

The decision of Aesculapius, in the cause O.P. versus M.D.

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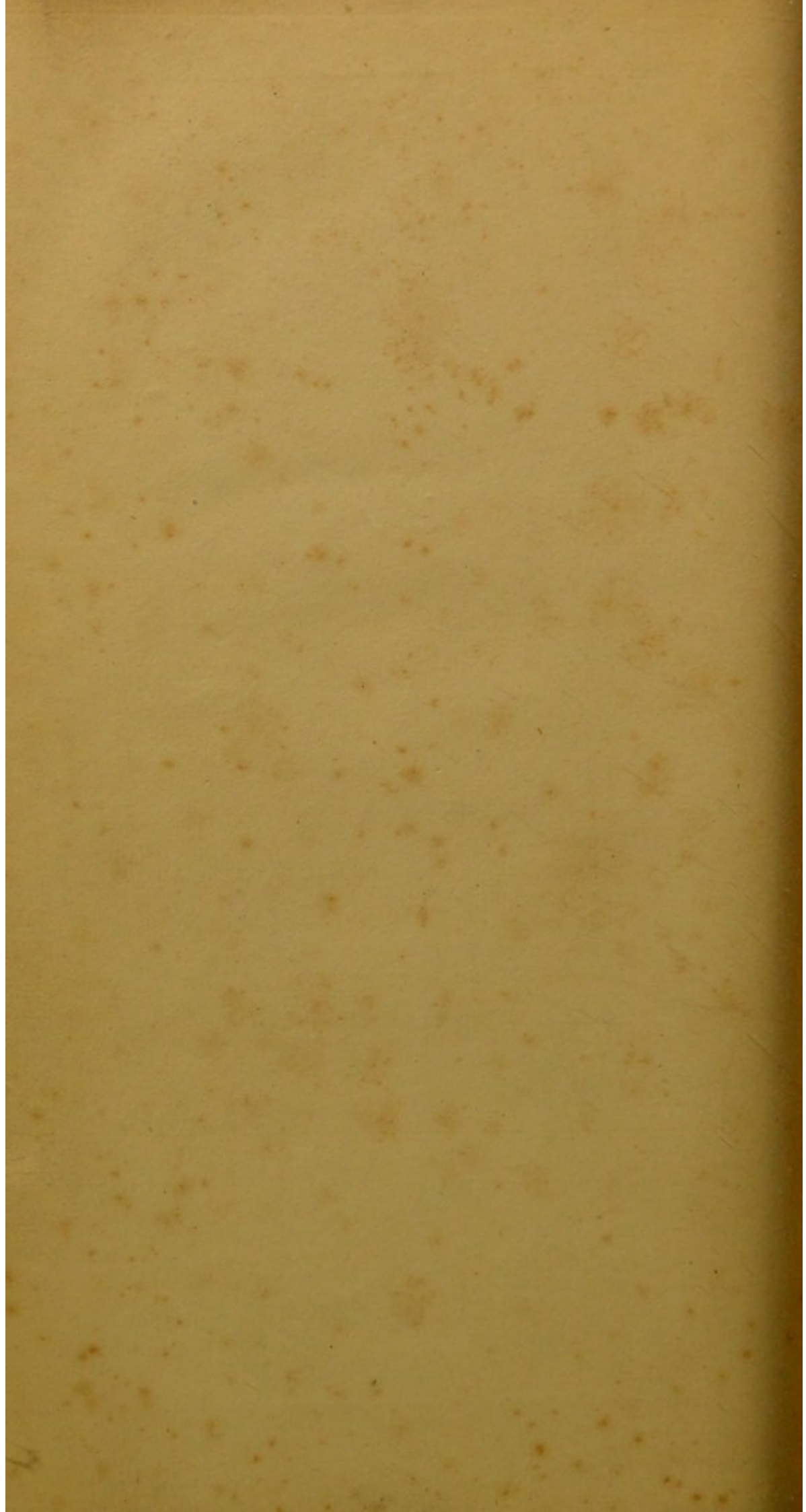


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183 Euston Road
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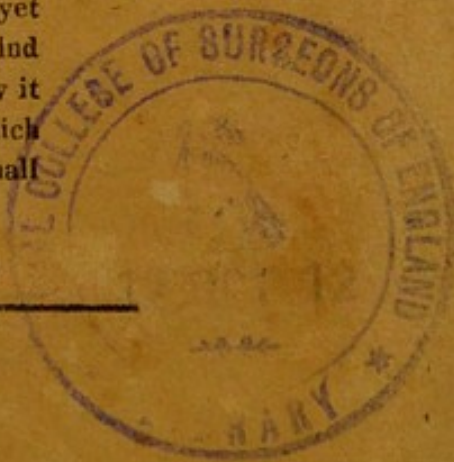
THE
DECISION OF ÆSCULAPIUS,

IN THE CAUSE

O. P. VERSUS M. D.

“ Though some make slight of jests, yet
you may see by them how the wind
sits; as, take a straw and throw it
up into the air, you may see which
way the wind is,—which you shall
not do by casting up a stone.”

SELDON'S TABLE-TALK.



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THE

DECISION OF ÆSCULAPIUS.

ÆSCULAPIUS.

Now, as of bustle a preventive,
Speak one at once,—and first, the plaintiff.

O. P.—Much honour'd judge, had I occasion
To state at large this innovation,
I'd harrow in thee and thy warden
Emotions fit for Covent-garden.
But, as details would only *fash ye*,
Take cases three,—*exempli gratia*.
First, “Amputation,”—case so pregnant
To duellist with ills malignant :
He'd risk a limb at honour's station,
But shrinks from “fee of amputation.”

Thus, adverse forces him importune,—
 His honour here, and there his fortune,
 The last prevails : cowards fire at twitches ;
 And then adieu to unkick'd breeches.
 Next, “ Tooth-extraction.” Ma'am revolving
 The fee demanded for dissolving
 'Twixt either jaw and teeth the union,
 Would bar 'twixt her and purse communion,
 Though loose, retains them, till we find her
 Quite throttled by a luckless grinder.
 And last, “ Midwifery,”—innovation
 That threatens our town's depopulation.
 If ladies have these fees before 'em,
 'Twill prove a lasting *in terrorem* :
 'Twill make our misses dread to marry,
 And make our married wives miscarry.

These cases prove our dire condition.
 Then grant, O grant O. P.'s petition !

M. D.—Goat-suckled god ! son of Apollo !
 What *larynx* can thy merits follow ?
 Or faithfully *anatomize*
 The deeds that raised thee to the skies ?

Famed Argo's crew, when very sea-sick,
 Thou curedst by thy skill in physic :
 And when at Rome the plague was raging,
 Thou, serpent-shaped, wert it assuaging.
 Thine eyes, transpiercing bones and sinews,
 Behold whate'er's conceal'd within us,—
 From *ganglia* of great toe, to what are
 Disposed beneath the *pia mater*.
 Nay, their resistless vision urge in
 Tracts never traced by human surgeon,
 Though to survey diseases station'd,
 Thyself wert never once a patient.
 Nay thou, without thy stomach rising,
 Canst give loose reins to gormandizing ;
 And (what no M. D. e'er could boast) if
 Port thou dost swill, thou art not costive.
 And thou canst———But the full relation
 Would baffle powers of *respiration*.—
 Then, father—patron—judge—defender !
 To thee I my devotions tender.
 See, lowly bent in genuflexion,
 I crave thy Majesty's protection,

O turn thy *tympanum* toward me !
 With furl'd *iris*, O regard me !
 While briefly I expose to view, Sir,
 The ingratitude of this accuser.

Ask why our tars brave Gallia's thunder,—
 They'll tell thee—'Tis the hope of plunder :
 Ask why our statesmen court dissension,—
 They'll tell thee—Hope of royal pension :
 And ask an M. D. whence attendance,—
 He'll answer—Hope of independence.
 What but this hope, exertion-giving,
 Had raised the dead, and kill'd the living ?
 By this inspired, I dared to venture
 The duties of a long indenture :
 Abroad, my master's spatter'd porter ;
 At home, companion of his mortar :
 And oft, when sleep's nocturnal potion
 Had stript my limbs of locomotion,
 The knocker's drear and timeless thunder
 Hath burst my *palpebræ* asunder,
 And forced me to exchange my slumber
 For watchings amid garret lumber.

Oft, shivering thus, in attic station,
 I've pass'd the midnight lucubration,—
 No "lowest" * bums applied the blister,
 And oftentimes (good Heavens!) a clyster.
 Discharged, I now, with foresight prudent,
 Became of medicine a student,—
 In hospitals defied infection,
 And run the circuit of dissection,—
 Paid sweeping fees to those who ease us
 Of writing a probation thesis,—
 And drain'd my purse, to bribe the proctor
 Who made me *medicinæ doctor*.
 Then flourish'd hope;—but this the station
 When hope must end in consummation.
 Now, what reward, say,—I impower ye,—
 For toils like these, but *multum auri*?

* "Lowest."—That is to say, of "the third class."—
 Would any ipecacuan critic object to the use of the word
 "num," be it known that it *stands or falls* with the twin
 monosyllable in the following extract, taken from a work of
 telling pretensions. "Dislocation of the *hip* joint."

Æs.—M. D. *et filius Jovis Ammon*
 Rewarded with the filth of Mammon!—
Proh pudor!—Ge'men of the jury,
 Find for the plaintiff.—

M. D.—Death and fury!

Æs.—Guards! hurry M. D. from before us!—
O tempora! o doctorum mores!
 Diseases, rise!—pursue!—And mind you
 Be steady to the post assign'd you:
 His limbs, ye galling host of Rowels,—
 His head, Vertigo,—Gripes, his bowels:
 Till, purified by oil of castor,
 He own me for his lawful master.

And you, O. P., successful plaintiff,
 To my advice be now attentive:
 Leave M. D. to his fees and hoaxes—
 His recipes and empty boxes;
 And, till he grant O. P.'s petition,
 Use “**BUCHAN'S FAMILY PHYSICIAN.**”

