tumour was

increasing, and he objected to its unsightliness. This was in 1820, and in the spring of the following year the King, still anxious about the matter, sent Sir Benjamin Bloomfield to bring Cooper down to Brighton.

Cooper slept at the Pavilion, and was startled to see His Majesty come into his room at one o'clock in the morning, saying, in an impatient tone,

"I am now ready, and I wish you to remove this thing from my head."

"Sire," answered the surgeon, "not for the world, now; your Majesty's life is too important to have such a thing done in a corner. Lady ——," he added, "died of erysipelas after such an operation; and what would the world say if this were to be fatal? No; too much depends upon your Majesty's life to suffer me, in the middle of the night, and in a retired part of the Pavilion, to perform an operation which, however trifling in itself, might by possibility be followed by fatal consequences."

Perhaps the surgeon had in his mind's eye the fatal operation on another King's head!

The King replied hastily, "This is the second time I have been disappointed."

"Yes, Sire," answered Cooper. "I am sorry for it; but I should not choose to do it unless Sir E. Home, Mr. Cline, and Mr. Brodie were present."

"Well," said the King, "I respect Cline, and I daresay he respects me, though we do not set our horses together in politics."

"Perhaps not, your Majesty," replied Cooper; "but your best policy will be to have his assistance in surgery."

"Then I *will* have it done as soon as I return to town," said the King, as he withdrew.

On the return of the Court to London, Cooper went to the levée, and the King said to him, "How do you do, Cooper?" adding, "Remember, next Tuesday."

Cooper seems to have felt very nervous over the affair;

for he called at once on Lord Liverpool, and asked him to persuade the King to let Home do the operation, alleging that, as he was Sergeant-Surgeon, it would be according to medical etiquette. Lord Liverpool said these professional conventionalities must give way to the King's preference; but Cooper, being at this time subject to sudden fits of vertigo, was apprehensive of interruption to the operation by the possible supervening of an attack. Next day Home informed him that it was he himself who was to do the operation, and it would be on Wednesday, when Halford, Tierney, Home, Cline, and Brodie were to meet at Carlton House. All was accordingly arranged for Home to be the operator; when, the morning having arrived, and the surgeons having all met, Halford was called out of the room, and on returning told Cooper *he* had been fixed on by the King, who immediately after entered, and before Cooper—who had not even brought his instruments—had recovered from his consternation, the King had shaken hands with him and informed him that *he* was ready.

There was now no time for further discussion, for the King immediately desired to know where he was to sit.

After lancing the tumour, Cooper proceeded to detach it from the scalp, and "it took up a great deal of time on the whole:" the edges of the wound were brought together, and lint and plaister applied.

It is to be regretted that the duration of the operation was not recorded.

The King appears to have borne it with resolution and calmness, and when it was finished asked how the tumour was called. On being told it was a *steatome*, he remarked,

"Well, I hope it will *stay at home* now I have got rid of it."

The Royal patient went on well till the Saturday following, when he came in to the medical men and complained of not having slept all night, adding, "I am d——d bad this morning, and my head is sore all over."

Cooper immediately apprehended erysipelas and the possible death of the Royal patient, especially as, after his third visit that day, the King appeared no better. Next morning, however, he found His Majesty with his feet up; one of them was red with gout, but his head had recovered its normal condition—an immense relief to the operator, as may readily be supposed. From this time the wound healed rapidly.

A fortnight after, the King said to him, "Lord Liverpool has promised to make you a baronet, but I shall do it myself."

Besides this honour, the King sent him a magnificent silver *épergne*, designed by himself, and for which he paid five hundred guineas.

Sir Astley had been in the habit of passing the Sunday—*i.e.*, from Saturday to Monday—at his seat in Herts, but on the Saturday, that followed the King's operation, being the critical day, he remained in town, always dreading the appearance of erysipelas, and was in the act of expressing his fears to his nephew, when a hurried summons came from Carlton House for him to visit the King immediately.

"There!" said he, in great agitation, "you may depend it is as I apprehended"; and immediately set off.

On his return his nephew ran to meet him to ascertain how matters stood.

"Oh! a mere nothing; he is going on very well. But tell me, do you see anything singular in my appearance?"

"Well," answered his nephew, "you might as well have put on a clean shirt and a white cravat, or at least have washed your hands before waiting on His Majesty."

The fact being that he had performed a slight operation just before he was called away, and some blood had stained the cuff of his shirt.

"God bless me, so I ought," said he, looking at himself in the glass. "The King is very particular; he was lying on a couch under a canopy, with a red turban on his head,

and after looking at me I saw displeasure in his face ; this accounts for it."

Sir Astley was fond of occasionally shortening a long evening, when in the country, by playing at whist, but he never consciously joined any table where the points were higher than a shilling.

His nephew used to relate that "one night, when he was at Hatfield, he was requested by the late Lady Salisbury, grandmother of the present Premier (1891) to make up four in a rubber. Sir Astley readily consented, and was soon involved in all its mysteries, paying more than usual attention, from his knowledge of his partner's experience. Notwithstanding his care, he lost seven points, for which he supposed he had forfeited seven shillings, and was therefore not a little discomfited when told they had been playing half-guinea points. He was more especially annoyed from the idea that his ill success in the game might have sacrificed his partner's money as well as his own ; but the Marchioness most good-naturedly attributed their ill-fortune to the badness of their cards, not to Sir Astley's want of skill. He could not, however, be induced to play another rubber."

In Sir Astley's diary occurs the following entry illustrative of his sentiments on gambling :—

"Wiesbaden is like Spa, a place of riding and walking in the morning, dining at the *table d'hôte* in the middle of the day, and promenading or dancing in the evening. In all these places gaming is the great resource for the idle ; but it is quite melancholy and sickening to see men throw away their time and their money at *Rouge-et-noir* or *Roulette*, with at least twenty to one against them, and in some games much more. Tossing up five-franc pieces would be a far more rational amusement as, at any rate, the chances are equal."

As an instance of the *revirement* every one of us must have noted in the matter of medical treatment, I may men-

tion seeing a patient suffering under a bronchial attack treated by Mr. Aiken, on principles precisely the reverse of those on which, thirty years before, the same complaint was met by Sir Charles Clarke and Dr. Granville. In both cases the patient happened to recover, so that one is tempted to ask whether the recovery was in spite, or in consequence, of the systems respectively adopted.

This apparent perversity of medical opinion is very startling. How many theories have we not seen—urged as “vitally important” at one time, tatooed as absolutely detrimental a few years later, and replaced by systems diametrically opposed to them! Yet, accustomed as we are to these revulsions in science generally, the changes in medical treatment ought scarcely to surprise us. All practical applications of science are virtually experiments; at the same time it is difficult for the survivors of friends who were the victims of such experiments, to remember with calmness, that they stood by and saw them hustled out of the world by a process which they are now told to believe could not but have proved fatal.

It has long been the fashion to insert in the announcements of marriages, the names of the rev. gentleman or gentlemen by whom the indissoluble knot was tied; how would it be, if, in the announcements of deceases, the names of the physicians who assisted Death in his work, were, in like manner, stated?

Lady Holland once asked her doctor whether the remorse medical men must experience, on account of their many fatal mistakes, did not far outweigh the satisfaction procured them by their cures.

“No,” he replied, “I think it is quite the reverse. For example, I hope I shall cure you a great many times before I kill you.”

The helplessness of a patient in the hands of his doctor was grievously illustrated in the case of Lord Byron; who, however, protested as long as he retained any power of

resistance, against what he knew to be wrong treatment. It was only when wearied out by the opposition of those about him, who took it for granted that the doctor must know best, that he unwillingly yielded.

The Duke of Kent was hurried out of the world in a precisely similar way, by a similar ignoramus. I heard another pathetic story of this kind—though not a case of bleeding to death—from a lady I once met when travelling. She was a *materfamilias*, and having been called suddenly to Eton to her eldest boy, taken with an epidemic that had broken out there, she left directions that a “black draught” ordered by the apothecary for a younger child, should be duly administered on the following morning. As the child could not overcome his repugnance to the horrible compound (I have an idea that it has at last become obsolete), the nurse appealed to his father, who, finding the poor little fellow obdurate in his refusal, and believing it to be his duty to insist, had recourse to superior force, and regardless of cries and struggles, succeeded in making him swallow the “doctor’s stuff.”

The effect was such that a terrible suspicion crossed the distracted father’s mind, but it was only too late that it became a dreadful certainty—the black draught was *not* even “black draught;” the liquid he had forcibly poured down his child’s throat was neither more nor less than 2 oz. of opium, which the druggist’s assistant had bottled up by mistake.

Though no blame could attach to the father’s act, the recollection of the scene and of the dead child, whose refusal then seemed to have been prophetic, haunted the unhappy man day and night, and he survived but a short time.

Reverting to the changes which medical ideas have undergone, I may mention having been told by a retired medical practitioner, who ultimately attained a very extensive practice, that although then eighty-four, he retained a vivid remem-

brance of an incident which occurred in very early life, when he was articled to a country apothecary. The latter was, one day, sent for in all haste to attend "a gentleman who had just had an apoplectic fit." The gig was brought round, and the young apprentice accompanied his master, who, of course, carried his case of instruments in his pocket. Arrived at the house, the apothecary proceeded forthwith to bleed the helpless patient, desiring his young assistant to keep his finger on the pulse, and report its condition.

"Weaker, sir," was the first reply. A few moments after, in response to a repetition of the inquiry, he had to answer, "*Still weaker*;" next time it was, "*Considerably weaker*;" and at last, white with terror, he gasped out, "I can't feel it *at all*, sir!"

"Ah!" sighed the doctor, "I was afraid we were too late; I hadn't time to take enough blood."

As for the hapless widow, she was inconsolable. "Only to think," said the poor soul, wringing her wrinkled hands, "if I'd only had the sense to send for you sooner, he might have been saved!"

As there was nothing *more* to be done, the doctor and his assistant took their leave. The former drove homeward with a preoccupied air, then, suddenly turning to his young companion and pupil (!) he exclaimed, "D'ye know it strikes me, *now*, we killed that man."

"Oh, don't say 'we,' sir, *I* had nothing to do with the killing, for killed he undoubtedly was," replied the youth.

The master's face assumed an irritated expression, as he answered excitedly, "What d'ye mean, you young dog? *You* had nothing to do with it? Why, you held the basin."

Another little affair, that happened to this young apprentice while under the same tuition, is equally significant.

One evening, his principal called to him, "I say, just go round and have a look at that old fellow Bates; he hasn't got many hours to live, so it's not worth while to neglect him."

The youth went as bidden, and found the patient very feeble. The wife sat in tears beside the bed.

"Ah, sir," said she, "I know the doctor considers my poor husband very bad; do *you* think there is anything that can be done for him?"

"I'm sorry to say I don't see much use in medicine in this case; we must wait and see what sort of a night he has," answered the fledgling, just for the sake of saying *something*; (it is a little way that doctors have).

"Might I give him a drop of port wine, sir?"

"Oh, yes, you may give him as much as he likes of that."

Next morning, the old apothecary sent his representative round to see Bates again, and lo! to his surprise, Bates was sitting up in bed, and welcomed him with a broad grin on his face.

"Well, sir," said the wife, now quite happy, "we begin to think you're the better doctor of the two; look how *your* prescription's answered."

"What! let me see; *did* I prescribe anything?"

"Yes, sir. You told me I was to give him as much port wine as he liked, and I went on all through the night, and by three o'clock this morning he'd finished the bottle, and got to sleep."

Notwithstanding the spirit of general unbelief which pervades the age, nothing is more striking than the credulity with which the vulgar (and also, perhaps, even the *not* vulgar, if sick), will cling to the words, and even the looks of any man calling himself a "doctor," partly because they *wish* to believe him, partly because they have a lurking faith in his infallibility, partly because they seem to shift off some of the responsibility from their own shoulders.

Sir Charles Wickens once remarked, "There's no one infallible but the Pope and the House of Lords, and they're generally wrong." Medicine may be allowed to come under *this* description of "infallibility;" for it is notorious that no literature so speedily becomes superannuated as that com-

prised in works of science, and the science of medicine seems, by its own showing, to be always widening the distance between itself and infallibility.

One need not have lived very long to discover the continued succession of diagnoses and systems of treatment, each, in its turn, destined speedily to become obsolete. If, therefore, we are right now, we must have been wrong before; but no one seems to think of the unlucky patients on whom are necessarily practised the scientific experiments needed to illustrate and establish new theories. What, indeed, are they but victims sacrificed to the "greatest good of the greatest number"?

It is difficult to explain how it happens that, although according to the views adopted in 1890, the methods pursued in 1820 must have been so entirely wrong that the doctors and nurses could only have been industriously and conscientiously employed in destroying their patients—it does not appear that more patients have been killed by the early than by the successive subsequent systems.

Sir William
Knighton.

Sir William Knighton, recognized as one of the first physicians of his day, and appointed Court physician under George IV., has remarked, "It is somewhat strange that, though in many arts and sciences improvement has advanced in a step of regular progression from the first, in others it has kept no pace with time, and we look back to ancient excellence with wonder not unmixed with awe. Medicine," he continues, "seems to be one of those ill-fated arts whose improvement bears no proportion to its antiquity. This is lamentably true, although anatomy has been better illustrated, the *materia medica* enlarged, and chirurgy better understood."

Dr. Baillie.

Dr. Baillie was more *naïf* still in his admissions—if a man can be called *naïf* who, after making his fortune out of the credulity of his patients, turns round and tells them that he "has no faith whatever in medicine." * He was a clever

* Dr. Radcliffe made on an average twenty guineas a day, or over £7,000 a

fellow though, was Dr. Baillie, for he gulled not his patients only, but the profession itself: he made himself popular with the public generally;—with the laity by working on their ignorance, and with the profession by humouring their vanity; still, the fact remains that when he had realized a handsome competency, he retired, openly proclaiming that “medicine was humbug.”

Baillie was not singular in this. Tronchin, a celebrated French *charlatan*, said to his confessor on his deathbed—“Le crois à tout excepté à la médecine.” And Laugier, a very learned German physician, being reproached by a noble patient for his unbelief in his own art, could only reply—“Credo Domine, adjuva incredulitatem meam.”

This same Dr. Baillie, who, be it remembered, was always dabbling in literature, though he knew but little about it, was one of the trio who tried their inexperienced skill on the malady of George III. An epigram of the day has survived to record the opinion entertained of them by their contemporaries:—

“The King employs three doctors daily,
Willis, Heberden, and Baillie,
All exceeding skilful men—
Baillie, Willis, Heberden;
But doubtful which least sure to kill, is
Baillie, Heberden, or Willis.”

Far be it from me to suppose there are not some splendid characters among the Faculty; I could name many, both departed and living, who would be an honour to any profession, as they were and are, to humanity; at the same time there are to be found among the “fashionable physician”

year, which rather increased than diminished up to the end of his career; but Dr. Mead, his *protégé* and successor in public favour, made a larger income still, and Dr. Warren, who died in 1797, left £150,000.

Dr. Baillie for many years made from nine to ten thousand a year.

Sir H. Halford, who followed Baillie, from that physician's death to that of William IV., when his attendance at Court terminated, could count on a professional revenue of £11,000.

class, dead and living, examples in sufficient number to justify Dr. Baillie's very candid admission.

I was once told by a retired medical man, now dead, that being called in for a consultation with two of his colleagues, he, and the one who arrived first, waited some little time for the third—a great favourite with the ladies, and who after being up all night with one lady patient, had been sent for to Brighton by another:—this latter, though she had really no serious ailment, never would see any other doctor.

At last he arrived, jaded and worn out, though with half-a-dozen other consultations before him for the day. After they had gone into the case, and had withdrawn to exchange views in private, he threw himself on a sofa with his hands in his pockets, seemingly incapable of commanding his ideas; however, it was necessary to arrive at a conclusion, more especially as he at last pulled out his watch and looked at it with a—"Bless my soul!" which brought him suddenly to his feet, meaning that he was already due elsewhere.

His brother doctors appealed to him: "Well!" said he, "what *can* you do in such a case?" and as he rose to leave, he threw out—"Change the colour of the medicine."

A foreign medico who contrived to get into high repute in England, having been called to a consultation at Chiswick, inquired of the other physician, an acquaintance of my own, "How many mile can we reckon de distance from London?" the inquirer having an eye to the guinea-a-mile allowance.*

It has always been the prerogative of romancists, poets, and dramatists to criticise medicine more or less severely. Molière scourged the apothecaries of his day with a vigorous,

* The following instances of travelling-fees may be interesting to the reader:—

Dr. Radcliffe, for going to Namur in 1695 to attend Lord Albemarle, with whom he remained a week, received from William IV. £1,200, and from the noble patient himself 400 guineas and a diamond ring.

Dr. Dimsdale (founder of a well-known Bank in Cornhill, and celebrated for his treatment of small-pox and method of inoculating) was called to St. Petersburg in 1768 by the Empress Catherine; and for his successful inoculation of that Princess

but not too severe a pen : and Cervantes ! and Le Sage ! and how many others ?

We must, however, remember that, though the doctors of that day were—as a rule—grossly ignorant, they recklessly and presumptuously dealt with life and death with a degree of assurance which the profoundest knowledge alone could have justified, and the public seemed to have been too ready to believe that the jargon with which they were hoodwinked, was the outcome and the indication of hard study and skilled experience.

Bulwer had his jokes about the Faculty ; writing to Lady Blessington in 1835 he says :—

“ I am miserably ill to-day, and have sent for the ‘ leech,’ as the poets call the doctor : why, I don’t know, unless that when he once fastens on us we can’t shake him off till he has got enough of our substance ! ” He goes on—“ I suspect the epidemic mystery,—the influenza,—to be mine enemy on this occasion, and to add to my misfortune, while I am dying to go to bed, I am obliged to go to the House. After all, life is a troublesome business, and I often long to shut up shop and retire from the profession.”

Byron did not spare the doctors, nor alas ! did they spare him. When attacked by a fever in his youth, he had absolutely refused to admit a physician, and taking his cure into his own hands, was able afterwards to reply to those who asked him how he recovered, that it was “ by the blessing of barley-water and the absence of doctors.” Lamentable, indeed, is it that he was not equally firm when the leeches—no figure of speech in this sad case—to whom he reluctantly gave place, deprived the world of a genius so unique that the gods have never vouchsafed us his like.

and the Grand Duke, her son, was rewarded with the rank of Baron of the Empire, Councillor of State, Physician to the Empress, and a pension of 1,200 roubles.

Dr. Granville, for a journey to St. Petersburg in the early part of the century, received £1,000 and travelling expenses.

A well-known popular specialist of the present day, Dr. —, got, on two occasions, 1,000 guineas for going to Pau, and a fee of 1,500 guineas for going to Pitlochrie and remaining a week with his patient.

Gui Patin
and André
Falconnet.

There is extant, a curious and voluminous correspondence, not intended for publication, which passed between two famous French doctors of Molière's time, Gui Patin and André Falconnet, the former being a confirmed *Sangrado*, and the latter as devout and conscientious in his belief in the efficacy of antimony as a panacea, as was Bishop Berkeley, in his advocacy of tar-water.

Dr. Reid was *not* a sharer in Patin's mania, for he declared that the lancet had caused more slaughter than the lance: a story is told of a French physician entirely opposed to the blood-letting system who, nevertheless, fell a victim to its application to himself. He fell down in a fit, and a colleague having been called in, he was at once bled. On partially recovering consciousness, he fancied himself at the bedside of a patient, and seizing his own wrist, proceeded to feel the pulse—Suddenly he started, aghast,—“Good God!” he exclaimed, “I have been called in too late! the patient has been bled! he is a lost man.” His verdict proved only too true. Bleeding, as a remedy *à tout propos*, and especially when a doctor found himself out of his depth, prevailed to a surprising extent, up to an almost recent period; for there long survived some old-fashioned people of the blood-letting school, who could not be persuaded of its fallacy—to use no stronger term. Without being as rampant in its favour as the aforesaid Gui Patin, who must have thereby slain his thousands, the advocates of the lancet, the leech, or the cupping-glasses were formidably numerous and fearfully determined, and some of them were deterred by no consideration for age or feebleness.*

Old Squire Waterton, of whose very persistent medical convictions I shall have to speak in a separate work, had his own notions on this subject, and always *treated* (he used to say *cured*) a cough by this means! Not long before his death,

* Sir H. Sloane boasted he had once bled a patient five times in the foot and arm in twelve hours: but Dr. Cheyne was opposed to him in this and many other details of his treatment.

and after he was eighty, he got an obstinate cough for which he said he knew there was only one remedy; so, one fine morning, he bled himself to a considerable extent. It was an alarming expedient for a subject already advanced in life and whose complexion was remarkably bloodless. Provokingly enough, it appeared to be successful, for the cough left him; but though this was probably a coincidence rather than a consequence, the old man became more confirmed in his theory than before.

It must be a matter of serious consideration to all conscientious medical men, whether they ought to warn a patient of approaching death, when they believe it imminent. Of course this will be more or less a question of circumstance, and there are many patients so situated as to render it imperative to reveal to them the whole truth—as far as the physician himself knows it. A great difficulty, however, must always present itself, in that, first, the physician does *not* always know, and secondly, that the imaginativeness of the patient has to be taken into account, and that according to that, he either adds to, or detracts from, the importance of the doctor's intimations, which thus become of doubtful advantage.

The deathbed of Balzac, as described by Arsène Houssaye, offers a noteworthy instance of the result of too much openness on the part of the doctor, who cannot be *sure* of his opinion, and may just as well give the poor patient the benefit of the doubt. The scene is dramatically interesting. Balzac's wife had succeeded in cheering the patient so effectually, that he had become calm, and even hopeful; but he yet desired to arrive at the opinion of his medical attendant, perhaps because he hoped to hear an official confirmation of the view taken by his wife.

"My dear doctor," said he, "you must not treat me as an ordinary patient; there still remain so many things that I must bring to a conclusion, that it is absolutely essential I should know my exact condition."

Balzac's
doctor.

The doctor replied evasively. "Yes, my dear friend, you have built up one of the literary monuments of this nineteenth century, but how many statues, how many sculptures are wanting to complete it!"

Balzac entered into the spirit of this metaphorical reply, and by the animation with which he took up the matter, greatly increased the feverishness of his condition.

"Doctor," he continued, "you see then, how much I need to have my life prolonged, and you, who are one of the princes of science, you will tell me truthfully, how long you can give me. . . . I am afraid I am more seriously ill than I thought; but a man of my stamp must not die like an every-day mortal; I owe some testamentary bequest to the public; let me have time to attend to that."

The doctor remained mute.

"Come, doctor," said the patient anxiously, "you deal with me as if I were a child; be candid with me; you may let me know the worst."

At last the doctor spoke. "Tell me," he replied, "how long will it take you to accomplish all you have planned," for he began to fear that Balzac might have in contemplation other and perhaps domestic testamentary dispositions, and these, for the sake of his wife and child, he would not prevent him from arranging.

Balzac seemed to be making a mental calculation, and then as if moved by a vague misgiving, answered in an inquiring tone, "Six months?" and he fixed his eyes eagerly on the face of the physician as if he felt he would learn there his doom.

"Six months! six *months*!" answered the man of medicine with indiscreet surprise—the dying are very quick at catching an impression.

"Ah!" said he, "I see; perhaps I ought to have put it at six *weeks*: but I might do much, if I work night and day, even in six *weeks*."

The doctor shook his head mournfully, and Balzac started

up as if under a sense of injury, for he really seemed to have brought himself to believe in the power of his physician to shorten or prolong his life: the doctor does not appear to have taken alarm at the effect produced upon his patient by his reply and attitude, for he had made up his mind to take him at his word and to tell him what he fully believed to be the truth, as frankly as he had been asked it. Balzac read in the doctor's face the gravity of his condition, but was unwilling to be satisfied with merely inferring it.

"I see," said he, at length, "that I am a lost man, but I shall have the courage to hear your verdict; say, you give me perhaps no more than six *days*?" The doctor could not find it in his heart to reply, the tears came into his eyes, and he turned away to hide them.

"Well!" said the sick man with a deep sigh, "since it must be so, I will hurry the work; I must do it roughly; my friends will dot the i's: I shall *make* time to over-run my fifty volumes; I will obliterate all the questionable passages and will emphasize the pages I find good. Human will can accomplish a great deal; God created the *world* in six days: I will employ *my* six days in giving an immortal existence to the world *I* have created: I will rest on the seventh day."

But what a despairing expression, what a despairing sigh accompanied these broken phrases!

While Balzac had been pleading with the physician—wrestling as it were with death—ten years seemed to have been added to his age; a choking sound proceeded from his throat, and the hoarse efforts at utterance made by the doctor in reply, equally failed to produce an intelligible sound.

"My dear patient," at last he contrived to say, while attempting a faint smile, "none of us, you know can reckon upon a single hour, and there will be many who are now in perfect health, who will die before you, yet; but . . . you asked me for the truth, and I feel bound to be candid with

you: you spoke of testamentary declarations to your public Well! make them to-day. . . . Perhaps you have other testamentary dispositions to make don't leave those for to-morrow."

Balzac could not but understand: he raised his head and exclaimed with terror—"I have then, perhaps, not six *hours!*" and he fell back upon the pillow. The doctor's last words had proved his death-blow.

He, who had once been Balzac, was already no more; he spoke not again; that creative imagination was enveloped in the mists of death; that luminous spirit was passing into its dark shadows. He had insisted on knowing the truth, and the truth had killed him before his time.

The doctor's name must not be revealed; he committed a grave error in unveiling death, who stood so near,

. . . ἡ σκίη παρέστηκε,*

when he might have yet, for a while, concealed his presence!

We should, perhaps, not have possessed another page of this author's hand, but, had Balzac not heard his condemnation, he might have lived a few more days, and he would have taken his journey into the unknown world with the illusions of a man who falls asleep in the belief that he will awake again amid all his familiar surroundings.

Mr. George
Pollock.

Mr. George Pollock the surgeon, (nephew of General Sir George, of Indian fame) was once attending a relative of mine. "Well, Sir W.," said he, "I think we shall pull you through." The patient, who knew better, turned to me, as the doctor left the room, and remarked—"Il se dit chirurgien; tout de même, 'il ment comme un arracheur de dents.'"

His death took place that same day, as the surgeon well knew it would. However, we can scarcely condemn any medical man for adopting this policy: the *too* conscientious

* Herondas.

physician, as we have seen, often takes away the patient's last chance, by his questionable candour. Let him but read the word "hopeless" in the doctor's face, and however brave, he is lost: a dose of poison would not be more effectual. Faith in his medical attendant and faith in his recovery are the sick man's staff, and will often save him when "treatment" fails: the Greatest Physician told His patient in so many words it was "his faith that made him whole," and every doctor who is worth the extra shilling, to say nothing of the gold coin, knows the power of imagination.

I once knew a worthy man—a zealous "foreign correspondent" of the *Morning Post* in its palmy days: he travelled through Spain on behalf of that journal in the time of the Carlist disturbances, and having undergone fatigues, hardships, and even perils, as he was fond of relating, he returned in so dilapidated a condition that he could get no sleep without the help of narcotics.

Mr. C. L.
Gruneisen.

After a time his wife, alarmed at the probable results of the dangerous habit he was acquiring, and convinced that his return to the repose and regularity of domestic life had sufficed to enable him to dispense with the artificial aid, proposed to him to abandon, or at least to modify, his recourse to it: of course he would not listen to the prudent suggestion, for his imagination had completely overmastered him. After another week or two, she again urged the reform, and obtained his consent to try the effect of half the dose; but next morning, he declared he had not closed his eyes, and begged she would not name the subject again. The following night she made up some bread pills, rolled them well about in the box, so as to impart the usual flavour and administered them in the usual way; no remark passed on either side, till about six weeks after, when she thought she might safely inform him he had been sleeping on Faith all that time!

Somewhat similar was the case of a patient of Mr. Skey's

Mr. Skey.

who, leading an idle, luxurious life, had gradually drifted into the hypochondriacal condition of an obese *malade imaginaire*. Every doctor knows how much less accessible to treatment are fancied, than real, ailments ; all that this poor lady wanted was the tone he knew to be attainable only by air, exercise, and regimen, but feeling it would be worse than useless to inform her plainly of her state, he recommended abstinence from some few over-indulgences, but made it a great point that she should, every morning before breakfast, drink one glass of water from St. Anne's Well in Kensington Gardens, the powers of which, he assured her, were quite unknown to the general public, although the source was so accessible. About a fortnight after, he called to learn how the remedy was succeeding, but finding her in the same low, nervous condition, he asked her if she had taken the prescribed dose regularly every day.

"Oh yes," she replied, "with one exception, and that day my maid had a cold so I couldn't send her for it."

So it turned out that the doctor's ingenious expedient had entirely failed in its object, the *walk*, and not the water, being the remedy he had relied on. No doubt this is more than half the secret of all "watercures."

Dr. Elliotson. I used to meet Dr. Elliotson at the house of a common friend with whom he often dined. He was exceedingly unlike the typical M.D. ; he had a Jewish cast of countenance ; and, in disaccord with the usage among physicians he discarded the conventional accessories of costume, and also wore a great deal of hair on his face ; he was an extremely agreeable talker and was very popular in society, as (until his secession from accepted medical principles) he had been, in the profession. His figure did not suggest the idea that he lived by the best medical rule, for he was unusually stout. Dr. Elliotson's character stood high for honesty and conscientiousness, but he was decidedly crotchety. He had risen rapidly in his practice, and for a long time was making an almost incredibly large income, when he abandoned his

old system of medicine and took to mesmerism. From the time this became known, by his introducing it into his practice, most of his patients abandoned him one by one; and he was of course compelled to give up the medical appointments he had long held with credit and honour as well as financial advantage; still, being a man of high principle, and, regarding as matter of serious conviction what appeared to others to be fads and whims, he was content to let his position go, rather than abandon his belief. Elliotson was the son of a druggist, and was born in 1791; he had been educated at Edinburgh and Cambridge, but did not become an M.D. till 1821: he died in 1868. Together with much intelligence, he had a vast store of energy and perseverance, but was always remarkable for a love of originality. Notwithstanding this, he was highly esteemed by members of the profession, and his lectures on diseases of the heart added considerably to his reputation: he was the first who employed the stethoscope, and attached great importance to its use.

After his adoption of his new ideas he used to give mesmeric *séances* at his house; these were largely attended, and the usual experiments were exhibited, but, if believed in by some, they were scoffed at by others; he also started the *Zoist*, a mesmeric monthly, which he continued for some years. Dr. Elliotson's diagnosis was considered very careful and correct, and as long as he practised on the normal principles of medicine, his patients had great confidence in his perspicacity.

Dr. Elliotson was what the French call *frileux*, and had a dread of draughts. One day Haydon the painter calling on him, was shown into his morning-room, while the servant went to apprise his master.

"Phew!" exclaimed Haydon to himself, "how can he live in such an atmosphere?" and without further reflection he threw up the window-sash. Presently the doctor came sliding in, after his gentle manner, and, shaking his visitor by

the hand, heartily welcomed him, when suddenly he became aware of a chilly sensation which seemed to horrify him; for, flying to the bell which he rang violently, he exclaimed, "Good God!—why!—have the servants gone mad? An open window!" and when the servant appeared, he addressed him with a vehemence which would not be appeased, and left no opening for an explanation.

But it was a mania of Haydon's to live with *open* windows, and he is said to have behaved in a similar way at Lord Yarmouth's. His lordship, however, took it differently, for he simply closed the window, and entered into conversation.

The friend, through whom I knew Elliotson, used to tell of a cure he had effected on her maid, by the simplest means, and without medicine: the young woman was continually subject to a complaint, not uncommon among "pampered menials"—indigestion. Dr. Elliotson's remedy was the enforcing of a very simple rule: he probably knew what are the habits of the class to which she belonged, and desired her to abstain from liquids, before, or while, eating, allowing her one draught (if necessary) in the middle of dinner (the *coup du milieu* of Brillat-Savarin) and one more at the end, alleging that nature supplies the right sort and the right amount of moisture during mastication, and resists the interference of any extraneous assistance. This was an ancient rule observed in the nursery and schoolroom of the last generation, when the beverage of children was good, plain, wholesome toast and water.—I don't believe a modern child knows the taste of it!—and the allowance was limited to two draughts during the meal. I have heard a French physician say that the sip of sherry or Madeira after soup, called by Brillat-Savarin the "*coup du médecin*," was, in his opinion, so useful it might be considered a "*coup de pied au médecin*," but it was only to be a "sip." *

* A "sip" is a somewhat vague and arbitrary measure. On certain grand occasions, the Temple dinners terminate with the passing round of the loving-cup

Charles
Lever, M.D.

Many years ago I was attended, for an accident to my hand, by Charles Lever, then practising as English physician in Brussels, cordially hating his profession all the while, and struggling like a caged bird, not only to spread his wings but to fly—into the realms of literature. As he made no secret of his proclivities, I don't think his patients can have had much confidence in him, in his medical capacity; he always appeared in his consulting-room habited in a black velvet dressing-gown tied with a scarlet silk girdle and tassels, and always carried a pen behind his ear, not so much for writing prescriptions, as to be ready to rush to his MSS. the moment he had disposed of his patient. Charles Lever had considerable musical genius, as those who know that inimitable little bit of musical Irish humour, "*Widow Malone*," can testify. As a writer, his admirers are, or rather were, very numerous: but writers of light literature now succeed each other so quickly, the old have to make place for the new.

The mention of this arch little song recalls the first time I heard it sung, and with admirable appreciation too, by an English medical specialist of repute, at an hospital entertainment. It was doubly good-natured on the part of one of the faculty, as it is generally (though I venture to think mistakenly) supposed, that medical men can never exhibit a proficiency in any extraneous accomplishment, without compromising their professional character. So far from sharing this view, I can only say that I was so favourably impressed by the evidence this gentleman's performance afforded, not only of the versatility of his genius, but of the

containing white wine, sweetened and curiously flavoured, called "sack." The butler hands and replenishes the cups, each student being allowed *one sip*. It is stated, however, that so cleverly are some of these "sips" managed, that a much larger quantity of liquor disappears than would be supposed possible, and on one occasion, the number of diners being under seventy, they contrived to "sip" away thirty-six quarts among them, making an average of over one pint to each person—rather a copious "sip"! We might say here—"There's many a 'sip' 'twixt the cup and the lip."

cheerfulness of his character, and the human side of his nature, that I immediately thought if ever I required the lights of a medical man in that branch of the profession, I should certainly prefer him to any other.

Campbell de Morgan.

Campbell de Morgan, the great cancer-specialist, was an admirable flutist, but it was with great difficulty he could be induced to play in society, I believe, from entertaining the feeling that such an accomplishment detracted from the seriousness of his character.

A vegetarian doctor.

I once heard an amusing anecdote of a well-known vegetarian doctor residing not a hundred miles from Cavendish Square. The narrator was a Yorkshire Squire leading an active country life, joining heartily in its sports, and indulging as heartily in the pleasures of the table. He used to boast that he thoroughly enjoyed his four meat-meals a day, and the *régime* answered very well . . . for a time; but there came a day when there was obviously something wrong, and the symptoms went from bad to worse, till a friend urged him to run up to London and see Dr. —.

The doctor diagnosed the case, shook his head, and told him there was only one remedy and that was in his own hands; he had simply to diminish the quantity of flesh-meat he had been allowing himself; week by week he was to knock off a certain amount of meat at each meal, till he took none, and then to proceed on a system of vegetable diet. The patient consented, and at the end of a twelvemonth was perfectly cured. When, however, he came to the end of six more months of what he called his "vegetating life," he felt so well and hearty, he thought himself cured for good and all, and, as he had left off his heavy feeding by weekly intervals, so he returned, by the same procedure, to his old course. By the end of the second half year he was once more seriously ill, and went back in great alarm to Cavendish Square.

"Ah!" said the doctor, with a toss of his head the moment he recognized him,—and he turned away and waved him off. "It's useless your coming to me; I can do nothing

for you ; I see what it is, you've been at your nasty carcasses again."

As to vegetarianism, is it quite clear that those who adopt it are practically satisfied with a doctrine so plausible in theory ? And is it not perhaps true (as has been asserted) that those who debar themselves from animal food, secretly hanker after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and when they refuse roast-beef are very glad to get its gravy over their vegetables ? I know vegetarians who, having brought themselves to death's door, have very quietly consented to be brought round by beef-tea, and are willing to wink at its being administered, provided it be "unbeknowns" to them.

The last time I was at Pisa I had the curiosity to visit the curiously beautiful old market-place, but, having to return through the shambles, so horrifying was the sight of the local "butcher's meat" as it hung there, that I became a convert to vegetarianism on the spot. Gradually the impression faded and so did my vegetarianism ; but I do my best never to revert to it, and forbear to enter, even here, into a description of what I saw. If I mention it at all, it is to facilitate the efforts of those who are trying to dispense with animal food, by advising them to inspect that department of the Pisan market, for themselves.

Vegetarian advocates argue, not without plausibility, that a man who would shrink from killing a sheep, has no right to eat mutton. If this doctrine were accepted, there would soon be an end of the meat-market. When the meat-market is gone, however, we shall have to consider how we are to get on with the other details of life, without slaughtering animals. It does not seem to have occurred to vegetarians to dispense with shoes, boots, harness, saddles, book-bindings, portmanteaus, and other indispensable articles made from leather ; they refuse to eat jelly, but allow the use of glue ; they shrink from the flesh of hares and rabbits, but readily employ their fur, and we never heard of a vegetarian lady who, declining a slice of a

pheasant, yet considers it criminal to adorn her head with his feathers. Vegetarians, taken on their own principles, are, therefore, ludicrously inconsistent; and, moreover, they eschew wine and beer, though essentially vegetable compounds. Those who take the humanitarian view of the matter are inconsistent in another way, for while they would not kill a bullock for the world, they express no compunction at the wholesale murders they occasion every time they eat a cabbage!

There are sects even among vegetarians. Animal food, such as it is, they consume without being conscious of it, but those who depart from the strict vegetarian code and consciously comprise in their diet Vegetables, Eggs, and Milk are contemptuously designated by their more rigid brethren, themselves vegetarians *purs et simples*, as "Vems."

Prince
Hohenlohe.

Prince Hohenlohe's miracles, much talked about in the early part of the century, obtained extensive credit all over Europe. A relative of my own, afflicted with a cancer, and alas! having practically discerned that "physicians were in vain," sent to the Prince a notice of her case and asked his prayers. She received a considerate and sympathetic reply with the most consoling promises, but—from whatever cause—they remained ineffectual and she died of the complaint.

A case recorded in the press of the time, February, 1834, however, represents the Prince's powers as occasionally only too efficacious. This case was that of a beautiful young lady, whose rare charms were marred by an unfortunate disfigurement; the left leg being shorter by four inches than the right. Prince Hohenlohe was asked to say four masses, one, apparently, for each superfluous inch! Unfortunately he misread the request and said *eight* masses instead of four. The consequence was disastrous, for it was now the right leg which had become too short, by four inches.*

* This untoward success recalls the story of an old Irish woman found praying.

This was the Prince's last miracle, for he was so distressed at the mischief he had occasioned, that he renounced any further attempt to interfere with the decrees of Providence. It was said, however, that he, somewhat illogically, transferred his powers to an old woman of Sonnendorf, in Saxony, Schumann by name.

There is probably no one among those who knew Brighton Dr. Taylor
of Brighton. in the earlier half of the century, who does not remember "Dr." Taylor (as he was called) of "Newnham and Taylor" on the Old Steine. Very popular he was among young and old, rich and poor, and as jolly a doctor as perhaps ever bled a patient or prescribed a bolus; for, even down to Taylor's days, the *Sangrado* theory was still in vogue, though not to the rabid extent of a somewhat earlier period: no, in Taylor's days it was rather—

" The blue, blue pill,
And the black, black draught in the morning ! "

Taylor, in due course, slipped out of the Newnham partnership, and set up on his own account. He drove not only a flourishing business, but a splendid pair of bays, during an incredible series of years—I don't mean to say that the patients out-lastcd the whole period of Taylor's practice, any more than the horses—it was like the brook which we habitually call the same, though each day, nay, each minute, whether we note it or not, it is a new brook that flows at our feet. I can remember him late in the twenties, in full practice, for he was one day summoned to ascertain

by a passing tourist, who inquired what it could be she was asking for with so much vehemence.

"Faith, yer Honor," replied the poor old soul, "my darter's been marrid this two year, and niver a child, and I'm askin' the Blessed Virgin to sind her a baby."

A year after, the tourist returning by the same road looked in at the cottage and inquired what had been the result of the prayers.

"Och, yer Honor! would ye belave it; I can't have explained meself roightly! the Blessed Virgin has sint me two grandchilder instid av one, but it's me un-marrid darter they've come to."

that there were no broken bones after a fall I had from my pony at Boss's riding-school. He continued to dash about Brighton with the reputation of a "Jehu" long after he had retired from professional duties, his jolly face and jovial manners still helping to render him a universal favourite. There were, during Taylor's practice, several physicians in Brighton making sorry attempts to gain a footing, but as long as Taylor was to the fore, they seemed to have no chance; it was *Figaro quà, Figaro là, Figaro sù, Figaro giù*. He was in constant requisition, and Brightonians of all classes, visitors and residents, were perfectly content with his ministrations. His manner was bright and hopeful, his bills . . . comparatively moderate—for he made his claims in the form of bills, and there was no question of that puzzling remuneration—a fee.

The generality of patients are apt to expect too much from the Faculty, and hence their disappointment at the frequent failures of doctors. It is wonderful, however, to what an extent a shrewd and politic doctor can supplement the limited means he really commands, by drawing on the imagination of his patients and leading them to believe in him and trust him.

Nature, of course, must have done something for such a doctor, for it is not given to all to inspire their patients with this trustfulness. A bright face, a cheery tone, a self-confident air are part of the physician's stock-in-trade, and if not born with these qualifications he must contrive to acquire them, if he would succeed. If their attainment prove beyond his efforts he had better shut up shop—or rather, he had better open shop; he might *sell* medicines, but could never arrive at *prescribing* them. We may depend on it the *Blandi Doctores* are the most popular, though there is a certain affectation of roughness which exercises its influence also.

Mr. Richard
Partridge.

I knew a lady who was attended by Mr. Richard Partridge, and after his death by a medical baronet, still living,

whom I will therefore not name. I have heard her say that after a visit from the former, though the time had passed mostly in friendly chat (with but a slight allusion to her ailments) she felt herself a different being for the rest of the day; whereas, the mere sound of the carriage-wheels of the latter, as they drove up the street, would throw her into a state of depression which did not leave her even when she heard them roll away: she told me his presence always suggested that of an undertaker; and yet there could have been no comparison between the professional abilities of the two doctors.

It is curious to note the variety of tones adopted by different members, or rather classes, of the Faculty. The rough-and-ready style culminated in Abernethy. His originality and his successes excused it, and his patients liked to repeat his odd sayings. There have been few such since, unless we may classify with him the late Dr. Matthews Duncan, nicknamed by some of his patients "Dr. Gruffy." Doctors who adopt this method of treating their patients, generally know what they are about, and probably possess a peculiar gift of manner which enables them to employ it with advantage, for we find that class of doctor rarely disliked; but no doubt a certain knowledge of human nature and also of individual temperament, guides the doctor's instinct, and tells him which of his patients will prefer, and which will resent, it.

Dr. Matthews
Duncan.

In some cases it is the soft and sympathetic tone which alone serves, and the doctor must needs gain a habit of expressing himself as if he were actually associated with his patient in trying the remedies he proposes. Doctors who feel this, have the art of identifying themselves with their patients and putting themselves, in imagination, in the same position; an ailment is softened to the sufferer when it can be made to appear it is shared. I knew a doctor who had acquired such a habit of taking part in his patients' complaints that he one day said to an old lady who con-

sulted him for a cold: "'We' will tallow 'our' nose, and put 'our' feet in hot water, and then 'we' will go to bed."

Of the blander class, too, was the doctor of whom, when attending the Princess Amelia, the old king asked if she might take an ice.



THE PRINCESS AMELIA.

"As many as your Majesty thinks fit," replied the courteous Court physician, with an obsequious bow, "provided they are warmed first."

The last illness of the Princess Amelia, if it supplied a medical joke, was marked with a very sad interest: she was

the King's favourite daughter, and her too obvious condition of health filled her poor old father with the most wearing anxiety: more than this, when she was on her death-bed, a fearful shock awaited him. It was only then that she confessed to him for the first time, that she was secretly married. The King was struck aghast; but when,—on his inquiring to whom, the Princess replied, “To a man you have always honoured with your special favour—General Fitzroy,”—the King uttered a cry of horror, and fled from the room. Neither the General nor the Princess were in any way aware of that officer's parentage, but the King knew only too well who was his father. The Princess died shortly after making this ominous revelation, and the terrible nature of it, together with her death, proved too much for the already impaired mental condition of the King, whose severest attack, from which he never recovered, was thought to have been hastened by the effect of these disasters.

Of the bluffer school of medicos, was a famous oculist whom I was urged to consult about twenty years ago; and who was much put out by my absolute refusal to submit to an application of belladonna, without which he said, he could not make a satisfactory diagnosis: however, he examined my eyes, affecting an ominous and perplexing silence, all that he condescended to utter, being a mysterious grunt: provoked into an inquiry, I said at last:—

Dr. —, the famous oculist.

“What is it, doctor? have you discovered that it is a cataract?”

“Cataract? no”; “I wish it *was*!” he answered in a hollow and foreboding voice.

As he vouchsafed no further information I had to conclude that he thought it a very serious case: if he did, all I can say is, his opinion was as bad as his grammar, for I have steered clear of oculists ever since, without being any the worse for it.

Cyrus Redding tells a story of Dr. Wolcot which is not without point: visiting him one day, when he was very

Dr. Wolcot.

old, he found him in his bedroom, laid up, and with a bandage over his eyes.

"Why, what has happened, Doctor?" said the visitor.

"Ah! since you were here," he answered, "Adams the oculist, (afterwards Sir Wm. Rawson), who goes about blinding everybody, persuaded me to submit to the operation of couching."

"And you consented?"

"Not on both eyes; I only agreed that he should try what he could do with one."

"And with what success?"

"Oh! of course so famous a practitioner *could* not fail, and he has succeeded in curing my eye, for ever, . . . of seeing. I could, before, distinguish the figure of any one between my eye and the light. I have just escaped an inflammation that might have reached the other eye, besides enduring three or four weeks of confinement; I outwitted him, however."

"How?"

"I gave him the worst eye to block up. He had persuaded me into it; but at eighty it was folly; he only wanted my name to puff a cure with."

Taylor, the
oculist.

Taylor, a well-known oculist of a somewhat later day, was famous for drawing the long bow, especially when recounting feats of his own performance. One day when this specialist was dining with the barristers of the Oxford Circuit, and talking overmuch of the clever things he had done in his time, Bearcroft began to be irritated by his vanity, and turning sharply on him said:—

"Chevalier, you have told us of much that you have done and *can* do, isn't it about time you tried to tell us of something you *can't* do?"

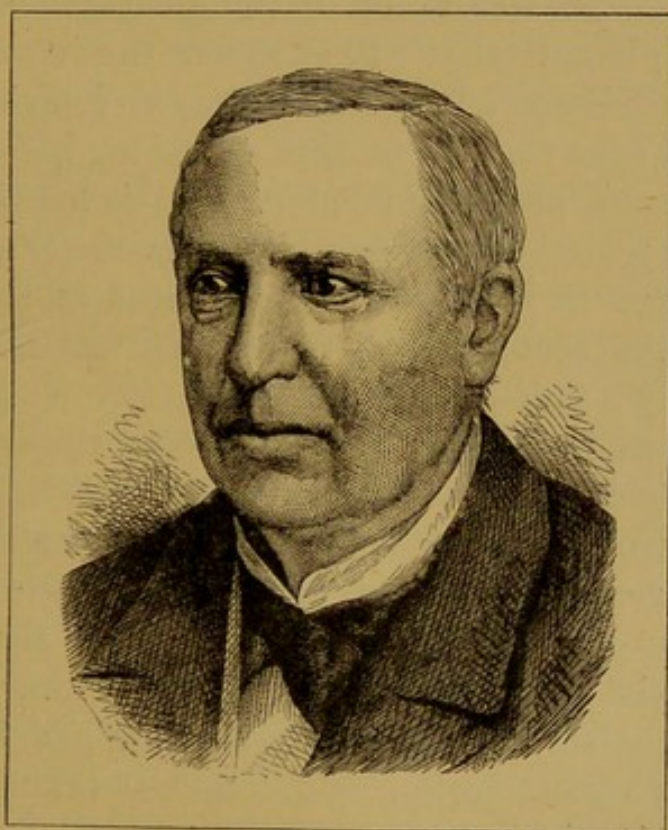
"I can manage that without much trying," answered Taylor; "I *can't* pay my share of the dinner-bill, and that is a thing *you* can do much better than I."

Mr. Richard
Partridge.

Mr. Richard Partridge, the surgeon whose cheeriness of

manner (already mentioned) stood him in good stead, I often had occasion to see. It will be remembered that he was sent over to diagnose the condition of Garibaldi's wounded foot. In this case he entirely failed, and even advised amputation; however, Perizoff, the celebrated Russian surgeon, who was also despatched to the patient, was equally at fault: last of all came Nélaton, whose reputation was based principally on the rapidity and penetration of his medical judgment: he could take in the

Dr. Nélaton.



LE DOCTEUR NÉLATON.

detail of the most complicated case almost at a glance, and his first opinion was generally correct.

His remedies, modified with judgment according to the circumstances of the case, were always marked by extreme simplicity. The cause of the condition which the wound had reached at the time that the Italian surgeons had abandoned the patient, and that these foreigners had been called in, was at once manifest to the French practitioner. He dif-

ferred in opinion from his English and Russian colleagues, and was perfectly satisfied as to the presence of the bullet, and of this he proceeded at once to convince them. The discovery was ingeniously made by sounding the wound with a small porcelain ball on the point of the probe. Garibaldi's gratitude to his deliverer was extreme, and Nélaton might have pocketed a large sum, but he (diplomatically?) refused to accept any fee, giving fine, sentimental reasons for this forbearance, to the effect that it was enough for him to have saved the life of the greatest hero, &c., &c. If I say "diplomatically," it is under the impression that it was not in Nélaton's habits to display so lofty a spirit, and if he did not take the fee on this occasion, his celebrity so greatly increased after the incident that it led to his taking many others; for he died worth 6,000,000 (*of francs*), but even in francs it was a respectable sort of fortune for a doctor to have accumulated, though he had had the good luck to marry a young heiress.

Dr. Birch told me, as authentic, an amusing story of this eminent French doctor. He had been attending the young and only son of the *Comtesse de* —, who had met with a not very severe accident at play. The mother, however, measured her gratitude more by the value of the child's life and the anxiety the accident had caused her, than by the services of the surgeon, who nevertheless had brought him through very satisfactorily. When he was taking leave after his last visit, wishing to express to him a sense of her recognition of his care and patience, she presented him with a handsomely embroidered pocket-book, expressly worked for him by her own fair fingers, and she intimated to him that she had paid him this little compliment. To the *Comtesse's* surprise and mortification, not only did Nélaton not show any appreciation of her amiable intention, but contented himself with bowing stiffly, and ignoring the gracious offering.

"*Madame la Comtesse*," said he, "the pocket-book is quite

a work of art, and I admire it exceedingly, but my fee is two thousand francs."

"Not more!" said she; then opening the leaves she took out a little bundle of five one-thousand franc notes, and from it selected two, which she presented to him, bowing stiffly in her turn, and retiring with the rejected pocket-book and the remaining notes.

Whether Nélaton repented of his *maladresse* I know not, but Louis XIV. would certainly have classed it among those "blunders" which he considered "worse than crimes."

To balance this, anecdotes more favourable to his character have been related of Nélaton; he was born in 1807, and died in 1873.

Apropos of fees, I remember a good story of the late Dr. Dr. Blundell. Blundell—perhaps his name would have described him more accurately with a different termination—of Great George Street, on whom a patient, a relation of my own, called one day, and as he was too ill and infirm to leave his carriage, the doctor was obliged to get in and hold the consultation there. Infirm as he was, however, the patient was a wag, and had an irrepressible way of making a joke of everything. The doctor felt his pulse, and, assuming a grave look of wisdom, stated solemnly that he did not exactly like the symptoms, but was not quite prepared to say what course should be followed; "In fact, Sir Charles," he said, "it will be necessary for me to see you at least three times before I can determine the nature of the case."

"Don't you think now, doctor," said the facetious patient, coaxingly, "that if I were to give you the three fees down, you could tell me at once?"

"Sir Charles," replied the doctor with offended dignity, "I don't know whether any other member of the Faculty will be willing to advise you, but you must excuse *me* from attending you any longer;" and with that he withdrew loftily into his own house, and the patient drove away chuckling over his joke.

I don't know who said that the letters *M.D.* after a physician's name stood for "Money down," but the explanation is certainly plausible.

Dr. Radcliffe. There are many well-known anecdotes about Dr. Radcliffe, but, while on the subject of fees, I venture to cite one which I do not think is among the more hackneyed. The doctor was tempted to risk £5,000 in the South Sea Bubble, and lost it. In reply to the friend who informed him of the collapse, he is said to have replied with admirable equanimity, "It is only going up five thousand more flights of stairs." He was pretty sure of *his* fees apparently.

As an instance of the patient's view of fees, I may quote an anecdote of Quin, around whose sick bed four doctors were consulting as to the best mode of producing a perspiration: the humourist, overhearing the discussion, said, "Send in your bills, gentlemen, that will do it at once."

There is a celebrated physician still living, and not a hundred miles from Harley Street, whose name I therefore withhold, who was consulted a few years ago by a friend of mine, not for the first or even the second time. It was just after the public had been given to understand that the old-fashioned guinea fee had become obsolete, and was to be doubled.—I may remark, *par parenthèse*, what an opening this gave to the medical practitioner!—On taking leave of this physician, my friend inquired, "What am I to give you, Dr. Blank?"

"Ah, yes; well, as it is not a first visit I suppose you will not care to give more than a guinea."

"True; but I thought, perhaps, as it is a fresh consultation, it might come into the category of a first visit."

"Ah, yes; you are right, . . . but" (with a bland smile, and turning out the palms of both hands) "give me what you please."

Of course there was but one way of meeting so expressive an attitude.

I was once weak enough to be persuaded into consulting

Erasmus Wilson. I went by appointment, and was punctual to the minute: notwithstanding my exactitude, he had the cheek to keep me waiting one hour and a half.

Erasmus
Wilson.

My resentment at this unjustifiable snub, for as such I regarded it, was augmented by the insolent grandeur of the doctor's mansion; the noble proportions of the staircase and vestibule, the solemn correctness of the butler, the costly fittings and decorations of the rooms, the valuable collection of works of art—of course some of these may have been "G.P.'s", or they *may* have been hung there by an understanding with the painters; but, more probably, they were *bonâ fide* property, and if so, so many proofs of the credulity of his patients and of his own ingenuity; in any case, I could not help thinking how unwise it was to display all this magnificence to one whose susceptibilities he was at that moment bruising—as if to remind him he was individually adding to the number of dupes.

When at length I was ushered into the *sanctum*, instead of offering any explanation or apology, he blandly expressed a hope that "I had found something to *amuse* me!" evidently expecting a string of compliments on the taste and wealth of his collection.

"I have no time for amusement, Doctor," I replied; "I have employed the time while I was waiting, in writing a fresh chapter to a volume I am preparing for the press."

"Ha! and what is the title of your book?" said he, patronisingly.

"I haven't yet decided on the title of the *book*," I answered, "but the title of that *chapter* will be 'THE HORRORS OF THE PHYSICIAN'S WAITING-ROOM.'"

Erasmus Wilson had, no doubt, very good reasons of his own for his persistent recommendation to his patients to employ Pears' Soap.

In July, 1834, there died in Harley Street a quack doctor, by name of St. John Long, who professed to cure con-

sumption. He was only 35 when he died, of the rupture of a blood-vessel. There must have been some believers in the potency of his remedies, for his executors sold his secret for £10,000. Perhaps it may be known among the Faculty what this secret was, and whether the investment proved a profitable one to the purchaser. What if this should turn out to be identical with "Dr. Koch's discovery"? or the more recent improvement (?) on it by another German visionary?

Dr. Henry
Monro.

Through the Rev. Edward Monro, the late conscientious, ingenious, cultivated, and indefatigable Rector of Harrow Weald, whom I knew intimately, I became acquainted with his brother, Dr. Monro, the specialist in lunacy cases; the father of both, also belonged to this branch of the profession, and was one of the physicians of George III.

Dr. Monro went by the name of the "Boy-Doctor," from the smoothness of his chin and the general juvenility of his appearance, from which it was difficult to form any estimate of his age. He must, however, at the time I speak of, have possessed considerable experience and knowledge, for he was head-physician at St. Luke's.

He one day kindly offered to take me to one of the periodical balls given at that hospital for the benefit and entertainment of the inmates, and it certainly proved a very interesting experience, for it was impossible not to be surprised at the tranquility and order with which all the detail went on. It was difficult to realize to oneself even that there was anything abnormal in the condition of things; the "ladies and gentlemen" behaved with the greatest propriety, and the little *minauderies* of the former, to attract the attention of the other sex, were fully as flirtatious as the small devices employed by their sisters of the so-called saner world. They country-danced, and they quadrilled, and "polked," and waltzed, and promenaded, and drank weak negus and lemonade, and, in fact, "went on" to all intents and purposes as if their ball-room were *not* the

refectory of a mad-house, with the benches and tables removed, and the boards scrubbed.

The antecedents of the improvised dancing-room were so cleverly masked with draperies and devices, flowers and banners, that no one ignorant of the fact, would for a moment have suspected where he was.

I entered into conversation with a respectable-looking fellow of middle age, and whose speech seemed to me to betoken a rather superior education for one of his class. He told me he had travelled, and that it was in Germany (in answer to a question of mine) that he had learnt to waltz so well. He told me of many national characteristics he had noticed in that country, which showed him to be shrewd and observant, and he spoke the language fairly well, if with a pronounced Prussian accent.

He said, "Yes, I brought away from that country a good deal of knowledge I didn't take there; but," he added, "I also brought away a great many different salts."

"Salts!" said I; "and what are you going to do with *them*?" for I began to think he might be in the drug line.

"Oh!" he replied, laughing—"Going to do with them! it's too late for that now, I've given them all away; they were valuable in many ways, and I was so teased for them I was glad to get done with it, so I gave 'em away, all except; ah, yes, *except* the salt of wisdom, and *that* nobody asked me for; indeed they wouldn't have it when I offered it."

"Well, I'm as much surprised as you, one would have expected that to be the first asked for."

"Ah! yes, wouldn't one?"

"Well, you needn't have it on your hands any longer; give it to me, I'll gladly rid you of it," said I.

At this he put on a cunning look, and whispered in my ear,

"Look you, the fact of your asking for it shows *you* don't want it, so I shall keep it for myself." Then he went on,

"I daresay now you're surprised to see me in this . . . this

. . . *club*, but the fact is I came back to England to be made a ward in Chancery, and as they told me there were a great many *wards* in the *club*, I thought it would be a good place to lodge at."

This poor fellow had quite a musical genius, and the fact having transpired in the course of our talk, he asked me if I should like him to play something; and hastening to the piano he seated himself, and performed a curious but brilliant and astonishing consecutive medley, into which he introduced the best known of our national airs; but when he rolled out "God save the Queen," and all present stood up and joined in the chorus, he showed himself so wildly enthusiastic that it became pretty evident he had gone too far. In the midst of it, an attendant approached and tapped him gently on the shoulder. It was like magic; he turned round, and recognizing the official, in an instant he had become another being. He rose, said not a word, and followed the man with the most lamb-like meekness; but he did not forget, as he passed me, to say a respectful "Good-night." "Good-night," said I, and gave him my hand. I was glad I had thought of this, as an expression of true pleasure, touching to witness, stole over his face, and when he reached the door he looked back again with a calm smile on his face, and bowed once more to me, saying, "Thank you." Seldom probably is it that these poor creatures meet with sympathetic notice.

This musical escapade and the genius it betrayed, brings to my mind a visit I once paid to the criminal ward of Bethlehem Hospital, when the parricide Dadd was undergoing his lifelong seclusion. It may not perhaps be remembered by many at the present day, that this unhappy creature conducted his old father to the brink of a ravine, precipice, or pit—I have forgotten the locality—and then deliberately pushed him over. He was acquitted on the plea of insanity, but sentenced to be imprisoned for life, and being by profession a painter, was allowed the use of brushes, colours, &c., in his confinement. When I entered the cell or room

allotted to him, he had his back turned to the door, and was busily engaged on a canvas that stood on his easel.

It was one of the most singular productions imaginable. The colouring was brilliant; a number of figures were introduced, all most carefully painted; but they were of various sizes, and the grouping seemed to be altogether accidental. As soon as the artist became aware there were persons present, he turned round and bowed courteously, begging us to approach and examine his work.

"Now what do you think of that for a subject?" said he.

"It is a very complicated and highly-finished composition," I replied, evading the question, from a reluctance to wound his vanity, by confessing an utter inability to make it out; happily, he did not press the inquiry; but proceeding with some volubility, he seemed to take it for granted that I understood that it represented a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. I don't think any other proof was needed of the abnormal state of the man's mind.

With that branch of medicine, or rather surgery, known as dentistry, I have been more familiar than with any other, for the very simple reason that in that respect Nature was not sufficiently left to herself. My good father thought two visits a year to the dentist—one before leaving London for the summer, the other after returning—were indispensable to the good ordering of the mouth and its furniture.

Samuel Cartwright, the dentist.

Consequently, once in every six months we were taken to that solemn and purgatorial mansion in Old Burlington Street occupied by the famous Samuel Cartwright, and admitted, only by favour of an "appointment" made some three or four weeks previously, through the patronizing intermediation of the dignified Cerberus. This functionary sat in a ponderous hall-porter's chair in the spacious vestibule, and kept an ominous doomsday-book filled with entries of real (and also, I suspect, imaginary) dates and names. It has often amused me in later years to remember the well-assumed gravity with which this keeper of the dentist's

conscience would deny the possibility of fixing any day and hour less remote than the one he considered sufficiently distant to be imposing; he would prolong his hesitation as to according even that one, till he had thus drawn a *douceur* of half-a-sovereign out of my father's pocket. This was followed by a refresher of at least five shillings more when the *dies iræ* arrived, and was supposed to insure as speedy an admittance as possible. The appointment so costlily bargained for, was virtually of little or no avail, and I can only too well remember on the occasion of those dreaded attendances, the added horror of often from two to three hours' anticipation in that huge and dismal waiting-room, and it was usually pretty full. I have since had good reason to believe about half the number were dummies, who, like the real victims, were silently called out as their respective turns came,—or were supposed to come,—and appeared no more; just as each one of us is beckoned out of the world at his appointed hour by the scarcely more weird finger of Death. In fact, the whole thing was a solemn farce; but somehow it "took," and fashionable patients were so ingeniously brought to place the most implicit and irrational confidence in the great dentist, that they readily submitted to all these indignities, if they could but, at last, obtain the privilege of having their sound teeth extracted by this bold and successful *charlatan*.

How well I remember that grim waiting-room, its lofty stucco walls of a dingy green, hung with dark pictures in heavy gilt frames; the ponderous furniture, leather-covered arm-chairs, Turkey carpet, and then that long, massive table, covered with a dark blue cloth and strewn with the dreariest old books. Periodicals were few and costly in those days, comic papers had not yet come into existence, and the three volumes of *Brambletye House*, Cooper's *Spy*, Scott's *Red Gauntlet*, and an odd volume or two of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, figured in a more and more torn, dog's-eared, and dilapidated condition year after year. Dreary and dismal

indeed were those three or four mortal hours spent in momentary dread of the fatal summons. Each time the door opened to admit a new patient, or to call out a fellow-sufferer, it aroused a conflict of emotions between the terror of finding oneself the destined victim, and the grim satisfaction of feeling oneself reprieved for a little while longer.

On one occasion, after a roomful of about twenty had passed through this fiery ordeal, the butler appeared at the door to solemnly and respectfully inform Mr. Cartwright's patients that that "eminent" . . . humbug—"would not be able to see any more of them that day, as he had been summoned to attend one of the Royal Family." An excellent *réclame*, no doubt!*

Ah! but when one did get admitted to the operating-room . . . what a business-like place that was, and how grave and solid this same humbug could look. He never let you go till he had pulled out half the sound teeth in your head, and he had a clever knack of concealing the extracting instrument up his sleeve, and saying, "Just allow me to look," with an air of such candour that you never suspected treachery and yielded confidingly to the insidious request. Then lo! before you could say "Jack Robinson," yea, in the twinkling of an

* This medical dodge, practised in many tolerably well-known forms, such as being fetched out of church, or summoned from a dinner-party or ball, for a supposed patient, was carried out in perfection by a French doctor—Portal—who, without any medical skill, contrived to make his way to earthly glory by following the advice of his master, the famous (charlatan) doctor, Tronchin, 1798: "N'ayez pas de talent," he would say to his pupils, "mais faites parler de vous." The result was that Portal ended by finding himself, long before his death, in 1832, *M. de l'Académie des Science, Président de la Faculté de Médecine, Professeur au Collège de France*, and Court Physician to Louis XVIII. In the early days of his career, Portal had recourse to the following stratagem. After disguising his face, he donned a grand livery, and going about the town late at night, attacked the most magnificent mansions, making a loud knocking at the door and inquiring whether it was not there that the great Dr. Portal was attending a patient, as he had not been able to find him at his house, and he was wanted immediately for his master, the Duc de ——. This proceeding he repeated sufficiently often, to impress his name on those at whose houses he applied, and succeeded in ultimately obtaining the largest practice of any physician in Paris, together with the attainment of all the professional dignities above enumerated.

eye, you fancied you recognized six wrenches, and didn't you feel them smartly when, a minute after, you saw a corresponding number of fine shiny, white, unblemished teeth standing in a ghastly group, each in its little crimson pool, on the turning-table beside you. Alas! what would you not give to have them in their places now? It was the smartest conjuring-trick imaginable. Oh yes, of course he could "replace" them . . . with sham ones, and this, naturally and necessarily, was part of his little game. Several guineas passing from the hand of one individual into that of another closed this comical, and at the same time, tragical scene, and then Mr. Samuel Cartwright, with an oily "Good-day," conducted his fleeced and bleeding victim to the door of the room. As he held it open, by pressing his foot on a spring in the floor, he communicated with the obsequious attendant, who, after showing out *that* sufferer, ushered another into the dread presence. What a relief it was to find oneself once more disembarrassed and free! One forgot the irreparable injury with which this freedom had been purchased; forgot the precious spoil left behind, the value of which would come to light only at a future day; the present fact was enough for the moment: Cartwright was done with for six months! An age, at that time of life!

It is to be deplored that the more respectable class of doctors should think it necessary to impose on their patients those weary and trying hours of waiting; but the blame in a great measure rests with the patients. Why do they submit to the treatment? It seems to me a gross impertinence on the part of a medical man to keep a patient waiting, who has been punctual to the appointed hour, and the patient should in that case *not* be *too* patient. If he had the pluck to resist or resent it, the imposition would soon come to an end.

In some (perhaps most) cases, no doubt, it is a mere "trick of the trade," and as such should be exposed. In others it is quite possible the physician may be occupied, but surely

he can arrange his work so as not to make a rule of overlapping the time due to one patient by that given to another.

On my father's property in Radnorshire we had an old Highland shepherd, by name Buchan. He died many years ago, but I can recollect his tall, somewhat gaunt figure, clad in a long grey garment resembling the "ulster" of the present day. He spoke chiefly Gaelic, but could make himself understood in English, which he flattered himself he spoke fluently; the Scotch accent was, however, tolerably marked, for he used to state not only that he was of Scotch origin, but that he was a kinsman of Dr. Buchan, the well-known physician of the last century, but who lived five years into this.

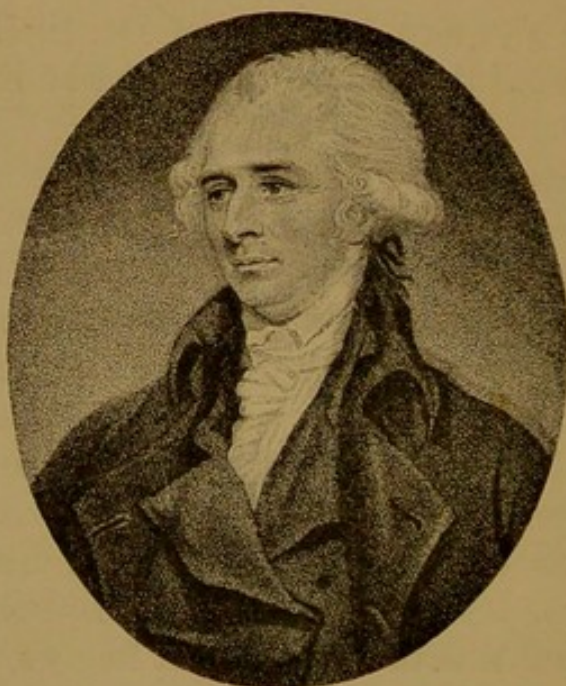
Dr. Buchan's
descendant.

The old fellow was one of those good-tempered old servants of the *ancien régime*, who took an affectionate interest in the families they served. Whether he inherited his knowledge of the healing art by atavism from his medical relative, or acquired it while tending his flocks on the mountains, by studying "simples," I cannot say; but, whenever there was an ailment in the house, he always expected to be consulted, and as he was generally liked and respected in the household, his humour was often indulged, whether his advice were followed or not. Sometimes his prescriptions—verbal, of course, for he was one of those honest fellows who could not write, any more than the great Bertrand du Guesclin—had very excellent results, and it rejoiced his old heart to be told he was a worthy successor to the genial and venerable M.D. whose patronymic he bore.

As for this same doctor, he, or rather his book, was not a favourite in the nursery. There was too much of the Jean Jacques about it, and it was to him that the children of that day owed their having been brought up on oatmeal porridge, brown bread, and raw milk; butter being scouted in the diet of children, by his ascetic code. This book of Buchan's, entitled, *Domestic Medicine*, was the first volume of its kind that had ever been published in England, and its success was

Dr. Buchan.

enormous. It went through nearly twenty editions during its author's lifetime, and the number of copies sold before his death, was something like 100,000. He might well have called it a vexatious success, for he had sold the copyright for £700, and the profit all went into another's pocket. It was translated into most European languages and circulated all over the civilized world, and the Emperor of Russia thought so highly of the man who wrote it, that he sent him a gold medal as expressive of his admiration. Buchan was



DR. BUCHAN.

physician to the Foundling Hospital at York till the office was suppressed, and it was by practical experience there, that he gained so useful an insight into the diseases of children.

Buchan was an amiable, philanthropic, and most genial man, and a favourite with his patients. He was not without humour, and a story is told of his having, one day, remarked to a veterinary surgeon that a great difficulty he had to contend with consisted in being seldom able to get children to describe the symptoms of their complaints.

"Ah!" replied the "vet," "I know something about that, myself, for still less can you get a horse to tell you what ails him."

"Oh," said Buchan, "don't bring your cavalry against my infantry, or it is plain I *must* get the worst of it."

There have been many medical men, Dr. Wolcot among Dr. Wolcot. the number, candid enough to admit the value of infusions and decoctions of simples resorted to by country folk, and that in a general way "their nostrums did good, but he did not know how."

"The most extraordinary of these I ever met with," he said, "was the broth of a boiled thunderbolt for the cure of rheumatism!"

Further questions elicited that he had gone into the matter and discovered an old woman in the act of boiling one, which she had to keep on the fire a prescribed time. He took it out of the saucepan and "found it to be one of those relics of the stone age often found in Cornwall, about which antiquaries can never agree, some asserting them to be chisels, while others pronounce them to be spear-heads."

Somewhere in Espriella's Letters I have seen greyhound-broth recommended to a man who had over-eaten himself with roast hare, probably on the principle acted on by the boy, who, seeing a mouse in the milk-pail, threw the cat in after it.

I ought, perhaps, to have headed instead of concluding my Dr. Kitchiner. recollections of the "Faculty" with Dr. Kitchiner, because I cannot remember, out of my own family, any personality with which I became acquainted at an earlier period of my life; but I had my scruples as to ranging him with M.D.'s. Though he was duly entitled to inscribe himself among the fraternity, medicine certainly did not occupy the first place in his many-sided life; he scarcely practised, his ample fortune rendering a profession unnecessary. It is, indeed, difficult to classify so versatile a character; you think you have him as a doctor of medicine; you suddenly find he

is not only an equally intelligent oculist, but also an optician, and you discover with surprise his wide and profound knowledge of the human eye, its capabilities, its diseases, and their remedies : you are amazed at his elaborate ingenuity and experience in the matter of those instruments intended to aid and preserve sight and to advance its usefulness, when you find he has insensibly assumed the prerogatives of an astronomer, not only improving existing telescopes and inventing new instruments, but applying himself to sweep with them the heavens, and to afford fresh and valuable information respecting those mysterious luminaries about which the wisest of us know so little. Having recognized in him an eminent natural philosopher, you have not half exhausted the catalogue of his surprising capabilities ; no, indeed, not by a great deal : though his comprehensive genius has soared to heaven, you soon find he has not abandoned earth, and that he is as respected an authority on most sublunary things, as on the abstruser mysteries of astronomical research.

Nothing, indeed, can be more practical than his published works, whether on science or on domestic life. Few amateur musicians have attained to the eminence he achieved, and he was as thorough in that fine art as in all else that engaged his ubiquitous attention. It was in his nature to treat all things scientifically ; and he understood music theoretically as well as practically. His compositions have been approved by a great authority, Sir George Grove, though he never posed in music as a professional, any more than in any other science he studied, and music was one of the delights of his life. He made a science of cookery, and his *Cook's Oracle* was so much admired and approved by the public, that it brought him in a handsome income ; he did not, however, need money ; his father, who was a coal-owner in a large way of business, had left him, at an early age, a very handsome fortune and a good deal of house property : the well-known house he occupied, 43, Warren Street, was his own.

After writing elaborately and with shrewd common-sense on cookery, housekeeping, travelling, astronomy, optics, and music, he summed up with a treatise on the art of invigorating and prolonging life, and another, on the "duty and pleasure of making a will" !

It would be as unfair to my readers as to the subject of these few and merely suggestive lines, to attempt, within the limits of the space I could find here, anything that could be called even a monograph on Dr. Kitchiner. His character and his occupations were so diversified and so full of incident of an entirely original cast, that they constitute a combination it would be most advantageous to study in detail. To those who knew him, it seems extraordinary that no one should have written a biographical account of a man of such marked individuality, the more so that a rescript of his intelligent, common-sense views of social economy in so many of its bearings, would be most opportune at the present time. Dr. Kitchiner's life is one, the tenor of which is calculated not merely to astonish and amuse, but from it might be acquired much matter for reflection and practical application to the present moral condition of society. It is also highly interesting to infer from his pages the curious social changes that have gradually and imperceptibly taken place in the habits and accessories of our every-day life since his time. Dear old Dr. Kitchiner ! I have never forgotten him. I don't know why I should call him "old," except that he seemed old to me then, and though, now, I have far outstripped him in years, the impression of the difference there once was in our ages, still remains. There can be few, if any, surviving, who know as much about him as myself, for he was a very intimate friend of my father's, who held him in the highest esteem, and deeply lamented his comparatively early death.

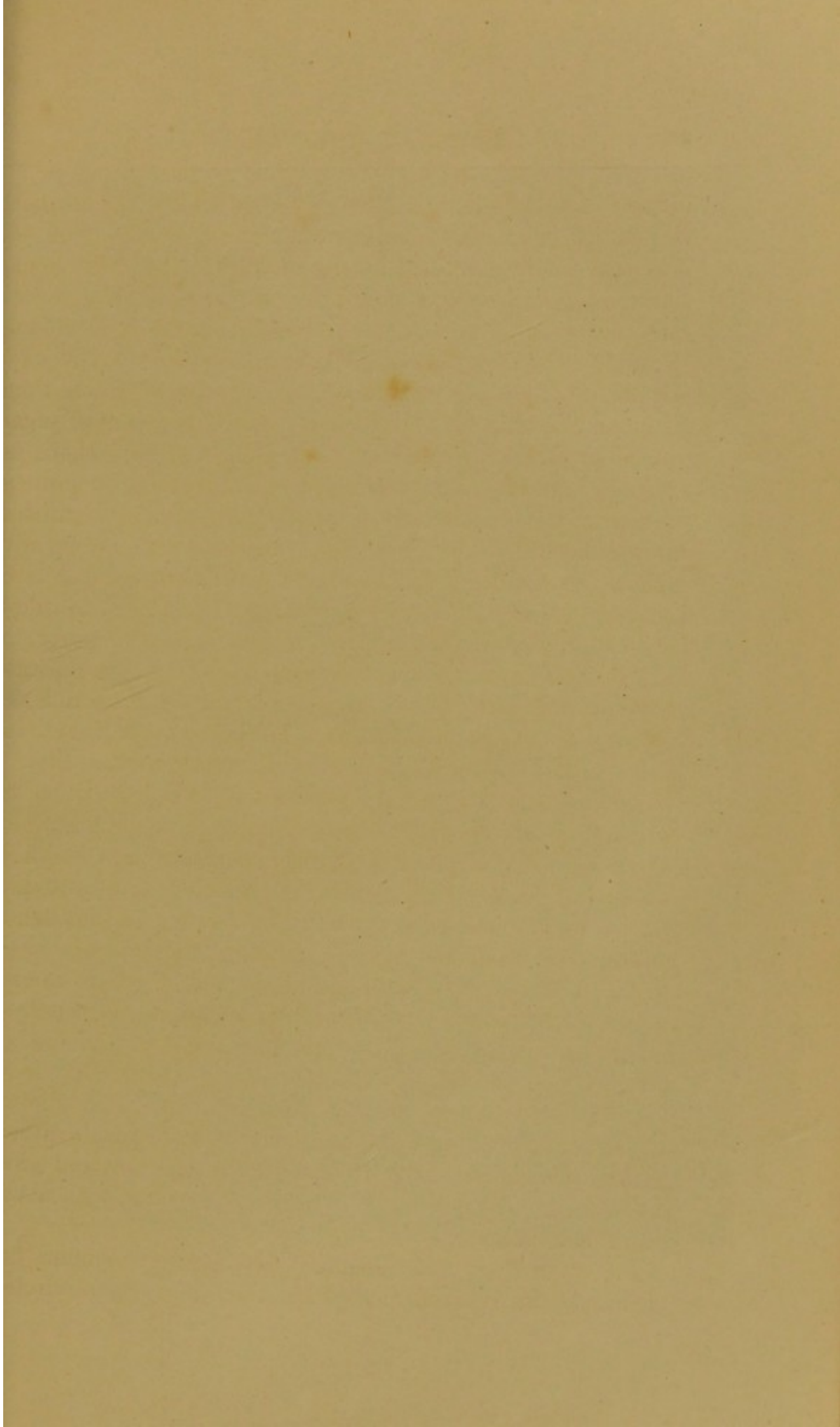
How well I remember his spare, tall figure, his kindly face, and genial voice, and the benevolent attention with which he condescended to children, and made himself the idol of the

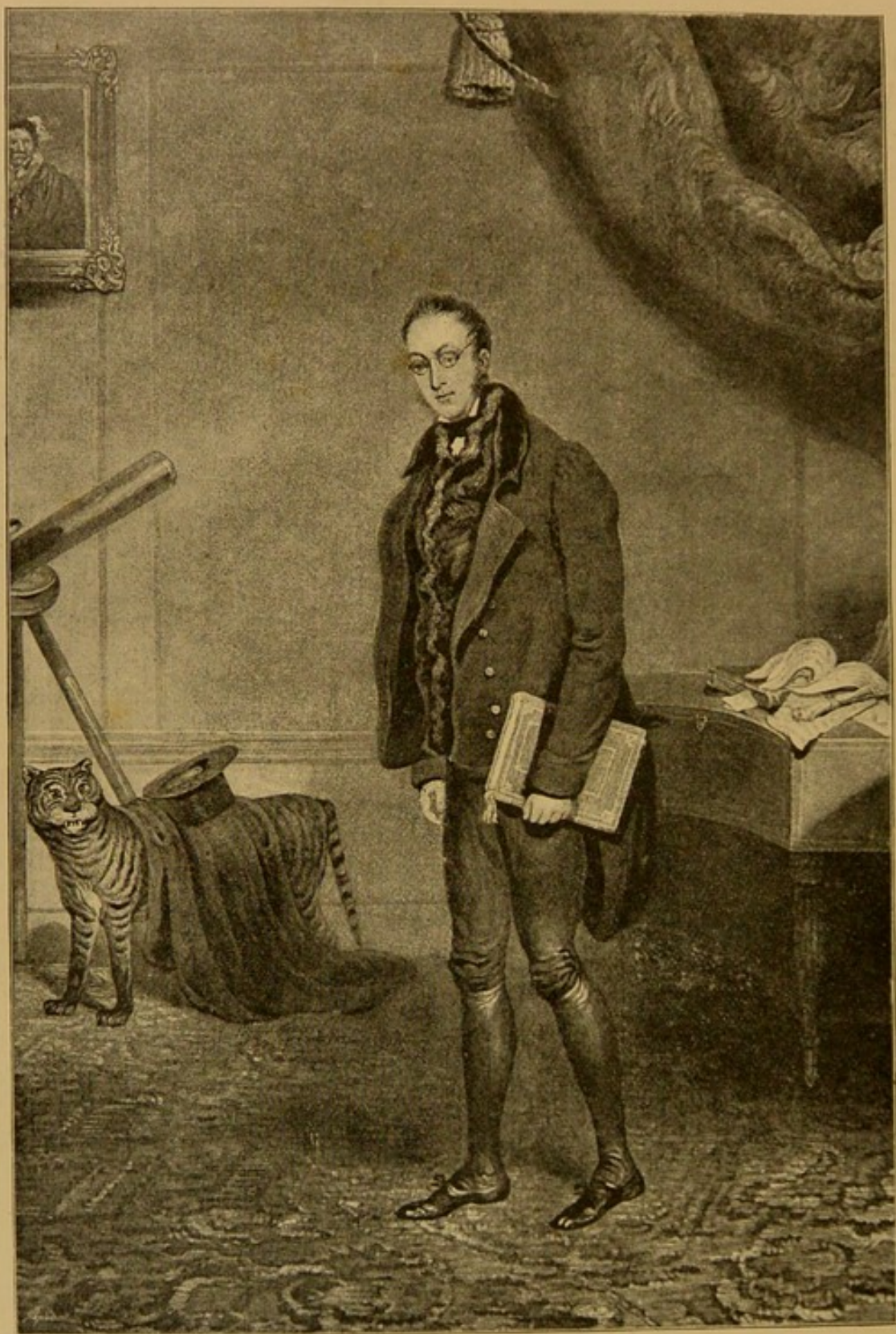
nursery. I can see him now as, seated at the piano with myself on one knee, and a small brother or sister on the other, he would play and sing to us the nursery songs he had set to music. I believe he enjoyed as much as ourselves the fun of inviting us to feel in his coat-pockets for barley-sugar "kisses," folded each in a different coloured paper, and when we had dived deeply, seizing our hands and imprisoning them until we had purchased our liberty with a kiss, *not* of sugar.

Dr. Kitchiner was brought up at Eton, and there, at thirteen, lost the sight of one eye while playing at a game so dangerous that it is wonderful it should have been permitted. He died in 1827 very suddenly. He had been dining with Braham, who then lived in Baker Street, and had ordered his carriage at 8.30, but, enjoying the society of Mathews and other professional friends who were of the party, he stayed on till 11. On his return home he ran upstairs more quickly than usual; his valet followed him, and saw him throw himself on the sofa. He never spoke again, and died in about half-an-hour. He was aged not quite fifty.

It is curious that a man who wrote so learnedly on the care and preservation of the eyesight, should have been blind of one eye; that although he published an excellent and well-considered book on the art of invigorating and prolonging life, he should have lived but half a century; and that having enforced on others the duty of making a will, he should have died with an unsigned codicil in his pocket. Though married, he had no children by his wife, from whom he was separated for twenty years; but, on a principle which he did his best to impress on others, he behaved with great liberality to his son, to whom he gave an expensive education, and who was an undergraduate at Cambridge at the time of his father's death. He was a strikingly handsome, elegant, and gifted young man, and his life was quite a romance, with a very tragic *dénouement*.

Dr. Kitchiner had, by his fascinating manners and cultivated conversation, drawn round him a large circle of





DR. KITCHENER.

literary friends, and held delightful weekly conversaziones as well as periodical dinners, at which they met. There would be much to say about these gatherings, their detail being eminently characteristic of the many-sided mind and varied accomplishments of the host, and I hope in a future volume to supply an account of the dear old friend of my childhood, more in accordance with the singular qualifications of his character.

It would be interesting to know when it was *not* considered "smart" to hold medicine up to ridicule, and to make jokes on physic and physicians; no subject probably has been more fertile in puns, notwithstanding that if it be bad policy to affront one's cook, there must be equally cogent reasons for not quarrelling with one's doctor: the Scriptural injunction—"Honora medicum propter necessitatem"—is of obvious sagacity, and Hippocrates says, "The physician stands before his patient in the light of a god: the issues of life and death are in his hands."

Satires on
medicine.

From the mordant criticisms of Martial to the irrepressible censures of Le Sage, of Cervantes, and of Molière, encouraged as was the last-named, by his Royal patron—not to enumerate the droll and well-known diatribes of a later date—the flow of sarcasm against medicine and its professors has never run dry; yet probably these merry jesters, when sick, have not been unwilling to avail themselves of such knowledge as might be possessed by those whom they had employed the cream of their wit in ridiculing.

It is an instructive warning to such, that Jean Jacques Rousseau (who, among many other malicious remarks, was wont to say that "Doctors killed the majority of their patients by ignorance, and saved the minority by accident") lived to recant, and later in life, told Bernardin de St. Pierre that, "of all *savants*, he considered that physicians not only knew the most, but knew the most thoroughly, all they did know."

Do not let us forget that Temple, Dryden, Pope, Black-

stone, and many other equally distinguished men have spoken of medical professors to the same effect; and Johnson bears his solid testimony to "their benevolence, dignity of sentiment, and disinterested readiness to exert a lucrative art where there is no hope of lucre."

We are all too apt to yield to the temptation of saying a clever thing, the humour of which we feel would commend it to the company, without pausing to consider whether it is generous, or even just; this weakness of our common nature will go far, not only to explain, but to explain away, most of the censorious witticisms which seem unfair to what by universal consent is, after all, a great profession. We may therefore conclude that there is rarely any real malice in medical *bons-mots*; and that they are for the most part harmless, is evident from the fact that we recount them in the presence of the Faculty, who often repeat them themselves, and are as heartily amused at their ingenuity and drollery as are the laity. They are not often as harsh in their significance as the saying of the Oriental Jews, who also probably meant it for a joke, that "All ass-drivers were rogues; all camel-drivers, honest; all pigeon-fanciers, liars; and all physicians, children of hell." But what *were* these "physicians"?

The severest of Molière's severe remarks was very probably true enough at the time; and he only showed up the medical ignorance of his day when he defined medicine as "the art of entertaining the patient with frivolous reasons for his malady, while Nature was curing or Death destroying him." *

"The Faculty of Molière's time," says Taschereau, "were naturally not much distressed at the death of a man so well

* Pitcairn, however, recommended this course, when he said, "the last thing experience teaches a physician is to know when to do nothing, but quietly to wait and allow Nature and Time to have fair play in checking the progress of disease and gradually restoring the strength and health of the patient." It may be mentioned, *apropos* of Pitcairn, that he was such an advocate of opium that his practice was called by his brother physicians, "*Currus triumphalis opii*."

informed on all their weak points, and so brilliantly clever, as well as so recklessly unscrupulous, in exposing them; as may be supposed, they were only too delighted to take their revenge by attributing to the just judgment of heaven his sudden death when in the very act of ridiculing their profession." Madame de Gaffigny, however, who lived in the succeeding century, used to expatiate with wonder on the extraordinary prescience of Molière, who, she declared, had, with as much accuracy as had been manifested by the prophets in foretelling the Messiah, pre-described, in his characters of Drs. *Diaphorus* and *Purgon*, a certain Dr. Malouin of Tours.

Notwithstanding the witty dramatist's apparent hostility to the Faculty, he was on the best possible terms with his doctor, Mauvillain, even availing himself of the King's favour to introduce him at Court, where Louis XIV. received him most graciously.

Palissot tells us that one day, when both were dining at the Royal table, the Monarch said: "So this is your doctor, Molière; now what does he do for you?"

"We argue together, Sire," replied the wit; "he prescribes for me; I don't take his medicines, and I recover."

Rabelais could not resist his joke against the doctors, not only in their presence, but on his death-bed, as they stood round him after holding a consultation.

"Dear gentlemen," said he, "a truce to 'remedies'; let me die a natural death."

Whether, after this exhortation, he finished off, as some have said, with "*Tirez le rideau—la farce est jouée!*" has never been fully authenticated.

Frederick the Great, who, like the *Grand Monarque*, was fond of firing off his wit upon doctors, met his match in Dr. Zimmerman, the Court physician, of whom he one day asked how many men he had killed.

"Far fewer than your Majesty," replied the wily medical courtier, "and with far less glory."

A wise discrimination, it will be seen, is needed to distinguish between "doctor" and doctor; for, various indeed are the qualifications of those who profess the healing art. "Credulity and superstition—twin sisters—" writes one of the profession, "have in all ages been the source whence priest-craft and quackery have derived their success: next to these, fashion, or the adoption of medicines set in vogue by princes and nobles."

Dr. Paris, who entered on his office as President of the College of Physicians in 1819 by the delivery of a series of lectures on the *Philosophy of Materia Medica*, "showing its importance in affording lessons of practical wisdom, reminiscences of its past uses, and beacons for future guidance," said, "Its records are the symbols of medical history—the accredited registers of departed systems, founded on ideal assumptions and of superstitions engendered by fear and ignorance."

I will not part with those who have followed me through this chapter without assuring them that, whatever remarks of a satirical nature I may have quoted on the subject of medicine, as far as I am myself concerned, they are "without prejudice" to that noble profession—for it may thus be justly qualified: why not, indeed, "noblest"?

If the soldier risks his life in the cause of duty, so also assuredly does the physician. The incentive of *promotion* may exercise its influence in both cases, but in the profession of arms there is the additional inducement of attainable *glory*. The soldier, when he risks his own life, is also bent on taking that of another, or *many* others; the physician seeks only to save or prolong life: not only this, but he risks his own, again and again, when exposing it to the results of dangerous experiments intended to prove beneficial to the human race. Many valuable lives have been thus sacrificed by willing martyrs, who have given themselves unreservedly to science and to the public service, always ready to respond to those who are pleased to draw upon their resources.

When we find ourselves, or those dear to us, in a supreme emergency, have we ever paused to consider that the infection of a virulent disease, which has made our house the terror of the neighbourhood, has to be braved without hesitation by any doctor it may please us to call in? and does it occur to a man who lies wounded on the field of battle, that the surgeon he has called to him must pass through the "thickest of war's tempest" to reach him?

Even the chances of longevity are against the doctor.* Mental perplexity, moral anxiety, physical fatigue, vigils, irregularity of rest and of food, exposure to changes of temperature, to bad air, and to contagion, sufficiently account for the brevity of their life, and ought to constitute a title to public respect.

These and other contingent considerations may be regarded as the heroic opportunities and ennobling privileges of a great calling; and by the reflecting, they are accepted with a just pride, which suffices to maintain among the Faculty the elevating sentiments of their traditional self-devotion.

* There is, according to reliable French statistics, no liberal profession of which the members are so short-lived as Medicine. Out of one hundred, only twenty-four, on an average, reach the age of seventy, and whereas, in other professions, the mean age is fifty-nine, in the medical it is only fifty-six.



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