Observations on the rise and progress of the medical art in the British Empire containing remarks on medical literature and a view of a Bibliographia medicinae britannicae / by William Royston.

To St. Matthew Baillie
from the author.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

RISE AND PROGRESS

OF THE

MEDICAL ART,

IN THE

BRITISH EMPIRE.

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CONTAINING

REMARKS ON MEDICAL LITERATURE,

AND

A VIEW

OF A

BIBLIOGRAPHIA MEDICINÆ BRITANNICÆ.

BY

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1808.

The chief glory of every people arises from its authors.

JOHNSON.

OBSERVATIONS.

LETTERS furnish the unsullied memorials of truth, and impart to successive generations the perfect records of knowledge. It is the felicity of literature to improve, in proportion to its cultivation, the general condition of the human race; to soften the ferocities of savage life, and to encourage a fraternal intercourse amidst the clash of arms and the shouts of war. Even in the slow, and otherwise almost imperceptible progression of arts and science, from their origin in remote and barbarous times to the invention of PRINTING, these effects are evident; and whenever a chance and imperfect ray of

learning enlightened the desolation and ignorance in which Europe for many ages was sunk, the increased prosperity and happiness of its inhabitants was the constant result.

From the discovery of Printing, an event most extensive in its beneficial influence, the progress of literature becomes infinitely more interesting; and its operation on the social and political state of nations more decided. The knowledge which this art widely diffused was the means of detecting errors that time had consecrated; and trying, at the bar of reason, systems that had governed opinion for centuries. The boundaries of science were enlarged, taste was corrected, and the judgment matured, by its bringing into action a greater portion of human intellect:* by giving

* In the long period of darkness and barbarism that followed close on the fall of the Roman empire, and continued until the energies of the human mind were aroused

" scope and verge enough" to this *divina particulam auræ*, this spark of celestial fire, discoveries were made that will benefit mankind to the latest hour of time; and works were produced that will instruct, and charm, as long as the privilege of understanding them remains.

YET the advance of knowledge did not bear an exact proportion to the facility which Printing afforded to the expansion

by a concurrence of causes, among which the invention of Printing was not the least efficient, it is easy to imagine, without violating the bounds of reason and probability, that many " hearts pregnant with celestial fire, mute inglorious Miltons," might have existed, who, under more favorable circumstances, would have " wak'd to extacy the living lyre;" that minds such as Galileo's, Harvey's, and Newton's, but for the impenetrable darkness that surrounded them, would have explained the economy of nature, and unfolded the laws of the universe: that other Titians, Raphaels, and Michael Angelos, had their latent powers been fostered by congenial times, would have taught the marble to breathe, or animated the canvas.

of opinion, and the promulgation of discovery. Man, just awakened from the long sleep of intellect, did not instantly understand how to use, to advantage, his native powers. The press was originally employed on books that are now not looked into, but as specimens of the first effort of the art: but, by degrees, it became occupied by works of taste, science, and genius. By the time two centuries had elapsed, printed books were accumulated into libraries of such extent, that it became essential to class and arrange them; to point them out in catalogues, or describe them in histories of literature.

The first, and indeed many of the works written with the intent of rendering intelligible these immense depositories of learning, were of a very general nature. Not a few, however, have been appropriated to particular branches of science: and among these, several have

appeared on the continent of Europe, the object of which has been to give a view of the progress of medical literature, by forming descriptive and scientific catalogues of medical books; and by arranging the materials of those books under distinct heads, to afford the student, the practitioner, or the writer, an exact and expeditious reference.

If health be a blessing, a regular and clear arrangement of the vast mass of materials that afford instruction for its preservation or restoration, will be a desideratum in which the whole of the human race must be interested.

By extensive and perspicuous views of the science, by giving general information through individual reference to every interesting fact, the compilers of *Bibliothecas* have endeavored to render the acquisition of knowledge easy to the practitioner: while, through the same me-

dium, those who look not merely to the laboratory or the sick chamber, have been gratified by illustrations of ingenious theory, by accounts of the structure and functions of animal bodies as a branch of natural history; and by details of the progress of medical literature, neither totally deficient in critical acumen, nor uninteresting to the philosophical inquirer into the powers of the human mind.

In every attempt, however, to execute these great works, on any principle, the labors of Englishmen have occupied so small a share of attention, that it may truly be considered that scarcely an effort has hitherto been made to arrange and describe the medical literature of the *British Empire.*

If the continental *Bibliothecas* are not confined to the works of any individual country, but attempt to give a view of

those of all times and places, it is a defect in the comprehensive and stupendous project, that has necessarily caused the indigenous literature of every country to be left imperfectly described.

Those who are acquainted with the genius and talents of *Haller*, and the persevering industry of *Ploucquet*, as manifested in their *Bibliothecas*, will admire the ability with which those works are executed; yet, with respect to English books, it must be admitted they are always jejune, and often incorrect. In the ten quarto volumes of Ploucquet, the references to English books are too few in number to do any manner of justice to the subject; and an examination of the *Bibliothecas* of Haller, those astonishing monuments of human knowledge as well as human labor, will excite surprize, when in them it is discovered how little he was acquainted with the works of

Englishmen, especially those written in the English language.

These remarks are not made with a view to depreciate the talents, or underrate the industry of those writers; but to shew that profound erudition and unwearied application are not equal to an exact description of the native literature of a foreign country.

It becomes then almost a self-evident proposition, that the *Bibliothecas* of the indigenous literature of any country should not be left in the hands of a foreigner.

Several years have now elapsed since the author of these "Observations," impressed with this idea, began to make collections for a *Bibliographia Medicinæ Britannicæ*, in which it was his desire to unite the precision of a *Catalogue raisonnée*, the convenience of a concordance

of facts and opinions, an historical sketch of the progress of the medical art in the British Empire, and biographical recollections of writers who have become conspicuous by their theories, the controversies in which they have been engaged, by their having meliorated the practice, or by their discoveries extended the boundaries of medical science.

More than half a century has passed away since Dr. Edward Milward* projected a plan to which this bears some resemblance.

* In 1740 Dr. Milward published a letter, in which he called upon all orders of learned men to assist him with materials for writing a history of the progress of medicine in England. In this letter he makes many ingenious, profound, and learned observations on the subject; and points out numerous heads of inquiry, which plainly shew how well he was qualified for the execution of the design. But his design differed essentially from this: it did not comprehend a Bibliographia, which is here the primary object. To this letter is acknowledged, with gratitude, many obligations. While its extensive view of the subject, the research it points out, and the investigations it

Among the causes that occasioned the failure of his design, an inquiry made with some diligence, has led to a belief that a singular apathy which then pervaded the study of nature and the pursuit of medical science, was the most decisive. Perhaps this is a more auspicious æra. The present times are distinguished by the general diffusion of a spirit of literary investigation, by a desire to trace the current of opinion as it flows from age to age, and to elucidate the latent sources from whence knowledge has arisen. On this character for

leads to, almost occasion despair, the information it gives materially assists in conquering the difficulty. The more recent attempt of Dr. Aikin, as explained in his "Specimen of the Medical Biography of Great Britain," had it been executed to the full extent of his first views, might at least have anticipated the biographical part of this work. The medical faculty has still to regret, that a person so eminently qualified for the undertaking should have been induced, from any want of encouragement, to abandon his original design, and be content with the publication of a part of his collections in a thin octavo volume.

disquisition and inquiry principally is founded the hope and the expectation of success.

The *amor patriæ* readily suggests that it would have been grateful to Englishmen, at any period, to have seen another wreath of intellect embellish the genius of their native soil: but a concurrence of peculiar circumstances was required to make the public feel, that the science of medicine could add one more ornament to the literary character of a country, already adorned by the immortal works of Shakspear, Milton, and Newton. Can the liberal sentiments, the knowledge, the justice, and the taste of the present age, allow a fastidious exclusion of the labors of Harvey, Sydenham, Cullen, Hunter, Monro, Darwin, &c. from the temple of British worthies?—Greece, in her brightest day of mental illumination, would have deified

the discoverer of the CIRCULATION OF THE BLOOD.

How easy would it be to produce a train of facts that would exalt the medical character of the British nation to the highest point in the scale of intellectual excellence. Classical learning, science, and elegant literature, have adorned it in no common degree; and the numerous works which bear ample testimony to the truth of this eulogium, present a system of anatomical and physiological learning, profound investigation, accurate arrangement, ingenious theory, and rational practice, equal, perhaps superior, to that of any other country.

THE facility which *Bibliothecas* give to scientific investigation is sufficiently marked to have excited general approbation and support; and to have received the sanction of every profession. But in none of the professions is the utility of

these compilations more decided than in that of medicine, where the facts are so numerous, and so loosely connected. There is then no hesitation respecting their general usefulness; but there may be some doubt as to the propriety of forming a *Bibliotheca* of the medical literature of any individual country.

It has been before observed, that the extensive designs of the existing *Bibliothecas* have rendered them very unfaithful pictures of indigenous literature: especially has that of Britain been neglected, either from ignorance of its stores, or from the limited capacity of man; for even German industry has been exhausted before it reached this mine.* That it has been neglected is certain; and that it deserves serious attention, perhaps, will appear from a perusal of

* A recent publication on the history of medicine is a striking instance of the superficial knowledge the continental writers have of the medical literature of England.

the following outline, within which is collected a part of the materials that the industry, the talents, and the genius of this country have, in the course of many ages, accumulated to a degree of magnitude that requires elucidation by arrangement and analysis.

The collecting widely dispersed materials, many of which are, though of intrinsic excellence, only to be found by the most diligent search in private libraries; and the arrangement and disposal of those materials, in such a manner as to render them of easy access, constitute two species of exertion equally essential in the compilation of a *Bibliographia.*

In collecting the subjects of the *Bibliographia Medicinæ Britannicæ,* neither time nor labor have been spared. And in forming its plan of arrangement much reflection has been employed to

make it adequately perspicuous, at the same time that particular attention and deference have been given to the great works of Haller and Ploucquet.

If in these works little can be found that will give information on individual articles in British literature, yet the arrangement employed in them has not been, even partially rejected, without hesitation and doubt. The high character stamped by public opinion on these works, and their internal excellence, almost make them models for imitation so sacred, that to deviate from them will be considered as wandering from the path of scientific truth.

Though one general principle of order must pervade all works of this kind, yet in the subordinate parts of the design there may be much variety of disposition. And, it is here, perhaps, that the British *Bibliographia* has most deviated; for its

author believed that disposal of its subordinate parts was most excellent, which best described with natural ease and perspicuity the various branches of the profession, keeping them at once distinct, and yet having in view a general chain of connexion.

In the *Bibliographia Medicinæ Britannicæ* it is intended to give a view of the progress of medical literature in the British empire, by forming a *Catalogue raisonnée* of its medical works, beginning with the earliest printed books, and ending with the year 1800: and by a scientific classification of these works, with an analytical arrangement of the materials which they contain, to furnish a comprehensive concordance of theoretical and practical knowledge.

The method purposed to be pursued in describing the books of which the *Bibliographia* is to consist, will give, first, a

description of the volume, comprehending the title, size, place, date, number of pages, plates, and other peculiarities; *principes* and *optimæ* editions: secondly, an analytical view of the contents, with critical remarks, practical observations, and biographical notices of the author. An endeavor will also be made to give the anonymous and pseudonymous productions to their real writers.

It is designed to precede this by an historical memoir, giving a detail of the progress of the medical art in Britain, from the earliest period to the present time.

This introductory memoir will touch, perhaps slightly, but it is hoped with precision, on the state of medicine among the antient Britons, particularly noticing the practice of it by the Druids; the state of medical science under the Romans in Britain; under the Saxons, the

Danes, and the Normans. On the progress of the art from the Norman conquest to the time of Linacre, and the founding of the College of Physicians: a period in which lived Joannes Egidius; Richardus, Gilbertus, and Alphredus Anglicus; Nicolas Ferenham, Hugh de Evesham, Roger Franks, John Estwode, William Grisaunt, Bartholomew Glanville, William de Holme, Simon Breodun, John Ardern, Henry Daniel, Richard Kennet, Nicolas Hortesham, John Marfelde, and John of Gaddesden; men of eminence and high repute in their profession as practitioners; and as authors neither devoid of ingenuity nor industry. The *Rosa Anglica,* the laborious work *de Rerum Proprietatibus,* and the chirurgical treatises of John Ardern remain as testimonies at least of their industry, and to elucidate the state of science in that rude age.

With the memoirs and biographical

notices of these persons, will be connected a particular investigation of the practice of physic and surgery by the monks and other ecclesiastics, and an inquiry into the losses that the science has sustained by the destruction of MSS. at the Reformation.

The period succeeding to this will be contained between the founding of the college, and the discovery, or demonstration of the *Circulation of the Blood.* Linacre, Caius, Ellyot, Turner, the author of the first English herbal, Moffit, Goulston, Clowes, Woodhall, &c. adorned this period. Learned and ingenious as these men were, a perfect devotion to the Galenic theory effectually prevented in them much advance in science. But though their time was principally employed in translating and commenting on the works of their master, or in defending the newly recognized rights of the regulars, they were of service to the

science of medicine, by encouraging a taste for antient literature and classical learning.

The æra of Harvey presents a variety of interesting circumstances. British medicine began then to assume a scientific form. His discovery called forth new views, and infused fresh energies into the human mind. Led on by his example, and guided by his genius, the structure and functions of animal bodies were investigated with unwearied assiduity, and the most profound arcana of nature almost developed. The merit of Harvey, with Englishmen at least, will not be confined to the dicovery of the circulation. The origin of a school of anatomy, in this country, is to be dated from his studies and discoveries; and experiments on generation, have not, perhaps, by any subsequent enquirer, been pursued with more science, ingenuity, and effect than in his *Exercita-*

tiones de Generatione Animalium. The institution of the Royal Society still further encouraged the cultivation of anatomy and general science; and its great work, the Philosophical Transactions, will claim particular attention, as the immense depository of facts in every province of natural history. It was in this national work that Lower, Needham, Thurston, Mayow, Willis, Ridley, and Boyle, first made the learned world acquainted with their discoveries.

Rapid as this view of the progress of the medical art in the British empire is intended to be, still many other circumstances will be noticed with all the conciseness the nature of the undertaking admits. Among these the practice of alchymy, the rosycrutian visions, the intermixture of astrology with the practice of physic, and various other empyrical delusions, will be attentively investigated.

The incorporation of the surgeons of London, establishment of anatomical and chirurgical lectures at Surgeons Hall; at the College of Physicians; the Harveian oration; and the rise and establishment of a medical school at Edinburgh, will not pass without remark.

Another part of the inquiry will comprehend the disputes between the galenists and the chemists; the attempt to establish a society of chemical physicians, in opposition to the college; the legal investigation of the claims of the licentiates; and the endowment of hospitals in London, Edinburgh, Dublin, and the provincial towns; with an examination of the effect they have had in improving the theory and practice of physic and surgery.

In the history of medicine there is no part more interesting than that which endeavors to extricate the origin of certain

diseases from the obscurity in which time has involved them. An effort will be made to elucidate the first appearance of *Siphilis* and *Variola* in Britain, and to ascertain the origin of *Rachitis* and the *Sudor Anglicanus;* with a detail of the various periods in which contagious Catarrh, under the popular term influenza, has occurred. This disorder, from its periodical returns, from the extent of its influence, and from the rapidity of its course, affords some of the most remarkable and curious facts in the history of diseases.

The appearance and progress of *Pestis* at various periods, and the opinions respecting its contagious or non-contagious nature; the properties of contagion in general; the attempts made to correct or destroy it; and the conduct of the legislature respecting those attempts, with the establishment and utility of quarantine, will have an attention given to them

proportioned to their weight and consequence.

The first appearance of scurvy in the British Navy, and the management that has almost effected its annihilation: *Chirurgia infusoria et transfusoria*: the introduction of Mercury, and the controversy on the use of crude quicksilver as a panacea: the first use of *Cinchona*, and how far and how early the English contributed to investigate its properties, and establish its use in opposition to art and prejudice: progress and improvement of surgery: the discovery and history of British mineral waters: practice of the obstetric art, its gradual improvement, and of the efforts made to retain it in the hands of females: empirical attempts to dissolve the calculus of the human bladder, the countenance those attempts received from the legislature, and the consequent controversy: the introduction of Small-pox inoculation; discovery

of the properties of the Cow-pock, and Vaccination, with the dispute concerning its utility, will likewise be comprized in this inquiry.

Biographical accounts of authors unnoticed by Friend and Aikin will claim particular attention; a constant reference will be had to the contemporary state of the art in other countries: and the memoir will conclude with a view of the progress of Botany, Chemistry, Electricity, and Galvanism in England, as connected with the science of medicine.

Notwithstanding the subjects of this introductory Memoir are so diversified, and its views so extensive, it is expected, with some confidence, that the materials which compose it may be compressed to such a degree as not to occupy too much space in the work, and yet be rendered perspicuous, by a constant and clear reference to the contemporary state of

medical knowledge on the continent, and to the corresponding classes and sections of the *Bibliographia.*

In arranging the body of the work much difficulty has been encountered, and many doubts have arisen, succeeded by as many alterations: but, after frequent reflection, it has been determined to form it into classes and sections, according to the following distribution.

In the disposal of these classes and sections two principles have been kept in view. The first of these regards the order in which it seems rational that the science of medicine should he studied. The classes begin with that which contains the works describing the structure and functions of the animal machine. The second class comprizes those which treat on the substances employed on the cure of diseases, their natural history, and the methods of preparing them for

medical purposes; with other works directly connected with the theory and practice of pharmacy. The student being thus put in possession of the means of understanding the structure and functions of the body, and made acquainted with the substances used for correcting its deviations from health; the third class teaches the nature and quality of morbid actions, and the method of using, for the purpose of restoring health, those substances, the natural and pharmacutical properties of which he had been taught, by the second class, to understand. The remaining classes apply to particular departments of the profession, or comprehend such adjuncts, as every intelligent member of the medical faculty feels the propriety of inquiring into.

Under the second principle, an effort has been constantly and steadily made to preserve a natural connexion in the distribution of diseases. In consonance to

this principle, the species of the genus *Febris* have been placed in the same section; exanthemata have been kept distinct from chronic diseases of the skin. Diseases of the brain and nervous system, of the chest, and of the digesting organs, &c. have each a separate section allotted to them. To the section employed on poisons, it may be objected, that it does not comprehend what the discriminating language of the present day denominates morbid poisons. In truth, under the term morbid poisons such a train of frequent and formidable diseases occur, and upon which so much has been written, that it was found expedient to give them separate sections, as in *Siphilis, Rabies, Variola,* &c. and to confine the term poisons, to an older, though not an obsolete, signification.

Guided by these principles, subject, however, to be corrected by liberal suggestions, and candid criticism, the classes

and sections fall into the subsequent order:—

CLASS I.

Anatomy and Physiology.

CLASS II.

Materia Medica.

Within this class will be comprehended the natural history and preparation of substances used in medicine, medical botany, pharmacutic chemistry, and pharmacopeias.

CLASS III.

Theory and Practice of Physic.

The multifarious materials of this class will require a sub-division into the following sections:

SECTION 1.—*Fever.* Continued, intermittent, and hectic.

SECTION 2.—*Exanthemata.* Variola, Varicella, Rubeola, Scarlatina, Erysipelas, Miliaria, Urticaria, Pemphigus, Pestis, Aptha, and Variola Vaccina.

SECTION 3.—*Diseases of the Brain and Nervous System.* Paralysis, Apoplexia, Epilepsia, Catalepsia, Chorea, Hysteria, Hypochondriasis, Oneirodynia, Mania, Melancholia, Trismus, Tetanus, &c.

SECTION 4.—*Diseases of the Chest and Respiring Organs.* Phthisis Pulmonalis, Asthma, Angina pectoris, Catarrh simple and contagious, Pneumonic inflammation, Dyspnea, Pertussis, &c.

SECTION 5.—*Diseases of the Digesting Organs.* Cholera, Diarrhœa, Dysentery, Obstipatio, Dyspepsia, Diseases of the Mouth and Fauces, constricted Œsepha-

gus, Hemorrhois, Scirrhus Rectum, inflammatory affections of the Viscera, and Vermes.

Section 6.—*Diseases of the Heart and circulating System.* Aneurism, Palpitatio, Ossification, Polypus, &c.

Section 7.—*Diseases of the Liver and its appendages.* Icterus, Hepatitis, Biliary concretions, &c.

Section 8.—*Diseases of the Urinary Organs.* Calculus, Diabetis, Nephritis, &c.

Section 9.—*Dropsy.*

Section 10.—*Gout, Rheumatism, Sciatica.*

Section 11.—*Diseases of the Eye, the Ear, and the Organ of Smell.*

SECTION 12.—*Natural history, structure and diseases of the Teeth.*

SECTION 13.—*Chronic Diseases of the Skin.* Elephantiasis, Lepra, Psora, Herpes, Tinea Capitis, &c.

SECTION 14.—*Scrophula.*

SECTION 15.—*Scurvy.*

SECTION 16.—*Cancer.*

SECTION 17.—*Siphilis.*

SECTION 18.—*Rabies.*

SECTION 19.—*Poisons.* Animal, Vegetable, and Mineral.

CLASS IV.

Nosology.

CLASS V.

Surgery.

CLASS VI.

Obstetrics, with Diseases of Women and Children.

CLASS VII.

Mineral Waters.

CLASS VIII.

Glossaries and Dictionaries.

CLASS IX.

Medical Jurisprudence.

In this class will be contained prophylaxis, or the preservation of public and

private health; revivification, and the humane society; various branches of medical police; and the conduct of the faculty as evidences in courts of justice, &c.

CLASS X.

Histories of Medicine, Medical Biography, Charters and Disputes respecting Privileges, Patent Medicines, and Empiricism, &c.

CLASS XI.

Veterinaria.

CLASS XII.

Experimental Philosophy.

Electricity, Magnetism, Galvanism, Meteorology, and Natural History, as far as connected with the theory and prac-

tice of medicine, will be comprized in this class.

CLASS XIII.

Miscellanea.

From the multitude of books which treat generally on the subject of medicine, in the form of systems; or as comprehending a variety of subjects in the same volume, and Collections, Reviews, Journals, Transactions, &c. an extensive class, under the title Miscellanea, became unavoidable.

In addition to the books specified in the preceding arrangement, it is intended to attach to each class or section, a reference to the loose and fugitive materials found in Transactions, Essays, Journals, Reviews, &c. with the title *Collectanea.*

Among the objects of a *Prospectus*, the time of publication, the form, the extent, and the price of a work, have been considered as the most important. If the author of the *Bibliographia Medicinæ Britannicæ* were able to speak explicitly to all these points, it would give him much satisfaction. He is enabled to state generally, however, that the work is so far advanced, that the historical Introduction, and some of the classes are so nearly finished, as to insure their being soon put to the press, if due consideration should warrant the publication of it in parts. But on this subject he holds it right to state, that his own opinion is entirely at variance with that of several friends, in whose judgment he has, however, great confidence: and that unless he can bring his sentiments to agree with theirs, not any part of the work will be printed until the whole is compleated.

The daily accumulation of new materials, the opening of additional and unexpected sources of information, and the more enlarged views that constant application and employment on the subject give, must, unavoidably, during the progress of a work, render its extent, in a measure, indefinite. It has been stated* that this would, probably, be comprized in four or five octavo volumes. It is still expected that it will not extend beyond that number; but no positive assurance of this can be given: neither is it unalterably determined that the form will not be quarto.

In the progress of a work of such magnitude, so difficult in its arrangement, so complex in its parts, so various in its subjects, and so imperiously demanding accuracy in dates, names, and references, as the *Bibliographia* of the books of a science in which so much

* Med. and Phys. Jour.

has been written, that its printed works are multiplied beyond the conception of those who have not industriously made the inquiry, it will surely be admitted, that many accidental difficulties, and unforeseen hindrances may arise, to render indeterminate the period of its final completion.

Should it then become a question, why a view of the work has been laid before the public, when it is not sufficiently advanced to answer explicitly every inquiry; the author has only to reply, that this has been done with the prospect of gaining information and instruction from liberal criticism, while that work is yet in a state to be corrected by the illumination that may thus be brought to bear upon it. He has not enough confidence in his own powers, to suppose that his is the best of all possible designs, that his arrangement is sufficiently comprehensive, and perfectly

lucid: that he has neither attempted too much, nor effected too little. He has many doubts which he hopes thus to have solved; many wishes for information which he expects thus to have completely gratified.

If on the general structure and disposition of the parts of the *Bibliographia Medicinæ Britannicæ*, the author is solicitous to have the opinion and advice of his brethren, he also is anxious to have it understood that the work will not be a mere catalogue of names; that it is his object to give in it as compleat a view of the rise and progress of *British Medicine*, in all its ramifications and dependencies, as the limited range of his acquirements admit. It is his desire to trace to its source every discovery, to elucidate every theory, and to investigate every interesting controversy: to point out hypothetical aberrations of opi-

nion, and duly estimate the sound reason and rational principles that have restored the misguided intellect to the genuine paths of science. It will be to him a felicity that will soften the toil, and lighten the labor, if he can rescue individual merit from obscurity, and render the aggregate excellencies of his countrymen sufficiently conspicuous, to raise the medical character of the empire to its proper station in the ranks of science.

But here it may be allowed, without imputed affectation, to pause on the execution of so vast a design; to contemplate, with almost fearful apprehension, the wild chaos of jarring opinions that bewilder the imagination, and disturb the judgment; or to shrink from the abyss of research, inevitably connected with the prosecution of the work.

From among the multitude of books that present for examination, it will be

an arduous task to discriminate and select; to award to each its due portion of attention; to explain their opinions, and state their facts: to ascertain the discoveries they claim, and elucidate the theories they support. But a still more difficult, delicate, and dangerous point it will be, to appreciate merit; to touch on defects without offensive criticism: to apportion praise and censure without raising resentment. Fully aware of the impossibility of altogether avoiding observations that may displease, the author is solicitous to deprecate anger, by asserting the spirit of candor and justice, by which he will anxiously endeavor to govern his animadversions.

When he is compelled, by the nature of his plan, to speak of the works of writers still living, he hopes to be believed when he affirms, that the narrowness of party, the preference of system, or the attachment to a school, will not

influence his remarks: that when he differs in opinion, as at times he must, he trusts it will be done without asperity; and that when he attempts to argue, it will not be for *victory*, but for TRUTH.

FINIS.

To men so well informed as those of the medical profession of the British Empire, it seems unnecessary to mention the difficulties encountered, and the time and labor required, in compiling a moderately correct Bibliotheca of its medical books; or to point out any particular objects of inquiry.

Anxious, however, to make the Bibliographia Medicinæ Britannicæ, *worthy a*

subject so interesting to the medical faculty, Mr. Royston requests, that those gentlemen who are disposed to assist his design, will direct a part of their inquiries to the early times of medical history in this country, comprehending, perhaps, all that period between the landing of the Romans and the founding of the College of Physicians in London; to Theses written by Englishmen at foreign universities soon after the revival of literature; to scarce books and MSS. to the first appearance of particular diseases in Great Britain; and to biographical notices of professional men, whose history has escaped the attention, or has not fallen within the plan of Freind and Aikin. Convinced that a Bibliographia Medicinæ Britannicæ *is a* NATIONAL WORK, *in which every member of the medical faculty of the British Empire is interested, not only on the principle of scientific improvement, but from a spirit of* PATRIOTISM; *Mr. Royston has no reluctance to solicit*

assistance, no hesitation in believing that assistance will be cheerfully given.

Those gentlemen who have the means and the inclination to supply him with information, either by a relation of facts, description of books, anecdotes, biographical and historical reports, or by critical remarks on his plan, are requested to transmit their communications to his residence in Princes Street, Cavendish Square, London; or to Mr. Callow, Medical Bookseller, Crown Court, Soho.

Hayden, Printer, Brydges Street, Covent Garden