

**Medical ethics; or, a code of institutes and precepts, adapted to the professional conduct of physicians and surgeons ... / By the late Thomas Percival ... With additions [by the editor], illustrative of the past and present state of the profession and its collegiate institutions, in Great Britain.**

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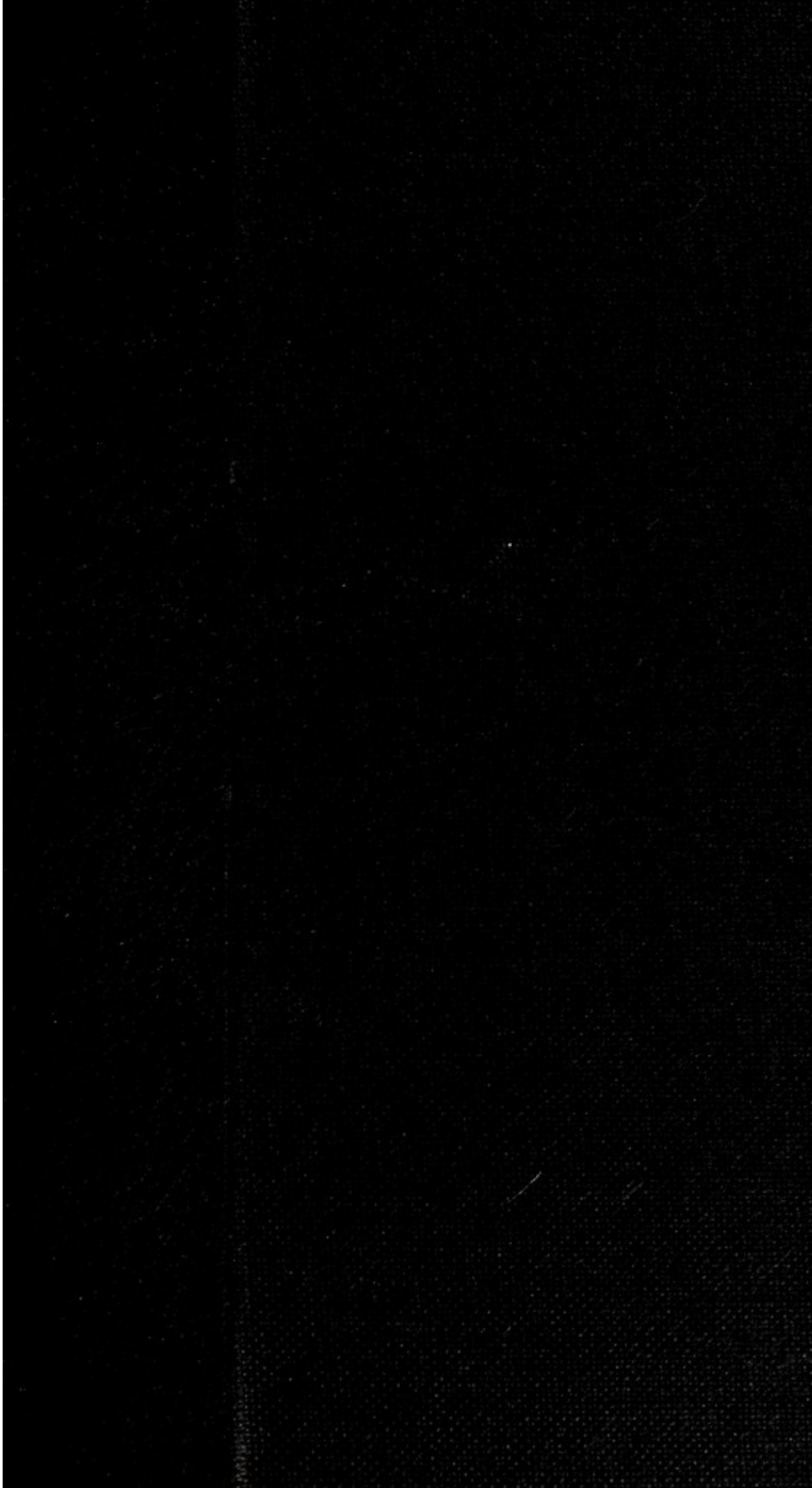
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J. C. Burnett

1875

**MEDICAL ETHICS.**



NULLA ENIM VITÆ PARS, NEQUE PUBLICIS, NEQUE PRIVATIS, NEQUE DOMESTICIS IN REBUS, NEQUE SI TECUM ACAS QUID, NEQUE SI CUM ALTERO CONTRAHAS VACARE OFFICIO POTEST: IN EOQUE COLENDO SITA VITÆ EST HONESTAS OMNIS, ET IN NEGLIGENDO TURPITUDO.

Cic. de Off. Lib. I. Cap. II.



# MEDICAL ETHICS;

OR, A CODE OF

INSTITUTES AND PRECEPTS,

ADAPTED TO THE

*PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT*

OF

PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS.

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BY THE LATE

THOMAS PERCIVAL, M. D.

F. R. S. AND A. S. LOED. F. R. S. AND R. M. S. EDINB. &C. &C.

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WITH ADDITIONS,

Illustrative of the past and present state of the Profession  
and its Collegiate Institutions, in Great Britain.

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LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY W. JACKSON,

MEDICAL BOOKSELLER,

(Near Saint Thomas's and Guy's Hospital,)

KING STREET, BOROUGH.

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1827.

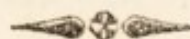


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## DEDICATION.



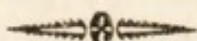
DOCTOR PERCIVAL'S *Work on Medical Ethics*, is so well calculated to point out the proper conduct to be observed by Physicians and Surgeons, and to recommend that behaviour, which is established by universal consent, amongst men of enlightened minds, and liberal manners, that the Editor of the present Edition, has thought that the most appropriate dedication of it, would be

TO THOSE  
PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS,  
WHO  
HAVING GONE THROUGH  
THE REGULAR FORMS OF STUDY,  
ARE ABOUT TO EMBARK  
IN  
THE PRACTICE  
OF  
THEIR PROFESSION.

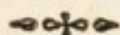
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




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## INTRODUCTION.

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Dr. PERCIVAL, in 1792, framed a code or laws, by which the practice of that comprehensive institution, the Manchester Infirmary, was afterwards regulated. From a desire to promote the honor and advancement of his profession, and to regulate the official conduct and mutual intercourse of the faculty, by precise and acknowledged principles of urbanity and rectitude, he formed the design of extending the few and concise rules, which are contained in the first chapter of this work, into a general system of Medical Ethics.

The death of a beloved son, who had nearly completed the course of his academi-

cal education, and whose talents, acquirements and virtues, promised to render him an ornament to the healing art; and, not many years afterwards, a second family loss, equally afflictive, caused the author to suspend his undertaking. But after a time, being “impressed with the conviction that the languor of sorrow becomes culpable, when it obstructs the offices of an active vocation,” he resumed this work with the hope of its proving beneficial to another son, who had exchanged the pursuits of general science at Cambridge, for the study of medicine at Edinburgh. To that son’s acceptance, in his dedication, he tenders the work, and the natural transfer of his solitudes, after adverting, in a tone of melancholy remembrance, to “his late excellent brother,” towards whom his thoughts were directed in the composition of it, “with the tenderest impulse of paternal love.” He then intimates, that he had begun to feel the pressure of advancing years, and regarded the



present publication as the conclusion, in this way, of his professional labors, a mournful prediction, which was fulfilled, by his dissolution, after the lapse of little more than a year.

A pleasing account of this amiable and excellent man, is given in the *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal* of 1808. From this we gather, that having settled in Manchester, in 1767, he rose to great eminence in his profession ; and his merit was not lost in the vastness of the circle of his employment, a situation, in which many practitioners are placed ; on the contrary, “ he found,” in the field of his exertions, “ sufficient opportunities for the display of his talents as a physician, as a moralist, and as a public character.” In the intervals of professional engagements, he was employed in philosophical and experimental enquiries, the results of which were published in periodical works ; “ for it was not then the fashion to make a volume, with

what was barely sufficient to fill one chapter." As well as to medical subjects, he extended his attention to studies and writings, which "include the human mind, and the moral constitution of mankind." Hence, those tales, reflections, and instructions, which were so favorably received. The charitable institutions of Manchester, and the affairs of Warrington Academy, he assisted and advocated. To him, the Literary and Philosophical Society of that place, of which he was many years a President, was indebted for its origin, and many of the miscellaneous writings, which adorn its memoirs. A tablet was erected by them to his memory, for a token of their regard. He possessed those qualities, which only can constitute a physician, and qualify him to discharge the duties, and extend the boundaries of the healing art, "quick penetration, a discerning judgment, and a deep sense of responsibility." A gravity of deportment, which spoke not the gloom of appre-



hension ; but the seriousness of interest was combined with the dignity, respectfulness, and ease of an engaging style of manners. The topics of encouragement and consolation, which he addressed to the sick, derived efficacy from a countenance expressive of a benignant sympathy, and genuine goodness of heart, and an eloquent and impressive character, from the abounding stores of an elegant and cultivated mind. The history of Dr. Percival, in fact, is the pleasing picture of one of those beings, who have sometimes united the placid and elevated pursuits of science and letters, with the fullest occupation in their profession. That he received this liberal distribution of public confidence, arose from the just appreciation of his mind, and a greater degree of reason and discernment in the sphere in which he existed, than is in general, to be discovered in the feelings and impulses of English provincial society, towards men of real intelligence.

We now come to that topic, relative to Dr. Percival, with which we are more immediately concerned. "One," observes his biographer, "of Dr. Percival's last and best works, is a code of institutes and precepts, for the professional conduct of physicians and surgeons, entitled '*Medical Ethics*;' in which he has drawn a portrait of himself, by tracing with his own hand, what sort of character a physician ought to be." He deemed that "the study of professional Ethics," as in his dedication, he informs his son, "could not fail to invigorate and enlarge the understanding; whilst the observance of the duties which they enjoin, would soften the manners, expand the affections, and form the individual to that propriety and dignity of conduct which are essential to the character of a gentleman."

This work, *so much wanted at the present time*, in a separate form,\* has long since been

\* Dr. Percival's Life, by his Son, and the Medical Ethics, were published in 1807, in Two Vols. 8vo.



out of print, and a continued demand for it, could not be supplied. The Publisher, desirous to comply with the wishes of the profession, has brought out the present edition, which the writer of this article was chosen to edit. How far he has executed that office with adequate ability and judgment, he leaves to the profession, after rendering an account of the reasons and motives of the course which he has taken.

The work, in its original form, consisted of the several aphorisms, which are included in this edition; of an anniversary discourse, preached by the Rev. T. Basnett Percival, L. L. B. and brother to Dr. P., to the President and Governors of the Liverpool Infirmary; and supplementary notes and illustrations, of a miscellaneous kind, by the Rev. T. Gisborne, M. A. &c. and author of an Enquiry into the Duties of Man. Of the supplementary portions described, and published twenty-three years ago, it will readily

be conceived that much is familiar to the public, or no longer consonant to public taste. Some observations on medical jurisprudence, are entirely superseded by recent and numerous works. Every important rule respecting the medical guardianship of hospitals, advanced in Mr. Percival's Sermon, is a recapitulation of the Ethics.

Plans for the structure of hospitals, and their regulation, certain casuistical discussions concerning the exposition of dangerous cases, to the patients themselves, and various opinions relative to the religious scepticism of medical men, with certain complimentary letters to the Author, from Drs. Heberden and Sir George Baker Bart., are omitted.

It remains for us to give some account of the materials which have been supplied in place of those, which have been left out. Dr. Percival says, that he had intended originally, to have treated of the Powers, Privileges, Honours, and Emoluments of the



Faculty ; but as it was the principal object with the author of the Medical Ethics, “ to trace what sort of character a physician *ought to be*,” the editor conceived the end in view, would be assisted by painting what sort of character he *ought not to be*. Thus, as in the style of the apologue, the moral would be enforced by connecting with it the example. It would have been easy, in a few days, to have filled the blank spaces with the *ipse dixits* of frigid morality ; but it may prove, more useful, we trust, both to the student and society, that the whole moral history of the profession, its institutions, and several divisions have been brought into one view ; by means of those fresh and living pictures, which, taken from the best writers of their time, represent with biographical fidelity, professional character, as it really existed, and was influenced by the state of society, and the manners and customs of the age, in which they were written. The additions which

bring up the picture to the present time, may be deemed sarcastic and overwrought ; but, in regard to truth, they are as “ holy as severe.”

To turn from mediocrity, to the contemplation of genius, learning, and *real* private worth, which have exalted human nature, and the profession to which they have belonged, is a transition from a barren region, into the most delightful climate of the mind ; and the author is sorry to have given up the more amiable task of meditating and delineating character of a superior cast, for the unpleasant duty of painting, with a view to their diminution, the folly and delusion of the world ; and the mean ambition and grovelling arts, which form, to use the language of olden times, “ the prejudices,” of what is *called*, and *ought* to be “ a *learned* and *liberal* profession ;” but too often rendered otherwise by error, partly originating in human nature, and partly in individuals, who belong to



medicine itself. But we have fallen on evil days, and a toil which resembles too nigh the least seemly of the tasks of Hercules, is incited only by a desire to provide those, who are commencing the voyage of life, with a staff like that of the Palmer, in Spenser, with which he not only protected himself, and those who approached the shores, against the charms and spells of the beings of the wandering isles, but restored to their native comeliness, such as had been transformed into unseemly shapes.

Concerning the Colleges of Physicians in London and Dublin, though we would not be esteemed setters forth of strange doctrines, nor pullers down of strong holds, nothing shall here be offered in apology for the statements contained in this work. Those superannuated institutions, are millstones and dead weights hung about the profession, which, however well adapted to it three centuries since, are now little superior to mere vehicles



of diploma-mongering, and of perverted and illiberal views. "It appears," says Dr. Percival's biographer, "that he had it in contemplation, at one time, to offer himself a candidate for a fellowship in the London College of Physicians, having the natural wish and laudable ambition of every man, whose success assures him that he has some merit, of being associated with the most eminent of his cotemporaries. Some feelings of personal attachment to some members of that royal corporation, might be an additional inducement for his wishing for the honour of being chronicled with them; but the honour was not obtained, and it ceased to be coveted when the private motive was done away; so that Percival's name floats down the stream of time, with those of Fothergill, Dobson, Darwin, Currie, and others, who will not be forgotten, although an English university, did not contribute in any way to save them from oblivion !!!"

In the observations, which we have made upon certain physicians and others it cannot be supposed, that we have meant to reflect upon men of Dr. Percival's character, but upon a race which has multiplied throughout the country, successful in the most unaccountable manner, beyond their merits, though exceedingly and altogether different in learning and conduct, from the several great and eminent examples, who, with the author of the *Medical Ethics*, adorned the profession at the beginning of the present century.

Oh ! how it tickles us to see a swad,  
Who ne'er so much as education had,  
To make him gen'rous, advanced to state.

Indeed, as the profession has increased beyond the demands of society, and the avenues of employment have become choked, by the pressure of excessive competition, those old modes of quackery have been revived, more especially in provincial practice ; which set



aside the pretensions and claims of men of great merit and education; who, cannot, with due respect to their own feelings, have recourse to them. In medicine, it might be supposed, that the interests of mankind would render talent indispensable; but at the time at which we are writing these sentences, a Percival would be no match for the successful exploits of cunning and hypocrisy; and their power over the minds of a people, whose judgments appear to be debilitated, and whose reason not advanced.

In the sketch of cure-mongering and watering places, will be found the features of the most novel and subtle forms of "humbug," as it is vulgarly, but significantly called, now in full operation. It has been our destiny to divide a considerable portion of life, between cities and watering places. In the former, we have seen the proper level of society preserved, and the superior qualities of the human character, have their due weight; but in the lat-

ter, the very reverse.\* After part of ten or twelve years passed in three principal watering places, and the immediate vicinity of two others, we hesitate not to say, that nothing is here alluded to, seriously or in gibes, which is not founded on solemn and irrefragable facts. It may be objected by the reader, that those places receive, in this work, more attention than they merit; of which the reason is, that they are the common sewers, whence quackery of every description is made to flow over the whole country—through the medium of people of fashion, who, caught with name and puff, are made the dupes of quacks in physic, and hypocrites in religion; and the means of carrying home and enlisting their friends in the support of the specious and their interests.

\* These places have all the dissipation, frivolity, and hollow and heartless qualities of great cities, *without* the same rectitude of judgment, the same limitation of sophistry, and bad taste, by the test of reason and truth; and the same predominant tendency to assign to intellectual character, that natural superiority of place, which it ought to bear, when competing with servility, ignorance, and cunning.



By means of strangers, and insulated and disjoined connections thus formed, the most audacious ignorance and impudence, is rendered independant of the character, which is borne by it, where it has a *local* habitation and a name. When, therefore, we hear of men gathering riches and patronage in a profession, whose tricks and exposures of themselves in it, are subjects of laughter and contempt, among the rational part of mankind, within their own immediate sphere, and, they notwithstanding, are encouraged by people, from whom the most fastidious choice and scrutiny might be looked for, it may be relied upon, that false impressions have been made, and the judgment dazzled by absurd and bombastic rumors, which have magnified the object in the mind in proportion to the distance from the hearer.\* Strangers, allured by these rural reports from their homes, finding

\* Puffs and Paragraphs in Newspapers, have most effect at a distance, than in their own immediate neighbourhood.

the counterfeit pretensions of some Braggadocia of the profession, attacked and ridiculed perhaps injudiciously ; and dissatisfied with having the semblance of dupes, conglomerate into parties, who, like the folks in Moliere's " Medecin malgre lui," will have the woodman for a doctor, and forge miracles, out of cases, which, away from the torrent and whirlwind of party feelings, would be regarded as matters of ordinary import, or, found in time to have no stay or bottom.

" The late Lord Girdlestone, himself a valetudinarian, took the pains to enquire for those persons, who had *actually attested* marvellous cures, and found that more than two-thirds of the number died very shortly *after that they had been cured !*" Sir Robert Walpole, Lords Bolingbroke, and Wennington, were killed by Curemongers : and, at the present time, in our high places, among those " who are governed by that fashionable conceit, which can either neutralize, or give infal-



libility to any thing, death and destruction have heard the fame thereof."

Hence, it is a very curious remark, that wounded pride and vanity, have a great share in supportiug quackery, and effecting the triumph of a sort of low cunning, about eighth or ninth rate, over talent and professional propriety. As with the Romans, impudence is a divinity amongst us, and temples are built to her worship, by folly.

In adopting an anonymous form, we have used a privilege, of which, from Swift, who wrought under it, more powerfully and beneficially than any man who ever lived, to the most eminent of the present day, all have availed themselves. We have relinquished in these times, when public principle, for the most part is resolved into servility and hypocrisy, general, for private approbation, money for truth ; and where a name could have served the cause, given it. But we would rather subject the enemies, which this work

may make, to the dilemma of rebutting facts, which are stubborn things, than afford them the more favorite alternative of private persecution. There is no moral obligation, which compels a man to stand at an ass's heels, nor any precaution, which deprives vipers of their power to sting.

We have adhered to one rule, more particularly incumbent on anonymous writers ; that no particular individual is here mentioned, or held up to contempt : but the blemishes in our profession are exposed, that the young, who are about to enter upon the exercise of it, “ by the honest and liberal practice of it, may be an help and ornament to it, and carry a respect not to descend into any course that is corrupt and unworthy of it ; but *preserve themselves from the abuses, wherewith the same profession is noted to be infected.*” \* We take this help and ornament, to be still

\* Lord Bacon's Elements of the Common Laws of England.



better performed, if besides shunning curved and narrow courses, “a man be able to visit and strengthen the roots and foundation of the science itself; thereby, not only giving it a reputation and dignity, but also amplifying it in profession and substance.” We wish them not to be led away, because they see the arts and intrigues which have been pointed out, visited by the auriferous stream of public favor; for, however successful for a time, they have mostly in the end, brought those who have exemplified them, into contempt with society, and invariably with the profession; nor to despair, because they themselves may lie the longer for sound conduct, on the sunless and cheerless side of fortune.

The oak, which, of all the trees of the forest, contains the most sap and vigor, blooms latest in the spring; but extends its noble members, covered with foliage, when things of forced and illegitimate growth, are leafless and barren.

Our labors may be condemned by some of those hypocritical and sycophantic persons, who, to serve their own interests with all parties, exclaiming “Nefas Corrigere!” wink at the practices developed in the following pages. The fearless examples of Dr. Gregory, in his Duties and Qualifications of Physicians;\* of Joseph Frank, of Vienna, in his Popular Instructions, for the knowledge and choice of a Physician, published at Vienna,

\* The editor to that work, in 1770, thus describes the intentions of Dr. Gregory’s animadversions. “Whatever opposition this part of the work may meet with, from *those* who find *their own foibles, or rather vices, censured with a just severity*, the ingenuous part of mankind, however, will not fail in bestowing that degree of applause, so justly due to its merit. At present, there seems to be a general disposition in mankind, to expose to their *deserved contempt, those quackish, low, and illiberal artifices, which have too long disgraced the profession of medicine*. It is therefore hoped, that the general spirit of the work, will have a remarkable tendency to *promote this laudable end; and that it will excite men of influence and of abilities, to exert themselves in crushing that arrogance, which hath frequently served to cover the ignorance* of many practisers of medicine, by means of which alone, they *acquire such a share of practice, as they are by no means entitled to.*” p. v. Introduction.



in 1800 ; and of a French Author, in that amusing work, *L' histoire des Charlatans* vindicate our steps. Dr. Beddoes, in his independant and vigorous style, in 1808, published "A letter to Sir Joseph Banks," showing, "that the power of quacks and irregulars, like that of the methodists," (for religious and medical quackery always go together,) "have increased, is increasing, *and ought to be diminished.*" A position, fully confirmed since the death of the Author ; *especially in that part of the kingdom, whence he drew his opinions* ; and should *our* remarks appear particular, concerning the West of England, and the adjacent country, let the striking picture be called to mind, which Beddoes drew of "the Hotwell doctors, and the *corresponding branch* of medical practice ;" of which, said the critics of the day, "there was too much reason to suspect, the coloring was not too strong."

We have outlived, or been separated from

a learned and distinguished circle of men in the profession, and the enmity of some contemporaries, is to us, of very little moment.

“To merit only, and her friends a friend,  
The world beside may murmur or commend;  
Know, all the distant din that world can keep,  
Rolls o’er my grotto, and but soothes my sleep.”

To the young, and men of *intellectual character* we look, to afford aid, by the propagation of this work, among their friends and patients, to assist in weeding out those more noxious, but climbing things, which only encumber the ground, and choke the growth and vitality of “scions of a gentler stock.”

The stream of true merit, like that of true love, perhaps, never did run smooth; but if something is effected, in these times, when it would appear to be of no price or value, that it may not be entirely “despised and rejected of men;” these pages will have compassed their purpose. To use the words of Dr. Venner, whose strain was similar to our own,



“ what we have written, touching the ill carriage of some physicians, doth nothing concern the worthy Professors of that noble faculty; nor any thing derogate from the respects and rewards which they well deserve; but it toucheth them that disgrace the faculty and make their patients purse their sole object or intention, and by fraudulent ways, cheat, and delude them; which true, worthy, and conscientious physicians abhor and detest.”

# MEDICAL ETHICS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *Of Professional Conduct, relative to Hospitals, or other Medical Charities.*

1. HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS and SURGEONS should minister to the sick, with due impressions of the importance of their office ; reflecting that the ease, the health, and the lives of those committed to their charge depend on their skill, attention, and fidelity. They should study, also, in their deportment, so to unite *tenderness* with *steadiness*, and *condescension* with *authority*, as to inspire the minds of their patients with gratitude, respect, and confidence.



II. The *choice* of a *physician* or *surgeon*, cannot be allowed to hospital patients, consistently with the regular and established succession of medical attendance. Yet personal confidence is not less important to the comfort and relief of the sick-poor, than of the rich under similar circumstances : and it would be equally just and humane, to enquire into and to indulge their partialities, by occasionally calling into consultation the favourite practitioner. The rectitude and wisdom of this conduct will be still more apparent, when it is recollected that patients in hospitals not unfrequently request their discharge, on a deceitful plea of having received relief ; and afterwards procure another recommendation, that they may be admitted under the physician or surgeon of their choice. Such practices involve in them a degree of falsehood ; produce unnecessary trouble ; and may be the occasion of irreparable loss of time in the treatment of diseases.

III. The *feelings* and *emotions* of the patients, under critical circumstances, require to be known and to be attended to, no less than the symptoms of their diseases. Thus, extreme *timidity*, with respect to venesection, contraindicates its use, in certain cases and constitutions. Even the *prejudices* of the sick are not to be contemned, or opposed with harshness. For though silenced by authority, they will operate secretly and forcibly on the mind, creating fear, anxiety, and watchfulness.

IV. As misapprehension may magnify real evils, or create imaginary ones, no *discussion* concerning the nature of the case should be entered into before the patients, either with the house surgeon, the pupils of the hospitals, or any medical visiter.

V. In the large wards of an Infirmary, the patients should be interrogated concerning their complaints, in a *tone of voice* which cannot be *overheard*. *Secrecy*, also, when



required by peculiar circumstances, should be strictly observed. And females should always be treated with the most scrupulous *delicacy*. To neglect or sport with their feelings is cruelty; and every wound thus inflicted tends to produce a callousness of mind, a contempt of decorum, and an insensibility to modesty and virtue. Let these considerations be forcibly and repeatedly urged on the hospital pupils.

VI. The *moral and religious influence* of sickness is so favourable to the best interests of men and of society, that it is justly regarded as an important object in the establishment of every hospital. The *institutions* for promoting it should, therefore, be encouraged by the physicians and surgeons, whenever seasonable opportunities occur. And by pointing out these to the officiating clergyman, the sacred offices will be performed with propriety, discrimination, and greater certainty of success. *The character of a phy-*

sician is usually remote *either from superstition or enthusiasm*: and the aid which he is now exhorted to give, will tend to their *exclusion* from the wards of the hospital, where *their effects have often been known to be not only baneful, but even fatal*. Thus Percival.

We are sorry to say, that the injunctions of Drs. Percival and Gregory require to be much strengthened. On this subject, Dr. Gregory observes, “the conversation of a clergyman of *cheerful piety and good sense*, in whom a sick man confides, may sometimes be of more consequence in composing the anguish of his mind and the flutter of his spirits, than all the drugs in the dispensatory, *while a gloomy and wrong-headed enthusiast may terrify him to distraction, and cut short a life, which, by proper attention, there was the greatest possibility of saving.*”<sup>\*</sup> The Rev. T. B. Percival, L.L.B. in addressing

<sup>\*</sup> Observations on the Duties and Offices of Physicians, p. 35.



the clergy, who officiate at Hospitals, remarks, “*Enthusiasm* and superstition cannot be dreaded in the offices of *rational* piety, conducted by *those who are rational* and pious. And you will neither betray men into *false confidence*,” (which is the common practice at the present hour with calvanistic enthusiasts, who have entered the established church by subscribing to the thirty-nine articles,) “nor alarm them when languishing under sickness and pain, with unseasonable terrors.”\*

We regret greatly to have to say that charges are constantly brought against the medical officers of institutions in many places, of having tolerated, if not encouraged, a vile system of intrusion on the religious principles of their patients. Conduct so entirely at variance with the better reason of medical education, medical ethics, and the examples

\* Discourse on Hospital Duties, preached at the Infirmary at Liverpool, 1791.

of all, who have ever exalted the profession, can spring only from a disgraceful prostitution of their knowledge and independance to their private interests, or degeneracy of the profession in sense, education, learning and respectability. Nothing can be more improper, either for them to permit, or for parties to make the attempt to disturb the sick with the pseudo-divinity of penny tracts, and the rhapsodies of wild enthusiasm—with those hopes of heaven, and terrors of hell, which flash with insane intemperance from imaginations heated and bewildered with the metaphysics of ultra-theology, and darkened with its most gloomy prejudices, untempered with the calm and judicious truths of philosophy, and unenlightened with the revelations of reason. **ED.**

VII. It is one of the circumstances which softens the lot of the poor, that they are exempt from the solitudes attendant on the disposal of property. Yet there are excep-



tions to this observation: and it may be necessary that an hospital patient, on the bed of sickness and death, should be reminded, by some friendly monitor, of the importance of a *last will and testament* to his wife, children, or relatives, who, otherwise, might be deprived of his effects, of his expected prize money, or of some future residuary legacy. This kind office will be best performed by the house-surgeon, whose frequent attendance on the sick, diminishes their reserve, and entitles him to their familiar confidence. And he will doubtless regard the performance of it as a duty. For whatever is right to be done, and cannot by another be so well done, has the full force of moral and personal obligation.

This warning should always be given in private practice. ED.

VIII. The physicians and surgeons should not suffer themselves to be restrained, by parsimonious considerations, from prescribing *wine*, and *drugs* even of *high price*, when

required in diseases of extraordinary malignity and danger. The efficacy of every medicine is proportioned to its purity and goodness ; and on the degree of these properties, *ceteris paribus*, both the cure of the sick, and the speediness of its accomplishment must depend. *But when drugs of inferior quality are employed, it is requisite to administer them in larger doses, and to continue the use of them a longer period of time ; circumstances which, probably, more than counterbalance any savings in their original price.* If the case, however, were far otherwise, no *economy*, of a *fatal* tendency, *ought to be admitted into institutions*, which, founded on principles of the purest beneficence, in this country, when well conducted, can never want contributions adequate to their liberal support. Thus Percival.

The relative situation of the Retail Druggist and Apothecary, reminds us of the Irish conjugal separation, in which the husband



proposes to give the outside of the house to his wife, and appropriate the inside to himself. In most large towns and watering places, the latter is superseded by the former, as the factotum of the physicians and surgeons, and compounder-general of prescriptions. A community of from three to five thousand people, will support one druggist. His stock, if garbled, is not made at a less cost than One Thousand Pounds, and his trade is slowly matured.

Dr. Johnson observes, "that those who grow rich by administering physic, are not to be numbered with them that get money by dispensing poison." The *respectable* druggist, who supplies *genuine and well-garbled drugs*, is invaluable to a community. The repeated acts of parliament passed in England and Ireland, for forming Apothecaries' Halls, which begin with stating "the many frauds and abuses, which have been imposed and practised on many of his Majesty's subjects,

to the *injury of the fair trader, the disappointment of the physician, the imminent hazard of the lives* of his Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects throughout the realm,"\* evince his essential utility. But the late baleful facilities of country-banks, and the system of false credit, forced the wholesome adjustment of society from its proper basis, and in this trade, their fallacious aid converted shop-boys into speculatists, multiplied the tributary streams of the *Materia Medica*, and inundated the country with its impurities, merely, in the end, to furnish plunder for lawyers, and heavy miscellaneous debts for the trades-people within the scope of these reckless experiments.

A pestiferous class of wholesale druggists, unworthy of support from the respectable retailer, are the usual architects of those magazines of poison. Bills at one year's

\* See an Act for the more effectually preserving the health of his Majesty's subjects, &c. &c. 31st Geo. III. Dublin.



date supply the first demand, partial payments, and the showy prospect of a business in a brisk, but short-lived retail, and books, posted full with the hollow procurings of underselling and indiscriminate credit, ensure further indulgence. With the third year and no settlement, the fatal Ides arrive, and usher in "the last scene of all," with the pathetic ceremony of "Selling Up." The recent carnage in the commercial world, has somewhat weeded out the rank redundancies of this trade; but to a scrutinizing eye, many places still present a kind of toxicological chart, which infallibly calls to mind Romeo's soliloquy.

Attempts to lower the standard price of drugs, by supporting superfluous druggists, secures to meanness and avarice, no other benefit than being surfeited with powder of post, or semi-destroyed by the first operation of substitutes, adulterations, and spoiled drugs. In the one case the drench and the

bill are infinitely protracted, and in either the prescriber is assailed with the obloquy of *mala praxis*, and the trade loaded with defamation.

Whatever effort or improvement the collision of medical and surgical supernumeraries may elicit, competition under the gilt Galen's heads, over and above the demand of society, produces altogether the reverse. Vainly, in this state of things, the established druggist exhibits his bill of parcels, and the relative cost and qualities of good and inferior articles, to exonerate himself from odious comparisons, and prove the expensiveness of a perfect system of business. The youth of straw, favored by parsimonious folly, limits his customers, compels him to a cheaper market, an inferior stock, and exorbitant prices.

To the stated causes, and the extraordinary precipitancy of many to make fortunes, may be ascribed the general distribution of inferior drugs and chemicals, now so loudly depre-



cated throughout this country. The provincial dispensaries, consistently with the institutes of Dr. Percival, are necessarily supplied from London.

The superior wisdom of the French laws, ordered rather to prevent than foster fraud and imposition, places the *pharmacien* under the most wholesome restrictions. To cut short the indiscriminate dispensing or pernicious use of drugs, the importation of them into that country for private individuals is prohibited, and the shops are regulated by the police, &c. We have known superfluous druggists, and "what a ruthless thing it was," with impunity sell opium and arsenic to females, who made use of them for self-destruction. One of three methods is needful to reform this trade, either legislative provisions, the more circumspect and exclusive bestowing of public patronage upon respectable druggists, or the appointment of branches from Apothecary's Hall in such towns and districts as absolutely require them.

In public places, the druggists are cuppers, phlebotomists, tooth-drawers, and electricians. In Italy, all applications for physicians and surgeons are said to be made to druggists, about whose shops the highest linger, like ticket-porters, in degrading dependency upon the lowest branches of the profession. In England, the connexion proceeds merely to mutual recommendation. In some places physicians and surgeons are said to receive twenty to forty *per cent* on their prescriptions. This infamous practice was prohibited in the "Statutes of Morality" of the College of Physicians, with a penalty of 40s. upon every offence.\*

In many large towns druggists practise medicine, and entitle themselves apothecaries on their cards, in defiance of the Hall. As an able writer observes, it would be infinitely better "that the druggist should confine him-

\* See Statuta Moralia, 1771.



self to the sale of medicines in the gross, and that he should not trespass in any way on the province of the apothecary, in preparing medicine in composition, either from the prescriptions of medical men or otherwise. In order to prevent this salutary interdiction being evaded, it would perhaps be necessary to prevent him from selling under certain quantities." "A few cases may, no doubt, be adduced, wherein partial and trifling inconveniences may attend this, *but they are so insignificant, when compared with the mass of evil which is caused by druggists acting as apothecaries*, that they are no counterbalance. By such restriction, no injustice is practised towards the individual, as he enters on his employment with a view to *mercantile profits only, and these should content him*. Neither is public convenience interfered with, as this is fully secured so long as medicine continues to be dispensed by the apothecary.\*"

\* Observations on Medical Reform, Dublin, 1807, pp. 83, 4.

A recent writer in the *Lancet* has pursued the same view, and proposed that retail druggists be entirely resolved into apothecaries. When such, “they should be effectually deterred from entering into collusion with his (the wholesale) druggist, for the purpose of imposing improper medicines on the public, by such salutary checks and restraints as, without interfering with the just rights and privileges of any, may have the effect of securing the public health from suffering by *turpitude* or *avarice*.”\*

Though no druggist should lay himself out for practice, his prescribing for a private friend, when requested, is never objectionable.

In many large towns, the trade of druggist, chemist, and vender of quack medicines, and the professions of apothecary, surgeon, man-midwife, &c. &c. are consolidated in an individual. These multifarious occupations

\* Observations on Medical Reform, p. 83.



are delineated in wavy scrolls on the portals of those painted receptacles of wood and bottles, which emblazon street corners with the seven primitive colors, and exhibit what is called "A Shew."\* "*Mille trahens varios adverso sole colores*," and like Jack the Giant Killer's coat of invisibility, universally assumed to give nominal respectability to every sinister course in the profession, the cognomen of surgeon is insphered as in a rainbow. Framed and glazed, the College and Hall diplomas swing from the walls, as the palladia, under which all things may be committed. With professional details so complex and distracting, book-keeping and retailing included, and without priority in any particular department, common sense need

\* The Drugs in the show jars are placed between pasteboard and glass. These persons form the "chaff and ruin" of the profession, sometimes wandering from town to town, and sometimes selling their businesses, upon the strength of the retail. Such concerns are always being advertized, and and create certain loss to purchasers.

not enlarge upon the imperfect skill with which duties so heterogenous are performed, though use has made many negligent of the inquiry.

It is not contended "that the subdivision of labour may not be carried too far," but Dr. Stewart,\* who reasons well, observes, that as in medicine, so in all other things, when excellence is sought, it is necessary "to divide and conquer;" and therefore all the branches of the profession should not be practised by one and the same person, unless he become, as Mrs. Malaprop says, "like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once." The sanction of the highest authorities to chartered companies, and institutions having distinct offices, and in medical education, the distribution of knowledge by different individuals, prove it to be the conviction of general experience, "that those who continue to frequent many paths

\* On the division of labor in medical practice, by Lionel Stewart, M. D. Lic. Roy. Coll. of Phys. &c. &c. &c. 1826.



can make little progress in any one." Diplomas, which are appealed to, to prove universal license and qualification, may ascertain how far the candidate has imbibed the science of his craft, but they cannot gauge his talent for it. *Talent for the profession* consists in *personal* qualifications, which are not to be *transferred*: experience, discrimination, presence of mind, fertility of resources, exquisite tact, above all law, capable of deciding in the critical hour, and a discretionary power like equity, having no established rules. This talent is a fund, to which subsequent additions are continually to be made, which is to be increased into solid store by aggregation. But when analytical observation is thus widely scattered, how are to be cultivated a correct habit of nicely weighing contingencies, and the probable course of future events, and the foresight which constitutes the superiority of the educated over the ignorant? The unlimited practitioner, or druggist surgeon, can

acquire only comprehensive and general ideas, and a knowledge of the mere routine of business. To expect excellence were as rational as to look for it in a surgeon, who being in want of a lancet, makes the anvil, and performs himself all the processes of its manufacture. Some men of superior powers and greater grasp of intellect, may have exceeded the due medium with success; but none within our observation could appeal to their own examples, in justification of the system. Favor they may have found from society, from prejudice, ignorance, and the common chances of life. Many persons in England seem to have no distinct notions of priority in pharmacy, skill in surgery, or discrimination in medicine; it is enough for them to be what *they* call "*A Doctor.*"

The Blue-bottle, or Druggist-surgeon, injures the interests and blemishes the respectability of every division of the profession which he so combines. The surgeon is levelled



in England in the same degree by the sufferance, as he is elevated in Ireland by the prohibition of these medleys. That such persons exonerate respectable druggists and apothecaries from beggars and their brats in quest of sulphur, or of scourers of fullers' earth, and provide a house of easy access to the lowest classes, is no sufficient extenuation. To destroy such a state of things was the object of the division of labor, which took place when the ancient College of Barber Surgeons was dissolved. In the back settlements of America, where society is but little removed from the simplicity of the golden age, and manners are undebased by refinement, a surgeon, in addition to the exercise of his profession in all its branches, may be a judge, a colonel, and a tavern-keeper, but, unless in remote and scantily peopled districts, it were better in this country, both for the general and medical public, that these ignominious monopolies were abolished.

Through the laxity of English law even more gross abuses occur. In large towns, long intercourse with the world often gives to the principal druggist a control over medical patronage within his sphere. Confidence, long imparted, offers opportunities too tempting to be withstood, of usurping medicine and surgery within his own establishment, and withholding recommendation from those unconnected with it. With the assistance of Motherby's dictionary, the prescription file, and fortuitous cases, a house surgeon in one of the company is educated by a very expeditious process.

Like Rubilac's figure of the grim king of terrors starting from beneath the half lifted tombstone, and shaking his deadly dart at an approaching object, it has not been uncommon for one who had reposed under a counter-lid over night, to have sprung from under it in the morning, armed with the fearful weapons of a self-constituted prescriber. Some care-



less Abigail in quest of fortuitous advice, subjects her frame to his trials: to her succeeds the mistress, and to the mistress the children. Fired with unexpected encouragement, with an Ogre's strides the ambitious pharmacopolist surmounts "the alps on alps," that intercept his progress to "the height of arts," 'till he accomplish a Proteus of all men's talents and his own.

In those fresh-water brooks, into which trout and other fish roam in the spring, a gaudy insect may be observed to flutter, whose development is singularly interesting to the entymologist. An egg dropped like an excrement into the stream by the parent fly, is the embryo; it sinks to the bottom, where it is transformed into a grub, cased in a sheath of straw; next into a half grub, half insect, or chrysalis; lastly, into a complete fly; when disengaging itself from its humble tenement it takes wing, the gay creation of a summer's day. Equally sublime are the metaph-

sychoses, which pervade the rivulets of pharmacy.

In addition to the chemist and druggist, 1st, The apothecary ; 2ndly, the general practitioner; 3dly, the operative surgeon; 4thly, the aurist or oculist; 5thly, the physician, are folded, not by validity but assumption, within the omnivorous grasp of his ambition, and the universal infallibility of his colossal intelligence. The easy good natured world prepared by this gradual developement to bear the vast volume of the "lux ex fulgore," rests charitably uninquisitive whether "all's right."\*

Dr. Johnson mentions that "the superintendence of the biography and punctuation of Lord Lyttleton's history of Henry II. was committed to a man originally a comb-maker, but then known by the title of *doctor*. Something uncommon was probably expected, and something uncommon was at last done; for

† Lives of the Poets.



to the doctor's edition is appended, what the world has hardly seen before, a list of errors in nineteen pages." Kindred results discover themselves to erudite eyes, in the performances of these masters of all work. But in communities as dark as Erebus, or gifted with the clear obscure of partial discernment, all objections are met with the amiable sentiment of Cowper :

" Give e'en a dunce the employment he desires,  
And he soon finds the talents it requires ;  
A business with an income at its heels,  
Furnishes always oil for its own wheels."

The pleiads, or seven stars, which seem to rule the destiny of the *ci-devant* druggist in these seven-fold transformations, are situated in regions of nebulae and clouds. In medicine, seven is a mystical number, *unde derivatur*, the seventh son of a seventh son. A parish clerk announced his intention to go into orders, because "it was the duty of every one to rise to the top of his profession!"

And should any "enfant perdu," who may

Hold his talent most adroit,  
For any mystical exploit,

be desirous of a guide to preferment, in this kind, the mode of proceeding requires no effort of the brains, and is agreeably diversified. He may call to mind the old song of Dicky Gossip.

When I was a younker, I first was apprenticed,  
Unto a gay barber, so dapper and airy,  
I next was a carpenter, then turned a dentist,  
Then Taylor, good Lord! then an apothecary,  
Then an apothecary;  
But for this trade, or that, why they all come as pat,  
They all come as pat as they can.  
For shaving and tooth-drawing,  
Bleeding, cabbaging, and sawing,  
Dicky Gossip, Dicky Gossip is the man.

*But blunders will happen, in callings so various,  
I fancy they will happen, to some who are prouder,  
I once gave a patient, whose health was precarious,  
A terrible dose of my best shaving powder.  
But no matter for that, why my trades come as pat,  
My trades come as pat as they can.*

Should he fail with the lady-kind, as Dicky



Gossip, let him procure the office of *locum-tenens* to some eminent practiser, with whom his *innocence* will recommend him, when the cares of medical labor may require remission. Dr. Hugh Smith of Bristol, who was a medical Nimrod, often substituted for himself, an elderly man, on whose head he placed a cauliflower wig. The deputy sat, subtle-looking as an ape in a house-porch, dispensing with facility for applicants, from drawers therapeutically labelled, for example, "ointment for sore eyes," "pills for the pethox-magnus,\*" &c. After the death of the principal, the "mock-doctor" succeeded to his practice, and the acquisition of an ample fortune.

But should no such golden occasion present itself, the *garçon apothecaire* may achieve greatness by other expedients. On Sunday, let him assiduously follow some famed Orator

\* Term used by Swift for the Lues.

Henley, (a noted gospel-preacher, in the Dunciad,) of the day, and hold subscription-plates at church doors ; on Monday, attend a lying-in committee ; on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, bible, Jew-conversion, humane and benevolent societies : keeping strict to these rules, he shall infallibly “smatter, cant, quack, and dabble,”\* to the summit of his ambition.

To preserve a consistent harmony in his plans, he will give heed to certain minor rules ; a recent satyrist† conveys our meaning ;

*Like Proteus, he assumes all shapes,  
Sometimes th' apothecary apes ;  
On founder'd mare, sometimes his 'prentice,  
Trudging on foot, to humbler entries,  
And sometimes makes a grand approach,  
Doctor of Physic in a coach.*

At the onset, he may appear on the ridge of a mere jackass of a horse, a steed of most ill-favored view, sharp hips, staring ribs, and

\* Applied by Hudibras to the Puritanical character.

† Felix Farley's *Man in the Moon*. Bristol.



shaggy hide ; the most chosen of the “ des-  
pecti et informes” of his kind, though, like  
Yorick, he look humility itself. It will pre-  
pare the way for some more high mettled  
racer ; and we should recommend a cream-  
coloured charger. It is a favorite colour with  
all *pseudo*-practisers ; for among the friends,  
whom the devil discovered when he came  
upon earth,

“ An apothecary, on a white horse, rode by on his avocations,  
Oh, oh, said the Devil, there’s my old friend Death in the  
Revelations !”

PORSON’S Lines.

As to vehicles, the lamp-black and lack-lus-  
tre gig of former times, may be attached to  
the first “ humility,” like a wheelbarrow  
harnessed to a terrier, and the showy stan-  
hope, or narrow disobligeant to the final  
Eclipse. To his name, he should append the  
title of Member of the College of Surgeons,  
in the public descriptions of the place in  
which he may live ; with precedence of older

and more respectable persons, even though the right of being so denominated, appear not in the published lists of that body.

We regret that occurrences in this country fully justify our remarks. In Ireland, France, and America, apparently none are permitted to avail themselves of public tendencies towards quackery, to the exclusion of sterling merit. As long as talent has to seek patronage, unprotected by the legislature, in many communities, it will be excepted for the sake of systematic artifice, and the public will be losers. The lawyer has long since been restrained from usurping *his* profession ; and the clergyman, also restricted, cannot unite in himself, the several occupations of verger, dog-whipper, sexton, churchwarden, parish-clerk and vicar. ED.

XIII. To advance professional improvement, a friendly and unreserved *intercourse* should subsist between the gentlemen of the faculty, with a free communication of what-



ever is extraordinary or interesting in the course of their hospital practice. And an *account* of every *case* or *operation*, which is rare, curious, or instructive, should be drawn up by the physician or surgeon, to whose charge it devolves, and entered in a register kept for the purpose, but open only to the physicians and surgeons of the charity.

XIV. *Hospital registers* usually contain only a simple report of the number of patients admitted and discharged. By adopting a more comprehensive plan, they might be rendered subservient to medical science, and beneficial to mankind. The following sketch is offered, with deference, to the gentlemen of the faculty. Let the register consist of three tables ; the first specifying the number of patients admitted cured, relieved, discharged, or dead ; the second the several diseases of the patients, with their events ; the third the sexes, ages, and occupations of the patients. The ages should be reduced into classes ;



and the tables adapted to the four divisions of the year. By such an institution, the increase or decrease of sickness; the attack, progress, and cessation of epidemics; the comparative healthiness of different situations, climates, and seasons; the influence of particular trades and manufactures on health and life; with many other curious circumstances, not more interesting to physicians than to the community, would be ascertained with sufficient precision. *Thus* Dr. Percival.

The author of the biography of the second Munro ascribes the eminence of that individual, to a habit of noting down cases. We owe the works of the late Dr. Parry,\* which exhibit a pure science, but seldom found in modern writings on medicine, to a similar practice. He says, "The great book of nature, which is alike open to all, and is incapable of deceiving, I have hourly read

\* Collections from the unpublished medical writings of Doctor Parry, vol. I, page 48.



and I trust not wholly in vain. During the first twelve or fourteen years of my professional life, I recorded almost every case, which occurred to me either in private practice, or in the chief conduct of an extensive charity. When afterwards the multiplication of common examples seemed to me an unnecessary waste of inestimable time, which might be much more profitably employed, I contented myself with the more useful task of recording chiefly such cases, or on occasions, such particular circumstances only of cases, as led to the establishment of principles. This I have generally done on the spot, or rarely deferred beyond the day of observation, always rejecting what, on repeated varied enquiry, I have not been able to verify." Would that he had lived to perfect this great work of unremitted industry. The tree was full grown indeed, and its noble members, withal loaded with fruit; some more early ripenings had dropped from the boughs, but the trunk was blasted

before the full golden crop could be gathered in its perfection. His cases were chiefly recorded on scraps, and written in his carriage. Though but "the baby figure of that giant mass" which could only have been moulded into form and excellence, by means of the materials which perished with the mind of the author, they are even as "disjecta membra" a treasury of sound knowledge. It is a holy task to freshen laurels gained with so much labor, and prevent such an example from falling into unmindfulness with the world.

It is singular, that persons are generally appointed to public institutions, who are least disposed to literary communication; who, with perfect apathy to science, habitually suffer the most interesting facts to pass through their notice into oblivion. Hence, if not in surgery, it has happened at all events in medicine, that almost every improvement has been promulgated by men, who had only the



scanty opportunities of private practice. As long as public institutions are at the command of private influence, and solicited for purposes of private interests, science will be little benefitted in the manner recommended by Dr. Percival. In private practice, "the very multiplication of the opportunities of knowledge, so harrasses and fatigues by the incessant practice of the art, as often to afford little leisure or inclination to cultivate and extend the science."\* Sir Astley Cooper, in his lectures, was wont to observe, that it were much to be wished that country practisers would more frequently benefit the world with their observations. ED.

XV. By the adoption of the *register*, recommended in the foregoing article, physicians and surgeons would obtain a clearer insight into the comparative success of their hospital and private practice; and would be

\* Id. p. 46.

incited to a diligent investigation of the causes of such difference. In particular diseases it will be found to subsist in a very remarkable degree: And the discretionary power of the physician or surgeon, in the admission of patients, could not be exerted with more justice or humanity, than in refusing to consign to lingering suffering, and almost certain death, a numerous class of patients, inadvertently recommended as objects of these charitable institutions. “In judging of diseases with regard to the propriety of their reception into hospitals,” says an excellent writer, “the following general circumstances are to be considered :

“Whether they be capable of speedy relief;  
“because, as it is the intention of charity to  
“relieve as great a number as possible, a  
“quick change of objects is to be wished;  
“and also because the inbred disease of hospitals will almost inevitably creep, in some  
“degree, upon one who continues a long



“ time in them, but will rarely attack one,  
“ whose stay is short.

“ Whether they require in a particular man-  
“ ner the superintendence of skilful persons,  
“ either on account of their acute and dange-  
“ rous nature, or any singularity or intricacy  
“ attending them, or erroneous opinions pre-  
“ vailing among the common people concern-  
“ ing their treatment.

“ Whether they be contagious, or subject  
“ in a peculiar degree to taint the air, and  
“ generate pestilential diseases.

“ Whether a fresh and pure air be pecu-  
“ liarly requisite for their cure, and they  
“ be remarkably injured by any vitiation of  
“ it.”\*

XVI. But no precautions relative to the  
reception of patients, who labour under ma-  
ladies incapable of relief, contagious in their  
nature, or liable to be aggravated by confine-

\* See Dr. Aikin's *Thoughts on Hospitals*, p. 21.

ment in an impure atmosphere, can obviate the evils arising from *close wards*, and the false economy of crowding a number of persons into the least possible space. There are inbred diseases which it is the duty of the physician or surgeon to prevent, as far as lies in his power, by a strict and persevering attention to the whole medical polity of the hospital. This comprehends the discrimination of cases admissable, air, diet, cleanliness, and *drugs*; each of which articles should be subjected to a rigid scrutiny, at stated periods of time.

XVII. The establishment of a *committee* of the *gentlemen* of the *faculty*, to be held monthly, would tend to facilitate this interesting investigation, and to accomplish the most important objects of it. By the free communication of remarks, various improvements would be suggested; by the regular discussing of them, they would be reduced to a definite and consistent form; and by the



authority of united suffrages, they would have full influence over the governors of the charity. The exertions of individuals, however benevolent or judicious, often give rise to jealousy; are opposed by those who have not been consulted; and prove inefficient by wanting the collective energy of numbers.

XVIII. The harmonious intercourse, which has been recommended to the gentlemen of the faculty, will naturally produce *frequent consultations*, viz. of the physicians on medical cases, of the surgeons on chirurgical cases, and of both united in cases of a compound nature, which falling under the department of each, may admit of elucidation by the reciprocal aid of the two professions.

XIX. In consultations on medical cases, the junior physician present should *deliver* his *opinion* first, and the others in the progressive order of their seniority. The same order should be observed in chirurgical cases; and a majority should be decisive in both:



But if the numbers be equal, the decision should rest with the physician or surgeon, under whose care the patient is placed. No decision, however, should restrain the acting practitioner from making such variations in the mode of treatment, as future contingences may require, or a farther insight into the nature of the disorder may shew to be expedient.

XX. In consultations on mixed cases, the junior surgeon should *deliver* his *opinion* first, and his brethren afterwards in succession, according to progressive seniority. The junior physician present should deliver his opinion after the senior surgeon; and the other physicians in the order above prescribed.

XXI. In every consultation, the case to be considered should be *concisely stated* by the physician or surgeon, who requests the aid of his brethren. The opinions relative to it should be delivered with brevity, agreeably to the preceding arrangement, and the deci-



sions collected in the same order. The order of seniority, among the physicians and surgeons, may be regulated by the dates of their respective appointments in the hospital.

XXII. Due *notice* should be given of a consultation, and no person admitted to it except physicians and surgeons of the hospital, and the house-surgeon, without the unanimous consent of the gentlemen present. If an examination of the patient be previously necessary, the particular circumstances of danger or difficulty should be carefully concealed from him, and every just precaution used to guard him from anxiety or alarm.

XXIII. No important *operation* should be determined upon, without a consultation of the physicians and surgeons, and the acquiescence of a majority of them. Twenty-four hours notice of the proposed operation should be given, except in dangerous accidents, or when peculiar occurrences may render delay hazardous. The presence of a *spectator*

should not be allowed during an operation, without the express permission of the operator. All extra-official interference in the management of it should be forbidden. A decorous *silence* ought to be observed. It may be humane and salutary, however, for one of the attending physicians or surgeons to speak occasionally to the patient; to comfort him under his sufferings; and to give him assurance, if consistent with truth, that the operation goes on well, and promises a speedy and successful termination.\*

As a Hospital is the best school for practical surgery, it would be liberal and beneficial to invite, in rotation, two surgeons of the town, who do not belong to the institution, to be present at each operation.

XXIV. Hospital consultations ought not to be held on Sundays, except in cases of urgent necessity; and on such occasions an

\* The five preceding articles were suggested by Dr. Ferriar and Mr. Simmons.



hour should be appointed, which does not interfere with attendance on public worship.

XXV. It is an established usage, in some hospitals, to have a *stated day* in the week, for the performance of operations. But this may occasion improper delay, or equally unjustifiable anticipation. When several operations are to take place in succession, one patient should not have his mind agitated by the knowledge of the sufferings of another. The surgeon should change his apron, when besmeared; and the table or instruments should be freed from all marks of blood, and every thing that may excite terror.

XXVI. DISPENSARIES afford the widest sphere for the treatment of diseases, comprehending, not only such as ordinarily occur, but those which are so infectious, malignant, and fatal, as to be excluded from admission into Infirmarys. Happily, also, they neither tend to counteract that spirit of independence, which should be sedulously fostered in the



poor, nor to preclude the practical exercise of those relative duties, "the charities of father, son, and brother," which constitute the strongest moral bonds of society. Being institutions less splendid and expensive than hospitals, they are well adapted to towns of moderate size; and might even be established, without difficulty, in populous country districts. Physicians and surgeons, in such situations, have generally great influence: and it would be truly honorable to exert it in a cause subservient to the interests of medical science, of commerce, and of philanthropy.

The duties which devolve on gentlemen of the faculty, engaged in the conduct of Dispensaries, are so nearly similar to those of hospital physicians and surgeons, as to be comprehended under the same professional and moral rules. But greater *authority* and greater *condescension* will be found requisite in domestic attendance on the poor. And human nature must be intimately studied, to



acquire that full ascendancy over the prejudices, the caprices, and the passions of the sick, and of their relatives, which is essential to medical success.

XXVII. Hospitals, appropriated to particular maladies, are established in different places, and claim both the patronage and the aid of the gentlemen of the faculty. To an ASYLUM for FEMALE PATIENTS, labouring under SYPHILIS, it is to be lamented that discouragements have been too often and successfully opposed. Yet whoever reflects on the variety of diseases to which the human body is incident, will find that a considerable part of them are derived from immoderate passions, and vicious indulgences. Sloth, intemperance, and irregular desires are the great sources of those evils, which contract the duration, and embitter the enjoyment of life. But humanity, whilst she bewails the vices of mankind, incites us to alleviate the miseries which flow from them. And it may

be proved, that a LOCK HOSPITAL is an institution founded on the most benevolent principles, consonant to sound policy, and favorable to reformation and to virtue. It provides relief for a painful and loathsome distemper, which contaminates, in its progress, the innocent as well as the guilty, and extends its baneful influence to future generations. It restores to virtue and to religion, those votaries whom pleasure has seduced, or villainy betrayed; and who now feel, by sad experience, that ruin, misery, and disgrace, *are the wages of sin*. Over such objects pity sheds the generous tear; austerity softens into forgiveness; and benevolence expands at the united pleas of frailty, penitence, and wretchedness.\*

\* See two Reports, intended to promote the establishment of a Lock Hospital in Manchester, in the year 1774, inserted in the author's *Essays Medical, Philosophical, and Experimental*. Vol. II. p. 263. 4th Edt.



## CHAPTER II.

*Of professional conduct in private, or general practice.*

I. THE *moral rules of conduct*, prescribed towards hospital patients, should be fully adopted in private or general practice. Every case, committed to the charge of a physician or surgeon, should be treated with attention, steadiness, and humanity : reasonable indulgence should be granted to the mental imbecility and caprices of the sick : secrecy, and delicacy when required by peculiar circumstances, should be strictly observed. And the familiar and confidential intercourse, to which the faculty are admitted in their professional visits, should be used with discretion, and with the most scrupulous regard to fidelity and honour.

II. The strictest *temperance* should be deemed incumbent on the faculty ; as the

practice both of physic and surgery at all times requires the exercise of a clear and vigorous understanding: and on emergencies, for which no professional man should be unprepared, a steady hand, an acute eye, and an unclouded head, may be essential to the well being, and even to the life, of a fellow-creature. Thus Dr. Percival.

Dr. Gregory observes, that he knew physicians, who boasted that they prescribed as well when drunk as sober. In this, they could not be mistaken, for their boast amounts precisely to this, that they prescribed no better when sober than drunk.\* We have known practitioners in midwifery, who were considered equally clever in either state, and many persons, on the whole, highly estimated for skill, who drank away their faculties. So much for the judgment of the world. ED.

\* Philosophical and Literary Essays, p. 187.



III. A physician should not be forward to make gloomy prognostications ; *because they savour of empiricism, by magnifying the importance of his services in the treatment or cure of the disease.* But he should not fail, on proper occasions, to give to the friends of the patient, *timely notice of danger*, when it really occurs, *and even to the patient himself, if absolutely necessary.* This office, however, is so peculiarly alarming, when executed by him, that it ought to be declined whenever it can be assigned to any other person of sufficient judgment and delicacy. For the physician should be the minister of hope and comfort to the sick, that by such cordials to the drooping spirit, he may smooth the bed of death ; revive expiring life ; and counteract the depressing influence of those maladies, which rob the philosopher of fortitude, and the Christian of consolation.

IV. *Officious interference, in a case under the charge of another, should be carefully*



avoided. *No meddling enquiries should be made concerning the patient ; no unnecessary hints given, relative to the nature or treatment of his disorder ; nor any selfish conduct pursued, that may directly or indirectly tend to diminish the trust reposed in the physician or surgeon employed. Yet though the character of a professional busy-body, whether from thoughtlessness or craft, is highly reprehensible, there are occasions which not only justify but require a spirited interposition. When artful ignorance grossly imposes on credulity ; when neglect puts to hazard an important life ; or rashness threatens it with still more imminent danger ; a medical neighbour, friend, or relative, apprized of such facts, will justly regard his interference as a duty. But he ought to be careful, that the information on which he acts, is well founded ; that his motives are pure and honourable ; and that his judgment of the measures pursued is*



*built on experience and practical knowledge, not on speculative or theoretical differences of opinion.* The particular circumstances of the case will suggest the most proper mode of conduct. In general, however, a personal and confidential application to the gentlemen of the faculty concerned, should be the first step taken, and afterwards, if necessary, the transaction may be communicated to the patient or to his family.

V. When a physician or surgeon is called to a patient, who has been before under the care of another gentleman of the faculty, a *consultation with him should be even proposed, though he may have discontinued his visits* : his practice, also, should be treated *with candour, and justified, so far as probity and truth will permit.* For the want of success in the primary treatment of a case is no impeachment of *professional skill or knowledge* ; and it often serves to throw light on the nature of a disease, and to sug-

gest to the subsequent practitioner more appropriate means of relief. Thus Percival.

Upon the exterior deportment and moral qualities, which should adorn the medical character, no observations are more correct in principle, or fearless in language, than those of Professor Gregory.\*

The disciple of medicine, has not only to subdue his own prejudices, but to struggle with those of his patients, the relations, the world in general, and the ill-offices of opposing interests, for “it *unfortunately* happens, that the *only judges* of his merit, are those, who have *an interest in concealing or depreciating it.*” To meet the crosses and disappointments, which spring from these several causes, requires a patient and flexible frame of the temper and passions.†

\* Observations on the duties and offices of a Physician.  
London 1770.

† Id. p. p 16, 17.



In the profession of physic, very various circumstances, and quite contrary characters, command success, according to the genius of places and persons, and peculiar combinations of events. The well known remark of Dr. Johnson, remains uncontroverted by experience, that "a physician in a great city, seems to be the mere plaything of fortune ; his degree of reputation is for the most part totally casual ; they that employ him, know not his excellence ; they that reject him, know not his deficiency.\*" The voices of the first difficult few, and the preferences of the last acclaiming many, may be owing to the subtle use of qualities, in which there is no merit, to appearances in which there is no solidity, and to extrinsic help, for which none can take credit to themselves. So also fortune is created of causes, equally irrelevant to the intrinsic worth of individuals.

\* Life of Akenside.

Since the practice of all rules, admit so contradictory results, experience selects such only, as are least subject to exceptions. First impressions are of great import. They penetrate vividly into the depths of society, when curiosity is most awake, and often decide at once the popularity of a character. The inexperienced mind, lest it should darken its first hopes and prospects by the ebullitions of a provoked and wounded spirit, must needs learn, that confidence follows reluctantly after cautious and deliberate steps, and reiterated impressions of a favorable kind. Public favor requires long and assiduous courtship, and often plays the part of Penelope with its suitors. Mistrust and caprice, readily undo the ties between a young candidate and his first employers, and evil natures, which abound, form the most malignant constructions on the best intentions, and ablest efforts. Talent, even more than mediocrity, finds its course, thus strewed with thorns and



briars. Perspicuous to the possessor himself, it is not equally transparent to the world. Its best achievements may sink dead, and its accidental and meritricious efforts, fix approbation. To pride of mind, this first lesson is severe, but the trial is certain, and the government of temper is indispensably requisite.

As respects competitors, the despotic influence of public opinion, of fashion, and imitation, and the idea of superior security with abilities, which, whether greater or less, have been tried most, and known longest, excite decisive prepossessions. Of those of whom we think nothing, the "whistling of a name," will cause thousands to think highly: two thirds of mankind neither can, nor will estimate medical capacity, by any other test than notoriety. What is well done by unknown talent, according to common prejudice, must be done better by a man with a name. From the one, the world will bolt at a straw;

from the other it will swallow a camel. With public confidence, neglect and even homicide are as wrongfully acquitted, as, without it, inadvertency is wrongfully cast.

An error of practice may be imagined by a patient, and a rival summoned. Dissembling courtesy may have marked his behaviour to his younger opponent, whilst the jealous malice of the most jealous of professions, rankled in his heart. Occasion to stab home an infant reputation, is full in his power; the secret disposition of the heart, swells the temptation; acknowledged precedence reinforces the blow; and nothing is left to the malevolence of a little soul but to select, for its weapons, the subtle poison of a hint, or the overwhelming imputation of overcharged error. Here an extreme case is supposed, and extreme measures must meet it. To flinch in silence, is to fall. Open inquiry, if possible, must be compelled, and the parties and the profession, be made to see the whole



truth. Medicine abounds in contradictory views of theory and practice ; alike in unsoundness and uncertainty ; and no difference of opinion, unless where error is of gross and palpable ill consequence, can justify the ruin of a rising reputation. In regard to the petty censoriousness and invidious sentiment of rivals, which always keep pace with success, wisdom returns not bolt for bolt, nor arrow for arrow. The curst fox thrives most, and the mastiff disregards the hisses of the goose.

The malevolence of rivals is seldom so fatal, as the virulence of patients themselves. How great soever may be the pretensions of the young practiser, it often happens to wound his spirits, and hurt his best interests, especially in fashionable circles, that egotism and presumptuous conceit, lavish on him cruelty, injustice and falsehood, for such inadvertencies or want of success, as in the nature of things, must occur. There is a



class of wretches, of callous feelings and bitter asperity of dispositions, whose understandings, if the gifts of fortune add nothing else, they bring at least the confidence of infallibility in their own conjectures. Did their sinister reflections never extend beyond themselves, it were of little account; but they often influence numbers, whose deficiencies render them equally incapable of discerning truth, and delighted to hear themselves talk. By a coterie of Jesabels, "the reputation of a respectable physician is frequently hunted away with the same deliberate coolness, with which Domitian would impale a fly, or an old dowager whisper away the honor of a fashionable beauty.\*" It is well for the young to feel, that they will be placed in those situations, from which neither superior mental powers, nor any other thing than long years of established practice will shield them. But

\* Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal, No. LXXXI.



justice requires it to be said, that in high life, the reverse of this conduct is exhibited by *real* good breeding, which, in its turn, softens the smart.

To meet such obstacles requires discretion. A temper quickly ignited by the embarrassments of practice, or follies of patients impairs the judgment and induces gross improprieties of behaviour.

Next as preeminent qualities, humanity and sympathy, with firmness and composure, win the confidence and affection of patients, and minister to their relief. Pity without weakness, and the blending of the friend and physician forms a character above all price. Whatever falsehood and malignity may insinuate, these qualities, "so far from being inconsistent with intellectual vigor, are its usual attendants." "On the other hand rough blustering manners mostly accompany a weak understanding and dastardly soul, and are indeed frequently affected to conceal those

infirmities.” The stern disciplinarian is exposed to the premeditated and secret insubordination of those who are quelled and paralysed by his austerity. His remedies are cast out of a window, and in tracing their supposed effects, he is exposed to ridicule. To absolute government in medicine, however necessary, few will submit.

More latitude may be ceded to physicians towards those patients who require explanations for every sigh and every groan. But with the *Malade Imaginaire*, since, switches better guide than cudgels, and,—

A little gentle jerking, sets the spirits all a working,

humanity, observes the just medium between light sarcastic ridicule and unseasonable jest, indifference and barbarous neglect. A brute occurs to our recollection, who bled a nervous patient at every time in one day that he was sent for, which was frequently. The day closed the connection between him and the



patient.\* The anecdote of Sandy Wood† and the Nervous Lady are well known. Once he threw her puppy out of the window, a second time he broke her china. "Eh, you auld wretch," said the patient, "gang oout of my sight, and ne'er come into it again." "I will gang, said Sandy, but ye canna do without me, y'ell een send again." The reaction was favourable to her spirits, and Sandy's prediction was fulfilled.

It has been observed that no style of manner insures or inhibits success, and that the extremes of honey and vinegar have prospered in real life in a more certain measure than mere milk and water. Amid her constellations, medicine has had generally an Ursa Major. Such, in the last century, was Radcliff. The rattle-snake is said to produce a fascination, by the mingling of terror with certain indescribable impressions, which causes

\* See Gregory.

† Alexander Wood, a celebrated Surgeon at Edinburgh.

its prey to leap into its throat. Perhaps the notoriety, which the lawless bruinism of an Abernethy has gained for his vigorous talent, may have profited him as much as, if he had assumed them, would "the nods and becks and wreathed smiles" of the most silver-tongued Eupheues\* of the profession. Rousseau tells some anecdotes of an untamed bear, who was proto Physician to one of the kings of France, which are humorous and caustic. A person wanted to borrow some money of him on good security. "My friend," said he to him, squeezing his arm, and, at the same time grinning, "should St. Peter come down from heaven to borrow of me ten pistoles, and the Trinity would be bound for the payment, I would not lend it to him." A devout Count, who had invited him to dinner proposed pra-

\* The Eupheuists or exquisites of the Sixteenth Century, conversed in the cant of Chivalry, gleaned from Sidney's *Arcadia* and Eupheues' *Looking Glass*. A Eupheuist is delineated in one of the *Waverley Novels*.



prayers. The physician with a wry face, fell on his knees, but, having said scarcely two *Ave Marias*, got up and walked off without a word. "Stay! Mr. Grossi, stay!" said the Count, "they have got an excellent red partridge on the spit." "Count!" said he, and turned round "if you had an angel down to roast, I would not stay."

Roughness may sometimes be reputed for strength of character, when more profound discernment may trace it to another cause.—

This is some fellow

Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect,  
A saucy roughness, and constrains his gait,  
Quite from his nature; he cannot flatter, he!  
An honest mind and plain,—he must speak truth,  
These kind of knaves, I know, which in this plainness,  
Harbour more craft and more corrupted ends,  
Than twenty silly clucking observants,  
That stretch their duties nicely.

Some may reject gentleness, as unbeseeming their natural characters; "He who would hang on Trajan's columns," said Johnson,

“garlands and myrtles, would disgrace, not adorn it ;” some from contempt of the understandings of others ; and many from dispositions soured by disappointment or constitutional irritability increased by distempers. But the sternest aspects conceal hearts “that have little left to learn ;” whose most wayward sallies are atoned by seasons of withering thought, and secret remorse.

There are excesses of the *suaviter in modo*, even more designing and censurable than the overacting of the *fortiter in re*. Dr. Gregory marks and forcibly condemns the double-faced and fee-seeking satyr, who blows south in the mansions of wealth, and north in the hovels of poverty ; the cur, who having grown rich by compliance with good manners, conceives himself indispensable to his employers, and becomes rapacious and brutal upon the strength of his reputation ; and the servile and fawning sycophant, who, in exceeding the established rules of good breeding



towards characters despicable in other respects than external splendor and magnificence, forgets that his philosophy is merely a name. This abject style of behaviour is the most humbling that can characterize genius and talent, and is chiefly incidental to persons of vulgar extraction.

✓ “Physicians, considered as a body of men, who live by medicine as a profession, have an interest separate and distinct from that of their art. In pursuit of this interest some have acted with candor, with honour, and with the ingenuous and liberal manners of gentlemen. Conscious of their own worth, they disdained all artificial colourings, and depended for success on their real merit. *But such men are not the most numerous in any profession.* Some impelled by necessity, some stimulated by vanity, and others anxious to conceal conscious ignorance, *have had recourse to various mean and unworthy arts to raise their importance among the ignorant,*

*who are always the most numerous part of mankind."*\*

Those arts with which low cunning seeks to betray weakness and credulity, and to gain a reputation for superior understanding, may be ascribed to its being perceived how inadequate is knowledge alone to success. They consist in flattery and insinuation, and external appearances of solemnity and importance. A load of artificial hair, a gold cane† dangling at the wrist, a full trimmed coat and sword, a solemn stately self-important demeanour, an air of perfect confidence in their own abilities, and a species of grandiloquous pedantry, characterised physicians in the last century. Whatever success this antiquated foppery found amongst men in general, the more judicious soon perceived that consummate ignorance and impudence

\* Id. p. 3.

† A humorous work, called "The Gold Cane," is lately published.



most adhered to it, and far from upholding the dignity of the profession, it brought it into contempt and ridicule. Hence "we never meet with a physician in a dramatic representation, but he is treated as a solemn coxcomb and a fool." Speaking justly, the satire was levelled not against physic, but physicians; not against the profession, but its particular manners. The first English anatomical physician, by the simplicity of his example, is said to have assimilated the costumes of the physician and private gentleman, and brought the public to think, that merit might exist without a carriage, and the ease and freedom of modern times concurred to banish a stiff and formal race of "porcupigs in armor."

The serpent may cast his slough, but the inner guile remains. Harmony between folly and cunning is inevitable in states of society, wholly artificial in habits and ideas. The willow will be preferred before the oak, and systematic deceit gratefully extenuated.



so long as pride is indisposed to brook the sincerity of independence, and the gluttony of vanity can only be appeased by adulation. Medicine will have her Chesterfields, from the attendant of the bourgeois-gentilhomme, up to the Esculapius of Royalty, who according to their sphere, will administer the molasses of rural politeness, or the more refined mellifications of the court. The Musidora of a bathing place will point to no ruler of the waves save the smooth Adonis of fashionable practice, and the Diana of a country town will limit her confidence to the glib and oily persuasions of a therapeutical Endymion.\*

By means of studied manners alone men have flourished for a season, or sometimes wasted out their days, "Wizards within their own charmed rings." Merely actors of a part, entertaining no views towards the in-

\*The learned Dr. Young says that the manners of medical men should be *obsequious*. Essay on Medical Literature. *We differ*.



terests of the profession ; such men, with very superficial parts, have reached the summit of honorary and pecuniary distinction. If it be asked what claim they can assert to that which is solid now and of immortality hereafter, the reply resolves itself into a Sir Pertinax Macsycophant detail of worldly diplomacy, bounded in its ambition by the love of gain and admiration, and contempt for renown. Renown indeed is not in the gift of their patrons, and they are content to regard it as the fox regarded the grapes, or in the same point of view as Falstaff, who was contented to think that it did not fat capons. ED.

VI. In large and opulent towns, the *distinction* between the *provinces* of *physic* and *surgery* should be steadily maintained. This distinction is sanctioned both by reason and experience. It is founded on the nature and objects of the two professions ; on the education and acquirements requisite for their most beneficial and honourable exercise ; and



tends to promote the complete cultivation and advancement of each. For the division of skill and labour is no less advantageous in the liberal than in the mechanic arts : And both physic and surgery are so comprehensive, and yet so far from perfection, as separately to give full scope to the industry and genius of their respective professors. Experience has fully evinced the benefits of the discrimination recommended, which is established in every well regulated hospital, and is thus expressly authorized by the faculty themselves, and by those who have the best opportunities of judging of the proper application of the healing art. No physician or surgeon, therefore, should adopt more than one denomination, or assume any rank or privileges different from those of his order.

VII. *Consultations* should be *promoted*, in difficult or protracted cases, as they give rise to confidence, energy, and more enlarged views in practice. On such occasions no rivalry



or jealousy should be indulged : Candour, probity, and all due respect should be exercised towards the physician or surgeon first engaged ; and as he may be presumed to be best acquainted with the patient and with his family, he should deliver all the medical directions agreed upon, though he may not have precedency in seniority or rank. It should be the province, however, of the senior physician, first to propose the necessary questions to the sick, but without excluding his associate from the privilege of making farther enquiries, to satisfy himself, or to elucidate the case.

VIII. As circumstances sometimes occur to render a *special consultation* desirable, when the continued attendance of another physician or surgeon might be objectionable to the patient, the gentleman of the faculty, whose assistance is required, in such cases, should pay only two or three visits ; and sedulously guard against all future unsolicited interference.



rence. For this consultation a double gratuity may reasonably be expected from the patient, as it will be found to require an extraordinary portion both of time and attention.

In medical practice, it is not an unfrequent occurrence, that a physician is hastily summoned, through the anxiety of the family, or the solicitation of friends, to visit a patient, who is under the regular direction of another physician, to whom notice of this call has not been given. Under such circumstances, no change in the treatment of the sick person should be made, till a previous consultation with the stated physician has taken place, unless the lateness of the hour precludes meeting, or the symptoms of the case are too pressing to admit of delay. Thus Percival.

In the Statutes of Morality, of the London College of Physicians, a Second Physician was enjoined not to cause the rejection of the First, nor attempt innovation, and in all



cases to inquire whether any physician had previously prescribed, under a penalty of £1. ED.

IX. *Theoretical discussions* should be avoided in consultations, as occasioning perplexity and loss of time. For there may be much diversity of opinion, concerning speculative points, with perfect agreement in those modes of practice, which are founded not on hypothesis, but on experience and observation.

X. The rules prescribed for hospital consultations, may be adopted in private or general practice.\* And the *seniority* of a physician may be determined by the period of his public and acknowledged practice as a physician, and that of a surgeon by the period of his practice as a surgeon, in the place where each resides. This arrangement, being clear and obvious, is adapted to remove all grounds of dispute amongst medical gentlemen : and

\* See articles xix. xx. xxi. Chap. I.



it secures the regular continuance of the order of precedency, established in every town, which might otherwise be liable to troublesome interruptions by new settlers, perhaps not long stationary. Thus Percival.

*Physicians.* Dr. Friend and others, have written express histories of Physic, but it comes within our scope only to furnish such a sketch, from anecdotes scattered through the lore of different ages, as may help to illustrate the character and manners of physicians at different periods of time.

The Arabians and Egyptians exposed their sick in public ways and market places, that they might receive the communication of remedies from bye-passers. Ancient knowledge was afterwards digested into a scientific form by Hippocrates, Arætaeus, and Galen; and subsequently cultivated with much vigor in the sixth century, by the Arabs.\* From

\* There are some excellent remarks on Medical history in recent criticisms in the Edinburgh Journal.



that period, till the revival of learning in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it made no important advancement beyond the doctrines of Hippocrates. A luminous, and spirited exposition of the state of medical and general learning, previous to that period, is given in Dr. Goldsmith's *Essay on Literature*. See also the *Hist. de la Medicine* of Sprengel, 9 vols.

The corruption and servility of declining states, and the progress of despotism have always been favorable to artificial, and destructive to intellectual character in this profession. From the commencement of imperial Rome, to the reign of Dioclesian, the state of medicine is thus described by Gibbon. "The professions of law and physic, are of such common use and certain profit, that they will always secure a certain number of practitioners, endowed with a reasonable degree of abilities and knowledge; but it does not appear, that the students in those two faculties, appeal to any celebrated masters



who have flourished within that period.”\* We have little of their history, but Martial ridicules the Roman physicians, for being accompanied with a long train of pupils, who successively felt the pulse. “Langerebam sed ter comitatus protinus ad me venisti centum, Symmache, discipulis centum me tetigere manus.”† *sed nunc habes*

In the last days of the Empire, Petrarch writes to Clement the Sixth, “holy father, regard as a troop of enemies, this crowd of physicians, with which you are beset.” Recollect this epitaph of the Emperor Adrian: “*Turba perii medicorum.*” It is principally in this age, that the prediction of the old Cato has been verified; who declared, that corruption would be general, when the Greeks had transmitted their sciences, and especially their physicians. Whole nations have done without them; perhaps they did better, and

\* The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

† Epig. in Symmachum, Medicum.



lived longer than us. The Roman republic, according to Pliny, was without physicians six hundred years, and has never been more flourishing." Probably, at that period, luxury had not enervated the Roman constitution, and engendered maladies. When temperance and robust habits are general, physicians are seldom wanting, but after the former are introduced, diseases and doctors must follow. The patriot-bard, found his entreaties unavailing, and again cautioned Clement against them. "But since it is decided, that we can neither live nor die without them, at least, make choice among them; let not that choice fall upon him, who can display the most eloquence and learning, but upon him who is most attached to you. Forgetting their profession, they depart from their thickets, and invade the forests of poets, and fields of orators. More busied in showing off than healing, they bawl about the bed of the patient an hotch-potch of the ideas of Cicero, and



the Aphorisms of Hippocrates. The malady grows worse ; but that goes for nothing, provided they succeed in making it be said, “ here’s a man, who talks well.” A physician who has the talent of speech, renders himself the arbiter of our lives and deaths. But regard as an assassin, as a giver of poison, every physician, who has more babble than wisdom and experience. Say to him, as said the old man in Plautus : “ depart, you were sent for to cure, not to declaim !” To avoid the reproaches of your physicians, I say nothing but what is drawn from Pliny, who speaks more of them than any one else.”\*

Petrarch’s picture of the foppish and pedantic physician of the middle ages, is severe ; and we may add to it, the accurate sketches of his cotemporary Boccaccio. But previously, the love of letters, induces us to confer a tribute to the genius of the patriot-bard of

\* *Memoirs pour la vie de Petrarque*, par l’abbé de Sade.  
Vol. iii. p. 99. A. D. 1351.



Italy, whose language, replete with the simplicity of reason and truth, in the dark ages, contained all the light and refinement as it now retains all the freshness, with less of the sophistry, of modern writers.

“We frequently see your citizens,” says Boccaccio, “after they have been to study at Bologna, come back one a lawyer, another a physician, a third, a notary, with their long scarlet gowns and furs, with other things to make a figure; and to what purpose, every day’s experience shews us.” He personifies the habits and customs of the physicians in one Master Simon da Villa, who is described as having returned from Bologna to Florence, “strutting in the robes belonging to his profession; though an ass would have become them as well as he.” The doctor, “whose knowledge reached no farther perhaps than to cure children of the itch,” has “a urinal,” painted over the door to the street, that such people as wanted his advice,



might know where to have it, and tells his friends, that “no physician in Florence, has better clothes, or a better library than himself, and gives his word, that if they be sick at any time, he will come for nothing ;” adding with all that egotism, and self-sufficiency for which many of the followers of Esculapius, in every age and country, have been so remarkable : “I have enough both of sense and learning, to furnish a whole city, and yet leave sufficient for myself.” The conclusion of this portrait, sketched in the imperishable colours of nature, images a character by no means uncommon, in which the conceit of an individual is only exceeded by the weakness of his understanding. One of his friends, who acts the part of Sneer in the Critic, replies to the doctor, “that he plainly sees that he has been at the university, and knows how to keep his mouth shut upon occasion, and that he has not learned his A. B. C. in the manner of most blockheads ;



that he must have been born on a Sunday ; and, though physic had been his study, had learned to *captivate* men by his *good sense, and manner of speaking*, far beyond any he ever saw." " Ah," says the doctor, " thus it is to have to do with people of understanding. What would you have said, had you seen me at Bologna, where were none, either great or small, doctor or scholar, but doated on me, so much did they profit by my discourses? Nay, more than that, I never spoke, but they all laughed ; so highly were they pleased to hear me ; and when I came away, they expressed the greatest concern imaginable at parting with me ; and to encourage me to continue with them, offered me the sole privilege of reading lectures on medicine to all the students. But I refused, being resolved to come and live here." His *friend* then turns to a third party, and observes, " you would not believe me, when I told you, that there was not a physician in all



this country, could cast an *ass's* water better than himself; nor is there his fellow, I will maintain it, from this place to Paris.”  
“Bruno is in the right,” quoth the doctor,  
“but *here nobody knows me; they are all a parcel of ignorant, stupid people*; but I wish you had seen how I appeared among the doctors.”\*

The value of this abstract, is its lively instruction to the young. In watering places, and in frivolous and superficial communities, where arrogance, stupidity, and presumption, run little risk of ridicule, Doctor Simon da Villa, and his vain-glory, are too frequently found to the disgust of men of sense, and the superseding of more modest worth, with the numbers who take upon trust all that young or antiquated coxcombs, from the schools, say of themselves.

“Medicine in great Britain was first practised as an art, founded only on limited observation

\* From the Decameron.



and experience of the effects of remedies in curing diseases, and was utterly unconnected with any collateral or accessory pursuit. As such it descended from father to son as an absolute right of inheritance, and was exclusively practised by particular families. In time it lapsed into other hands, and from the increase of society it naturally became more extended. Its importance to mankind soon attracted towards it the attention of the learned, and from an art it ascended to the dignity of a science.”\*

Burton, in the *Anatomie of Melancholie*, observes : “ Paulus Jovius in his description of Britaine and Levinius Lemnius say as much of this our Island, that there was of old no use of physicke amongst us, and but little at this day, except it be for a few nice and idle citizens, surfeiting Courtiers, and stalled gentlemen lubbers. The country people use Kitchen Physicke and see more in it.”

\* Observations on Medical Reform p. 14.



It seems that the Monks in chronic infirmities, spent their remaining days in an infirmary, where there appears to have been very good living, and little or no use of physic : and Piers Plowman says of the doctor :

By this daye, syr Doctour, quod I, than ye be not in dowel,  
For ye have armed us two, in that ye eate the puddinge,  
Mortreux (a rich soup) and other meat, and we no morsel had,  
And if ye fare so in your *farmery*. (Infirmary, &c.)\*

“In the middle ages medicine was mostly professed by Clerks, because they alone were capable of reading the Latin works on the art of healing, and physicians till 1451, were not allowed to marry, the age seeming to think that a father of a family could not heal so well as a priest. From the nature of some of the prescriptions, there appears an evident intention of confining this art as well as others to the dogmas of the existing religion, for which reason relics were introduced into the *Materia Medica*.” A ring taken from

\* British Monachism, p. 324.



the body of St. Remigius, and dipped in water, is said to have produced a drink very good in fevers, and different diseases ! Relicks were also hawked about, and money given to the bearers for access of the sick to them. This pretended property of miraculous healing, no doubt conciliated the vulgar to superstition in a miraculous degree, especially as there was one very convenient rule upon the subject. Limbs, it seems, were as valuable as whole bodies, because the Saint knowing that he was not entire without the limb, would of course attend to that as much as to the rest of the body." "Peyrat says, there was a miraculous fountain at Moissac, where lepers came in crowds to bathe, and were healed by the *merits* of a *saint*, whose relicks were deposited in the abbey ; but the lepers communicated their disease to the Monks, of whom a great part died ; which induced the others to shut up the fountain, for their repose and health. Now is it not ridiculous that the



Saint should not screen the monks, while he saved the lepers, or that the former should not have the same easy method of cure.”\*

The monk-physician has been thus described :

“ His compeer hour the Leech’s calling plied,  
Herbs aromatic, dangling in a noose,  
For medicine, to the sick-house beams he tied ;  
He knew the learned name of each, the juice,  
And moon’s age when it should be cull’d for use ;  
If chance his herbs were unavailing found,  
He would from a much treasured volume chuse  
The power of words of most unwieldly sound,  
And add the gestures meet that to those words were bound.

“*Ingenius Medicus*” formed part of the Epitaph of R. Waldby App. York, A. D. 1396,† and “Atwell a parson of Calverly in Devonshire (between 1555 and 1620) and now of St. Tue in Cornwall,” is described as “being well versed in the theorie of physicke. Besides his judgement in urines, cometh

\* Fosbroke’s *British Monachism*, p p. 14, 15, second Edit.

† Willis’s *Survey of the Cathedral of Salisbury*, Vol. I. p. 39.



little behind the *skilfullest* in that profession ; most for all diseases he prescribes *milk*, and very often *apples !*" The same author observes, that "there were then but very few physicians, and only one, John Williams, of note in Cornwall, (a county now full of nostrums and superstitious quackery. ED.) One Rawe Clyez, a blacksmith, was also *eminent* in physic, but furnished *no more* learning than was suitable to his calling."

A French author observes ; "les medecins du quinzieme siecle, gens presque tous peu lettrez et qui n'avoient qu'une intelligence assez mediocre de leur art." "Nous avons à Angers un proverbe, qui dit un bouille de choux fait perdre cinque sols au medecin. Il est du tems que l'on ne donnoit que cinq sols au medecin par visite."\*

In the reign of Henry the Sixth, Margaret Paston, in a letter to her husband, says :

\* Menagiana Paris 1694, Edit. 2.



“ For Goddy’s sake, beware what medesyn  
ye take of any fysicians of London. I shall  
never trust to them, because of your fadyr,  
and myn onkyl.”\*

The late literary patriarch, John Nichols,  
as venerable for his learning, as estimable in  
his private character, gives a very interesting  
account in his “ Progresses,” of the atten-  
dance of the court physicians upon one of the  
sons of James the First. Mayerne said the  
patient would die, for having the misfortune  
to be a prince; alluding to the timid and  
contrary indications which result from consul-  
tations over the great. Hence the old  
epigram :

Like a prompt sculler, one physician plies  
And all his force and all his physic tries,  
But two physicians like a pair of oars  
Conduct you soonest to the Stygian Shores.

The last remedy is worthy of note; a  
capon *humanely* split in two *alive*, and  
applied to the prince’s feet.

\* Paston Letters, p. 180.



After the violent subversions of Henry the Eighth, the day-spring of science and literature broke in England, and the primitive college of physicians received its charter. Though in Elizabeth's reign, Gerard and others, describe the country as subject to its natural peuriency of quackery, they allude to the increased respectability of a profession under collegiate legislation. The regions of darkness and empyricism began to be illuminated. The mighty genius of Bacon, propounded more safe guides and perfect for the explorers of knowledge. Bonet, Sennert, Riverius, and others, promulgated the doctrine of Hippocrates, with whatsoever additions in anatomy and pathology they found extant in their time. Their works yet contain more various and useful materials for reference, than the bulk of modern productions. But Harvey's discovery was of chief moment in its subsequent results. Sydenham, Staal, Hoffman, Boerhaave, Van Swieten, Haller,



Cullen, and several successive enquirers and discoverers, manifested the power of individual capacities, in accomplishing the existing improved state of medicine, which has been derived wholly from the cultivation of morbid anatomy and physiology, the analytical investigation of the distinguishing and characteristic symptoms of diseases. Whilst the most popular empirics have scarcely left the trace of a benefit to mankind, solitary men of science, often neglected by the world, and oppressed by the followers of their own occupation, have performed all things, according to their parts, for their profession, and fellow men.

Of the manners of physicians, as modified by the customs and fashions of the day, we have already spoken. Pedantry, a pompous costume, and other habits, assumed to exalt the trade, and sink the science, are preserved in the faithful and risible pictures of Moliere, and our own novelists. But as a body,



towards the end of last century, the physicians made their profession more respectable, and Blackstone gave them pre-eminence for "general and extensive knowledge."

Dr. Johnson was scarcely less favorable in his estimation. "Whether," he remarks, "what Temple says be true, that physicians have had more learning than the other faculties, I will not stay to enquire, but I believe, every man has found in physicians, great liberality and dignity of sentiment, very prompt effusion of beneficence, and willingness to exert a lucrative art, where there is no hope of lucre."\* The late Dr. Parr concurred in the opinion of Blackstone. "While I allow," he wrote, "that peculiar and important advantages arise from the appropriate studies of the three liberal professions, I must confess, that in erudition and science, and in habits of deep and comprehensive thinking, the pre-eminence in some degree must be

\* Lives of the Poets. Garth.

assigned to physicians.”\* Testimony, so exalted, outweighs volumes from mediocrity.

The lapse of little more than one century, has produced nothing more remarkable than the greater simplification and precision in the form of remedies. The wretched farragos of the old time, it has cleared away :

Burnt clouts, chalk, and clay,  
Powder of bones, scalings of iron, glass,  
And worlds of other strange ingredients  
’Twould burst a man to name.

Even so late as 1771, physicians prescribed the teeth of bears, the jawbones of pikes, and the black lips of crab’s claws in jaundice.

Whatever opinions may be entertained of the artificial division of the profession, into physicians and surgeons, and of the error of allotting to each a different course of education, prejudice only will contend that the former have been at any time useless or per-

\* Remarks on the Statements of Dr. Charles Coombe,  
p. p. 82, 3.



nicious, however chimerical, wavering, or contradictory their doctrine and practices. Doubtless, among them, useful and indispensable agents were found, even when they prescribed, as well as other trash, woodlice, rat's and pigeon's dung, and directed their patients to grub up their roots at the full of the moon, with a bone instead of a spade. However obvious those absurdities, or the views which accompanied them, many practical rules were even then observed by prescribers, distinct from the confusions of theory, and misapplied and ridiculous expedients, which afforded indisputable proofs of the beneficial tendency of their art. The difficulties which mar the physician's skill have always been the same, and the means of overcoming them, whether more or less rational, almost equally fallible. So long as man is born to die, diseases must take hold

\* See Gerard's Herbal, and the Dispensatories of Salmon, Quincy, and Alleyne.

upon him, which will vanquish the limited expedients of the most exalted talent, and leave it the utmost boast of physicians, "that there is a time, when in their hands there is good success."

The chief proof of good sense, is not that men deny physic altogether, but choose with accurate discrimination, and favorably rather to learning and talent, than cure-mongers and quacks, with whom to confide their lives when in peril.

The metropolis, provincial cities, and large towns, afford the only field-room for physicians. Those towns which contain populations of ten thousand persons, commonly have two physicians, whose occupations increase in proportion as their reputations are diffused and strengthened by time and perseverance, capacity and connexion. The chief employment of the country physician, consists in consultations with general practitioners in the surrounding districts, as of the London phy-



sician in great part with apothecaries. The professional income of the latter, in full practice, except in about a dozen instances, rarely exceeds One Thousand Pounds *per annum*; and of the former, with very few exceptions, in very opulent districts, Two Thousand Pounds *per annum*; of which full half is expended in journies, often distant and harassing, and the remainder in supporting the style and appearance, looked for from the highest order of the profession. The memoirs of the late Dr. Withering,\* afford some evidence on these points. During a sojourn of eight years at Stafford, which was a confined field, his professional receipts did not average annually more than one hundred pounds. In 1775, he relinquished Stafford for Birmingham, where, shortly, he received one thousand pounds *per annum* in fees, which afterwards augmented to double that amount. His professional journies in nine

\* Memoirs and Tracts of the late Dr. Withering Vol. 1.

years, were computed at 6,353 miles; but, out of his gains, he was enabled to add little to his patrimony. We were informed by an amiable physician, whose practice laid in Wales, that he frequently rode on horseback forty-five miles out, and the same distance back; and we have known others pass over three hundred miles weekly, for several weeks in succession.

The course of practice is not impeded so much as formerly by prejudices against unripe years, and deficiency of exterior aids; but openings are more rare; and though some fall into the full stream of employment at once, most have to endure a tardy probation. It is said, that the fellowship of the London College, several years travel and study, and a standing of ten years, afford the only chance of making way in the metropolis. Those, who remove to town, buoyed up by provincial eminence, and all who are graduates of other universities have a slender chance.



In cathedral towns, where society is stationary, the medical character is said to be more solid and less variegated, than in public places. In mutable and recent communities, the proper level is not readily found, nor mind and just discrimination rapidly developed. Fashion, external impressions, contingencies, cunning and artifice, too easily, in such places, vanquish the most sterling merit.

The London Journals constantly abound in ridicule of the superficial character and dissipation of mind, which they ascribe to those whom they call "The Water Doctors," in imitation of the term "Water Poets," formerly applied to a particular class of bards. There is something, says one of these critics, detrimental to the proper application or improvement of the medical mind, in the air of watering places, which the waters cannot cure. The repetition of easy and similar cases, offers little exercise to brilliant parts and solid talent. A fashionable practice

among five thousand patients annually, and sometimes one hundred and thirty daily, in a watering place for many years, came under our observation:—a novelty, or casualty occurred more rarely than in the most limited practice in some situations. But private respectability and moderate talent, may be found, sufficient to conduct liver diseases, and prescribe mineral waters, to rule the hour for plunging into the sea, and taking blue-pill and alkalis for dyspepsia.

Wherever our practising physicians degenerate in strict decorum, or become less profound in learning, it is owing, it is to be feared, to the public mind not keeping pace with the knowledge of the age. In that case, medical science fails to excite impressions, and recourse is had to those meretricious and more popular displays, which concur with the empirical appetite of the day.

Dr. Gregory, and others, congratulate themselves on the honourable view in which the



physician is regarded in the British dominions, comparatively with many other countries; and, hence, on the inducement offered to men of family, with spirit and genius, to embrace the profession, and confer on it the dignity of those liberal and ingenuous manners, which commonly adorn men of birth and education. These remarks savor more of policy than truth. Though much improved, especially in England and Ireland, the profession is still unequal, and reception into society procured rather by the impulse of individual, than nominal considerations, according to wealth and advancement.

It is well known, that some years since, physicians in Scotland were seldom seen, or liberally appreciated in the highest circles. A friend, who, after having visited the courts of Europe, and studied at Gottingen, went to Edinburgh to graduate in medicine, told the author of these remarks, that on bearing an introduction to a Scottish lady of quality, he

was repulsed by the exclamation ; “ What ! a student of phee-sic ! ” and treated so coolly, that, having understood the feeling to be general, he thought fit to conceal the profession for which he was destined.

“ If the science of medicine,” says the late Dr. Parry, “ be thus important and difficult, one might reasonably expect, that it would on its own account, be honored among mankind, and its interests assiduously promoted. Above all, one would presume, that those who *worthily* profess it, would hold, among the orders of society, a rank precisely proportioned to the civilization of the country in which they lived.”

“ What, then will posterity conclude of the *barbarism* of a country, which at the beginning of the nineteenth century, places medical graduates in the very lowest ranks of privileged society. It requires no strong powers of observation, to see the tendency of such principles to *discourage* the *scientific* pursuit



of medicine, and to debase it to the level of a mere mechanical art, capable of being practised by the *meanest* and most *sordid* of mankind."

"There is, however, in every well regulated mind, an elasticity bounding against oppression; a sense of accomplished duty; a proud consciousness of having conferred unrequited benefits, which sustain it amidst all the degradations of external forms, and individual or national ingratitude, and which incite it, in spite of every obstacle, to persevere in one undeviating course, to the end of its mortal career."\*

*Medical Universities and Colleges of Great Britain.* The College of Physicians of London, was chartered by Henry the Eighth, "for the exclusion of the illiterate, and banishing of all odious impostors, and that the science might be kept in its just

\* Parry's *Posthumous Medical Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 5.

beauty and splendor." It was empowered, to control the whole medical practice of England, and examine all medical graduates, except those of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, who are said by the statute, "to have accomplished all things for their form, without any grace." In modern times, their control has been limited to the metropolis, and within seven miles of the precincts. The graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, of which the system of education is kindred to that of the English Universities, being admissible to an *ad eundem* degree in the latter, is eligible to the fellowship of the London College. But the graduate of Edinburgh and Glasgow, who seeks a settlement in the capital, is compelled to undergo an examination, and can become only a licentiate.

Notwithstanding the original charter, by some ulterior law, the medical graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, now pass examinations for fellowships at the London College.



These graduates are first required to take a Master's degree\* in one of those universities, to which (the degree) they cannot be admitted before the age of twenty-two years. Up to that period, no steps have been taken towards a professional education, for, although a

\* The student destined for physic, keeps the same terms, about thirteen, included in three successive years, passes the same examinations, and takes the same degrees as the clerical student. The first degree is that of Bachelor; and one year having elapsed, that of Master of Arts. The Master's degree is a mere form, but costs either fourteen or twenty pounds. The periods of absence, or vacations between the terms are two, the long and short; the former, or summer vacation, lasts about six months; the latter, before and after Christmas, about six weeks. The examinations are two in number at both universities; the first, and most simple, the Little-go, is in classics; the second, or Great-go, at Oxford, consists in classics, logic, history, and divinity; at Cambridge, in mathematics. At one, the examination is viva-voce, and public; at the other, in writing, in the Senate House. The examination in both, continues several days, and occupies many hours each day. The first five books in Euclid, are sufficient for a degree at Cambridge, after the Little-go. In case of rejection, or *plucking*, the *Cantab* is generally passed in a bye-term, after a few week's lapse, and a private examination. Term-trotting, was common a few years since in these universities, but is now prohibited.



Clinical and Regius Professor of Physic are appointed, they seldom give a lecture. Lectures and Demonstrations on anatomy, and a chemical course are read. When the student of medicine has provided himself in London or elsewhere, with sufficient medical knowledge, he returns to these universities, and having submitted to an examination in physic, under the Regius Professor, he becomes Bachelor of Medicine. Eleven years having elapsed from the period when the degree of B. M. was taken, that of M. D. is formally conferred. As bachelor of medicine, the pupil is qualified to become a candidate for a fellowship in the College of Physicians of London. The number of fellowships are eighty, and filled up according to vacancies. The examination is the same as with licentiates; during which, the candidate wears the master's gown, in the presence of the whole college assembled, and being admitted pays £100. The candidate for a



fellowship, who at any period of life, has been a surgeon, is obliged, before he can be qualified for admission, to read his *recantation of surgery* !!!

The Licentiate is examined by the President, Censors, &c. altogether five individuals; in anatomy and physiology, theory and practice of physic, pharmacy and chemistry. The examinations are in latin, and of a miscellaneous and excursive kind, and both mostly last from fifteen to twenty minutes each. The cost of the licence is £56:17s. The extra-licentiate has only one examination, and pays about £19, for his licence. If he become a licentiate afterwards, he must submit to the rules as stated above. The Diploma of the University of Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, or any foreign university, is admitted as a sufficient qualification; even Aberdeen is received, provided a certain number of terms or sessions have been kept. It has been the custom with general practi-

tioners, to qualify themselves by what is called term-trotting ; that is, matriculating, or entering their names as students in the books at universities, without subsequent residence. Formerly, they went to Paris, Glasgow, Edinburgh, or Dublin, with this view, at the commencement of the sessions, but since at Paris and Edinburgh, the names have been called over at short intervals of time, such evasions have ceased. The number of licentiates is unlimited. They have no connection with the college, but individuals are occasionally elected honorary fellows, by special favor.

In the University of Dublin, a similar course, and an equal period of attendance as at Edinburgh previously to the late regulations, viz. four sessions, included in three years, instead as now of five sessions, in four years, are required as qualifications for examination. The school of medicine consists of six professorships ; three endowed by the



university, and three by funds bequeathed by Sir Patrick Dunn. Here there is a botanical chair, without a botanical garden, and a school of medicine, without a clinical hospital, or any regular or accredited course of clinical lectures; though attendance on both, under any circumstances, is required of a candidate for a degree; and no substituted course, under the certificate of the University of Edinburgh, is admissable.\* The University of Edinburgh allows an examination, and the degree to the students, although he has pursued his entire studies in the University of Dublin. But, notwithstanding certain Edinburgh lectures are allowed to a Dublin student, this indulgence is not reciprocal. In the University of Dublin there are two forms of granting degrees. A literary graduate of the University, is examined by the three medical professors, and the regius professor

\* These statements were published in 1807.

of physic, when, if approved, he is constituted B. M. He undergoes one examination, and reads in the hall of the university, but not publishes, a dissertation. The candidate, who is not a literary graduate, is examined by all the professors except the regius professor, publishes his thesis, and in due course is constituted a doctor of medicine. This double regulation has been much blamed.

The circumstance of three professors being endowed and elected by the university, and three by the College of Dublin, has excited animosity and dissension between those bodies, so injurious to the university, as to force the youth of the country, to abandon it for schools, where they find no unnecessary vexations and impediments.

The College of Dublin is a local corporation, distinct from the university, and similar to that of London, but more limited in its powers, as it merely controls nominally the profession in Ireland. It is governed by a



president, vice-president and board of fellows, with a numerous list of licentiates, who, like those of the London College, enter not into its councils, are ineligible to its offices, and scarce recognised as belonging to it. Under its original charter, the graduate of the University of Dublin received free admission as licentiates; but they now undergo a second examination, and pay £50. for the licence, to exercise within the city privileges, already solemnly, and without limitation conferred on them by the university. In 1807, twenty graduates of the university practised in Dublin, who did not belong to it. It levies no fine on outlaws, in Dublin: therefore the mere comparison of artificial distinctions, the annoyance of imputed irregularity, and the hindrance to freedom of consultation with the fellows of this college, are the only inducements to obtain the licence.

The University of Edinburgh enjoins four sessions, three of six months, the fourth of

nine months in length. The session commences November 5th, and ends in April. The matriculation fee, (thirteen shillings) renewed every session, places at his disposal, the splendid library of the university. Attendance every year in two classes in the university, on each of the following branches, anatomy and surgery, institutions of medicine, practice of medicine, clinical medicine, botany, and chemistry, is peremptory. Courses of medical jurisprudence, midwifery and natural history are voluntary. A pupillage of twelve months to the clinical practice of the Royal Infirmary is required, of which only six months attendance is indispensable. There are two examinations, one by the classical professors, in the pupil's knowledge of latin; the second, for the degree, in English, which is private, and the conclusive criterion of the candidate's qualifications in medicine. This examination, which embraces the several subjects of the candidate's studies, is conducted



at the house of one of the professors, of whom the whole are examiners. Its edge and force is concentrated in the principal subjects, and less strict in the collateral sciences, chemistry and botany. Deficiency in the latter, is counterbalanced by *eclat* in the former. The examination is less elementary to the pupil of known talent; but as the extreme of lenity, consistent with the examiner's duty, inability to surmount the grinder's examination only incurs rejection. Two cases are afterwards selected by a professor; the pathology and treatment of which, the candidate is required to illustrate. The most intelligent and studious have recourse to grinders, for the sake of acquiring a ready command and methodical arrangement of their knowledge. The grinder's fees to an individual, are, in a class, £2 2s.; singly four guineas; and to two individuals, three guineas per month. The fee to each class is £4 10s.; the expence of graduation, £23 13s.; and hospital pupillage at the Royal Infirmary, about £8 8s.

Candidates send in their certificates of attendance upon the prescribed courses of study, with their names and addresses, and are examined according to the priority of their applications. The capping day is in August, when the degree is conferred by touching the heads of the assembled graduates with a cap, and some other forms.

The keeping of sessions admits this latitude. The books remain open for matriculation till December 21st, and departure a month before the close of the session, May 5th, is overlooked.\* Matriculation and entrance to the prescribed classes, without attendance, did not formerly preclude the examination for the degree; the examination being considered a sufficient check. But monthly inscriptions in the Album are now required to obtain the certificate of qualifica-

\* We state this as uncertainly. If it is the case still, twenty months in a series of four years, is the longest compulsory residence for a degree.



tion. Previous education and hospital pupillage in London procure a remission of six months pupillage to the Royal Infirmary, and a deduction of one year from the four years course of studies at Edinburgh. Two years matriculations, and two years attendance at Foreign or British universities, if certificated, are accepted, in lieu of a corresponding period of study, pursued in Edinburgh.

The College of Physicians of Edinburgh, conscious of the absurdity of examining the tried graduates of Oxford, Cambridge, or Dublin, admits to its fellowships all physicians of English and Irish universities, after simple enquiry into the previous qualifications of the candidate, and the reality of his previous medical degree. The Colleges of London and Dublin, have yet to learn Scottish wisdom and liberality.

The university of Glasgow, requires attendance during four sessions, included in a period of three years. It prescribes three

courses of anatomy ; two of chemistry ; three of materia medica ; one of surgery, and one of midwifery. The fee for each course of lectures, which occupies one session, is £3. except midwifery, £2. The degree is £25. There are four examinations in English, each of which occupies about half an hour ; the first is in anatomy and physiology ; second, in the theory and practice of physic ; third, materia medica, pharmacy and chemistry ; and the fourth, which is miscellaneous, is in latin, at which the classical professors attend. The student afterwards reads a written case, and a commentary on an aphorism of Hippocrates, in latin, and answers interrogations.

Hospital attendance is probably required at the Glasgow Infirmary, but we know not the terms. The student, who has attended the same university classes at Edinburgh, is admitted to an examination, and a degree at Glasgow. Two years inscriptions, certified, of attendance on corresponding lectures in



foreign universities, are received for the same period in Glasgow.

This university is much raised in reputation by its facilities in anatomy. Subjects are procured at £4 4s. each. The names of Jeffry, in anatomy; Burns, the brother of Allan Burns, in surgery; and Thompson, in chemistry, stand too high to need our commendation.

There are three professorships at Aberdeen, two of medicine, and one of chemistry, and one at Saint Andrews. As schools of medicine, they are unknown; but as warehouses for the sale of diplomas, notorious. Legislative enquiry is instituted, and the abrogation of this privilege is expected. To obtain their diplomas, it is necessary to procure and forward a certificate of moral and professional qualifications, signed by two respectable physicians, with an enclosure of £14.

The reformer traces the errors of colleges or corporations, separate and distinct from

universities ; as, for instance, London and Dublin, to their inefficient constitution. They were formed by our ancestors, according to erroneous principles of policy and false analogies, when their future influence upon the interests of society could not be fore-shadowed. It was meant, that they should prevent the imposition of irregular and unqualified persons upon the public ; control the corrupt practices of universities, and guard their own and the general interests of the profession. But it was a fundamental error of judgment not to have perceived that had the profession of medicine been regulated properly in its groundworks, no superior authority of this nature, need have existed. First and last, the qualifications of professional men, and the state of the profession itself, must rest solely with the universities, and schools, and their more or less perfect form and regulation. In vulgar trades, corporations may be necessary to receive public appeals, and to guard



the rights and interests of such trades. When a corrupt shoemaker testifies an apprenticeship not served, and in consequence, an half-accomplished cobbler menaces to coffin his neighbours in empirical shoes, it is quite clear that a controlling power should exist somewhere. But surely there is a difference between the education of the cobbler and physician, which preclude all coincidence. Physic is not taught by mechanical servitude to a last, nor the rudiments of shoemaking under the shade of academic bowers; a revolution in events, which, with good reason, might call for the tutelary interference of colleges.

It was not perceived, that partiality and exclusion would naturally arise from men being entrusted with authority to confirm or reverse the solemn decrees and passports of universities, who were themselves looking jealously towards a monopoly of wealth and high employment. Nor was it taken into

account, that examiners may be both incompetent and improperly biassed, who are, in no manner, concerned in the education of those whom they are destined to control.

These antiquated institutions are loudly charged, with having yielded to mere corporation principles, grown to entertain no interest in common with the great body of the profession ; with having abandoned the original designs of their charters ; surrendered themselves to corrupt and imperfect counsels ; shackled the profession with unnecessary bonds ; “ exercised tyranny, to which they have established no claim, by any demonstration of advantages, imparted by them, either to the profession of medicine or the world ;” and committed usurpations greatly exceeding their original rights, without claim, except custom or sufferance.

Their kingly founders had in view, that the Colleges of London and Dublin, should have kept “ the science in its just beauty and



splendor." But the reformer taunts them with the extreme inequality of their members, and their want of super-eminent distinction, individually and collectively, in medical science and general intellectual character. He ascribes to the principal northern university, the whole "beauty and splendor" of British medicine, both in the science and practice of the profession. He compares with exultation, the Munros, Cullens, Blacks, Duncans, and Gregories, who have adorned it, and established its high superior character throughout the civilized world, with the tilting of the fashionable practisers, and the chivalry of the courtier physicians, who dictate laws for the profession in England, from the seat of rule in Warwick Lane. He views their illustrious names as "*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*," and the posthumous fame of Sydenham, Harvey, Heberden, Baillie, and a few others, as entombed, like Abury and Stonehenge, in a wide expanse of desert. He

refers to the Red Book, and enquires, what, though accomplished men and classics, those, who now stand in the high places of the profession, have contributed to the improvement of it? He turns to Oxford and Cambridge, and avows himself unconscious of the name or fame of those, who are charged with the education of under graduates in medicine in those universities. He directs his search to Dublin, and the result is equally unsatisfactory. Though sixty regular bred physicians resided in Dublin in 1807, this college, which legislates for the whole profession in Ireland, then contained only fifteen fellows, including presidents, &c. of whom five were honorary! The charter of William and Mary, gave to the medical graduates of the university of Dublin, the right of entering the college of physicians without examination; but the guardian honesty and superior wisdom of an Irish Parliament abolished this right, and surrendered the power of control over



the whole profession, to the discretion and disinterested views of these fifteen individuals, who thus applied to have their own charter reversed !

From these comparisons, the graduate of the Scotch university, deduces ground for deep resentment and wounded pride, *that* he should be subject to power, invested in mouldering and corrupt institutions, in every essential point imbecile and inferior, comparatively with the great school from which he has derived his knowledge, and his authority to practise ; that he should be subject to be examined by men, whom, if in medical education he can admit to be even equal, he cannot acknowledge to be superior to himself. Chased from London by the beadle of the college, should he not submit ; assigned the lowest station as a physician, in the view of the profession and the world, should he comply ; estimated and dealt with by both accordingly, without consideration of the only

rational tests of superior pretensions, his mental qualifications, the licentiate “speaks unadvisedly with his lips,” and bounds against oppression. Whilst he conceives that avarice, the love of power, and fear of the advancement of reason and knowledge before artificial and aristocratical pretensions, have raised bulwarks to fortify arrogance and imbecility against those without, he trusts that the elements of destruction are created within, and renovation is not remote.

As the first stipulation of the charter of the London College has not been adhered to, he enquires concerning the second ; “the exclusion of the illiterate, and banishing of all odious impostors ?” In England, he beholds from the birth of the College of Physicians to the present time, the whole country abandoned to quacks and impostors, uncontrolled by law, and encouraged by popular disposition, to an extent, of which there is no example in any other civilized state in



Europe. Under the same designation as the fellows themselves, without license, and close to the very gates of the London college, the vilest reptiles commit assassination, with "charter liberal as the winds." It has been stated, to account for the impunity of quackery, that the prohibitory powers of the colleges of London and Dublin are nugatory, no penalty being attached to the breach of them.

The Dublin college, though empowered by their charter to fine those, who, however otherwise qualified, possess not their licence, has discontinued to enforce its authority in this respect; and their fellows even consult with the extra-collegiate outlaw, when called in over him. Prohibited by collegiate regulations from attending with a surgeon, unless called in also over him, the fellow of this college is said to secede from his attendance, that the surgeon may be sent for as to a new case, and afterwards demand his, the fellow's, assistance.

The London college, probably by virtue of certain bye-laws, makes the one amenable, though it leaves the other unmolested. For the sake of argument, the dominion of these colleges over quackery being admitted, it has been asked whether it lay dormant in consequence of being too extended to be enforced in remote parts of the kingdom? Which has been replied to in the negative; inasmuch as it is passive in the capital itself, where quackery is concentrated and collected, and reflected and dispersed over the whole country. It has then been enquired, whether such quiescence arise from liberality; respect to the rights of the subject, or from considerations of public utility? The Reformer answers unequivocally, that they have been actuated to overlook the progress of quackery on account of its forming a basis of stronger appeal for reinforcing and concentrating their own arbitrary powers of exclusion, and augmenting their own private monopoly. But



the motive is in some degree founded on the weakness of charters, comparatively with acts of legislature, to confer powers admitting of vexatious exercise. Such powers exceed the prerogative of the crown. Acts of incorporation by royal charter, are said to confer on a body no powers exceeding those which its members individually possess, and therefore merely authorize a combined exercise of rights and privileges, which amount to no power at all. It has been said, that judicial enquiry would annihilate the system of interference with the unlicensed practiser : hence, it is agreed, that bodies, of which the constitution is so ineffective, are not only useless, but injurious to the profession ; hence, it is said, charlatanism retains its footing. Owing to the several impediments opposed to the admission of acceptable men, the public fail to adopt that standard which the law points out, and employ only members of such bodies: for seeing individuals eminently endued with

wisdom and learning, and the essential qualifications, grow old without deeming them sufficiently important to seek admission into them, the public themselves lose all sense of their importance. They see that their powers are nugatory, absurd, and that the legal qualifications are intrinsically no qualifications;—they are informed of the ridiculous tenets in their constitution, and attach ridicule to the whole body. Thus, the degradation of the profession is created in the very institutions which are appointed to uphold it.

But no constitution of things is so bad as not to admit of somewhat resembling reason in its favor. The reformer complains that Dr. Pemberton replies to him in a violent rhapsody, and Dr. Harrison in the puerilities of offended pride and jealousy of interference. The speech of Dr. Pemberton, certainly affords some curious fragments; “*quis vestrum ignorat, alienorum hominum congressum habitum esse, novis consiliis, nova*



audacia erectum, ad reformandum ut aiunt, sed potius evertendum eam medicam disciplinam quæ in hac nostra domo per tria secula feliciter constituta est. In tali casu ubi is vestrum invenitur qui non ad arma currat? Quis non clamat "stet fortuna domus," clamandoque pro salute nostræ, reipublicæ propugnet? Anne antiquam illam majorum domum quæ talem heroum progeniem quasi in gremio aluit, dirui tandem et collabi patiemur? uno animo statuimus pugnandum esse pro hac nostra patria; aserenda quæcunque sunt jura; vindicanda privilegia; tenendosque mores a patribus receptos !!!"

We find, however, something more impressive than mere declamation in the statements of the London College, *that* they merit under any circumstance, the same protection from innovation, as other bodies; *that* they have a clearer right to hold those possessions, which having been gained in the lapse of

time, are become in their nature as private property, than others who are foreign to themselves, to usurp them. Their members ascribe their success in metropolitan practice, to the connexions formed at the English universities, and the light in which a more expensive and classical form of education is regarded, from usage, in the aristocratic circles of English society. It is certain that an unquestionable tendency prevails in England, to consider expence as the only means of preserving the profession of medicine in high respectability and purity.

The Suffolk Benevolent Medical Society, and we believe also the London and Lincolnshire Societies, embraced this contracted principle, and proposed increased expence and difficulty of initiation, in a specific resolution, as the chief expedient for advancing the respectability of the medical profession. Thus, they held up the most fallacious standard of excellence, and a casual and irrelative



contingency, for the natural and rational passport of superior learning and ability. To regard wealth, says a powerful writer on this subject, a test and proof of talent and respectability in England and Ireland, is, as society exists, ridiculous. The Dublin College affords a very illustrative anecdote in this respect, of the disinterested and patriotic spirit, with which corporate bodies exercise their powers. Appalled by the manifest and increasing tendency to deterioration in the profession, they concluded, that the doubling of the fees of admission to the rights and privileges granted to licentiates by their charter, would form the least fallible criterion of the respectability of the profession. The unlicensed practitioners of Dublin, though graduates of the university, wishing to remove themselves by the *double* qualification of attaching themselves to the college, from every imputation of irregularity, petitioned to have this resolution rescinded, which the

college refused, but stated, that they would consent to take half the amount in cash, and the remainder in *approved bills at twelve months date* !\* The sum is £50. This college is reputed, as possessing the truest spirit of corporation policy and illiberality.

To this last point, the reformer replies, that no approved and sufficient system of education can be so moderate, as not to exclude all who are unpossessed of a competence adequate to support them through long years devoted to the acquisition of knowledge, and consumed in waiting for practice ; that no subsequent profit can sufficiently repay the most economical sacrifices ; that the medical profession offers no sufficient temptation, either in honors or lucre, to the ambition of power and independance.

In a commercial country, a subjection of the mental powers, which tends to counteract

\* Observations on Medical Reform, p. 28.



their developement, is almost indispensable to the procuring of wealth. Those who spring from a class of persons that so command it, would, it is said, monopolize the highest posts in the profession, with habits, seldom to be separated in the first and second generations, from a commercial origin, and not so likely to render the profession pure and select, as to exclude the most respectable, though not the most opulent part of the community; viz. the younger sons of private families. It is said also, that the multiplication of expence has always tended to discourage the most worthy of admission; to divert the resources of the student from their proper application, into useless and unprofitable channels; to diminish the number of regularly bred physicians; to force the public upon employing quacks; and provide funds, which are misappropriated. The college of Dublin, instead of expending an oppressive taxation upon the profession, in forming a college library, or



museum, is said to disburse its receipts, partly, in voting a hogshead of claret to their president, to ensure entertainment to the fellows.\*

Certain it is, that the great lights of law, physic, divinity, and general literature, have invariably been men, whose circumstances were by no means easy, and whose exertions were excited by necessity. Such men have seldom belonged to incorporated bodies in the first place, and often been arbitrarily excluded from them, 'till they had acquired the public confidence so far, as to become formidable to them.

The Bar affords a very strong argument in favor of the economical system. A student is called to the bar, after optional studies, and a moderate expenditure of money and time, and if possessed of talent, with the prospect of wealth, titular honors, and the highest

\* See *Essay on Reform*, p. 83.



offices of state. The respectability of the bar, is owing, not to the wealth of the students, but to the strict rules of professional conduct observed in the inns of court, and the rigid severities practised by the whole society, towards such members as infringe them.

The reformer has contended, that in the education of the English physician, the universities of Cambridge and Oxford receive the remuneration, without performing the labor. He maintains, that to a conscientious mind, dissatisfied with the unreal mockery of superior nominal qualifications, or not perverted to the single view of mere official advancement, the want of a substantial medical education is as painful, as it is fraught with evil to society. It is conceived by the most enlightened medical men, that unless medicine is progressively and systematically taught, either empiricism or imbecility in practice, is the invariable result. The London college replies, that the deficiencies of the English



universities, are compensated by the plenitude of medical erudition, which may be afterwards acquired at other schools, and matured in those hospitals, to which they have the power of appointing the younger fellows. The reformer rejoins, *that* a protracted system of medical education, can be made available only to a few individuals, in bountiful possession of time and money, which must curb the most efficient means of diminishing quackery, viz. the multiplication of regular physicians; *that* the great improvers of medicine, have been graduates of universities, whose medical educations did not exceed the term of three years; *that* as diseases are so fickle and variform in their combinations, elementary instruction in pathology is without end, and after that period, useful knowledge can be better acquired by actual practice, and the examination of facts rendered impressive, and brought close to the mind's eye, through the interest excited in the individual, when acting for himself.



Goldsmith entertained the same opinion of the results of prolonged study of medicine in universities, as Johnson entertained of the ancient schools of declamation; "that the more diligently they were frequented, the more was the student disqualified for the world, because he found nothing there which he should ever meet in any other place."\* We have observed, that the system is more productive of medical pedantry than sound knowledge, of inveterate and blind prejudice in favor of established doctrines, and the *verba magistri*, than correct discernment.

On this head, proceeding from argument to example, the reformer instances the licentiates of the college, as the principal teachers and authors in the metropolis. But among the fellows, they are found, who sturdily insist, that no intellectual reputation is equivalent to the possession of the highest degree

\* Preface to Shakspeare:



n Great Britain, and the paramount claim of being super-regularly bred. With such men, genius is called "enthusiasm," and posthumous authorship, and the communication of rare cases to the transactions of a college, the only admissable and lawful intercourse with the press. His antagonist recriminates, that even the most untainted legitimacy can stoop to the illustration of such inept topics, as diet and digestion, the stomach and the liver; subjects, alike popular, empirical, and threadbare; and otherwise, approach the borders of quackery. We have heard of a fellow of the London college, who, in a watering place, made use of his honors as a plea for requiring more than the ordinary fees.

These modern censures upon the London college for avarice and negligence of great objects, reminds us of the reflections of Garth, who was one of their leaders, that they were like some, "that will trust their wives with any body, but their money with none:" and



with that author, "we are sorry to find, that there could be any constitution that was not to be cured without *poison*, and that there should be a prospect of affecting it, by a less grateful method than reason and persuasion." Some part of Garth's "*poison*," resembles the invectives of the modern reformer.

"There stands a dome, majestic to the sight,  
And sumptuous arches bear its oval height;  
A golden globe, plac'd high with artful skill,  
Seems, to the distant sight, a gilded pill.  
This pill was by the pious patron's aim,  
Rais'd for a use, as noble as its frame;  
Nor did the learn'd society decline  
The propagation of that great design;  
In all her mazes, Nature's face they view'd,  
And as she disappear'd, their search pursued.  
Wrapt in the shade of night, the goddess lies,  
Yet to the learn'd unveils her dark disguise,  
But shuns the gross access of vulgar eyes.  
But now, no grand enquiries are descried,  
Mean faction reigns, when knowledge should preside.  
Feuds are increas'd, learning laid aside.  
The drooping sciences, neglected pine,  
And Pæan's beams with fading lustre shine.  
No readers here, with hectic looks are found,  
Nor eyes in rheum, thro' midnight watching, drown'd:  
The lonely edifice in sullen sweats complains,  
That nothing there but sullen silence reigns.

*The Dispensary.*

Thus far, we have stated not our own opinions, but the animadversions of others, upon the constitution and policy of those institutions, which preside over the medical profession in England and Ireland.\* None, who can pretend to disinterested and philosophical observation of the civil institutions of these two countries for the last half century, will be surprised, when told, that those which belong to medicine, are no purer in principle than others. Founded on views, selfish, exclusive, and aristocratic, they represent merely the will and private interests of a party, and are supported against public opinion, by power and influence, with scarce any reference to the general good.

So long as certain principles are omnipotent, the suggestions of truth and reason, in the cause of renovation and improvement, be

\* See an exposure of the College of Physicians of Dublin, Vol. X. No. 155 *Lancet*, by a witty and masterly writer.



they ever so disinterested, ever so patriotic, ever so unconnected with factious and subversive designs, incite only intolerant malevolence and bitter persecution, without procuring the prospective advantages of exposure. The lowest epithets and comparative terms, culled from the current language of power, and strengthened by the common-place and home-bred prejudices, in favor of established systems, are used to lower the *remonstrant* in the public eyes, and eagerly adopted by the mass of sycophancy already, or in expectation of being elevated by making common cause with corruption. In this posture of things, the worst and most selfish triumph in reputation and reward over the best part of the community. It is not till imperfect institutions have fallen very far behind the spirit and advancement of the age, and lost their strength in spite of the props which supported them, that justice is done to the motives and projects of the judicious reformer.

and the contempt and repudiation under which he has labored, are transferred from his own, to the shoulders of those against whom he has contended.

With these convictions, we are very reluctant to hazard even the following opinions concerning those institutions, which, in England and Ireland, would seem to overlay the whole medical profession.

In France, where a new has been framed upon the most chosen models, in place of an ancient and subverted constitution; and in North America, where the civil institutions have been constituted with every advantage that could be derived from the experience of other countries; what has proved sound, has been adopted; what evil, excluded. Hence, in comparison with England and Ireland, their medical institutions exhibit a very superior structure. Scotland, with her usual good sense, has assimilated her system to those great examples, though it is to be feared that



the incorporation of corrupt influence with her municipal councils, may deduct from the ancient fame, and consequent prosperity of her chief university. In England, of late years, every thing has concurred to render the interest of the many, subservient to the avarice and advancement of the few, and in all public institutions whatsoever, the manage of jobbing, juggling, and sinister influence has obtained, to a so great extent, that cunning hypocrisy and servility, have overwhelmed the pretensions of merit, and every demand for a reasonable change.

Should any profitable modification ever take place in the medical institutions of England and Ireland, which, under the wisdom and liberality of the present monarch, and the more enlightened views of the present prime minister,\* is not altogether impossible: the following outline, may afford some serviceable hints.

\* Mr. Canning.

Colleges or corporations, should no longer be entrusted with power to confirm or reverse the solemn decrees of universities, which, as they unite the office of teaching, and conferring the proper qualifications, should be entitled to the sole authority over the profession.

It is obviously absurd, that a few individuals should continue to hold a jurisdiction over rival interests, and legislate for the whole profession.

“The different schools of France, are no longer independant of each other, and no longer possess the right of framing their own laws and statutes; they are now all dependant upon the same power, regulated by the same laws, and subject to the same supreme jurisdiction.”\*

In each kingdom, the graduate should be

\* Present state of Education in France, by David Johnston, M. D.



subject to no other control, than being required to enter collegiate bodies, for which it should suffice that he proves his degree, and pays the regular fee. To encourage science, form museums and libraries, and enquire into the legal qualifications of persons publicly professing the practice of medicine, are proper objects of their superintendence. The legislature should preside over all arrangements, to which men of general information are competent, and leave to colleges the power of decision, only where professional learning is indispensable.

In the three kingdoms, each university in the medical and surgical departments should be formed without disparity in the systems of education. The qualifications of a degree obtained from one of the universities, thus regulated by similar statutes, should be a final and unlimited authority to enter upon practice in any part of the British dominions to exercise indeed, according to the language



of a medical degree, “*amplissimam potestatem, medicinam ubique gentium legendi, docendi, faciendi, alia que omnia privilegia, immunitates, jura quæ hic aut usquam alibi ad doctoratus apicem evictis concedi solent.*”

In France, America, and Scotland, the system of education now unites medicine and surgery, and leaves to the genius of the graduate, and the natural operation of circumstances, the ultimate preference of either division of the profession.

The French pupil must have attained sixteen years in age, and possess the degrees both of bachelor in arts and sciences, which any one may challenge, in whatever country he may have been educated, who can pass an examination for one, in classics, history, geography and rhetoric ; for the other, in the elements of mathematics, physics, natural history, chemistry, botany, &c. Dr. Thornton has addressed the patrons and royal commissioners of the Scotch universities, upon the



very deficient state of prefatory education in the great bulk of young men entering upon the study of medicine.

To provide for the true dignity and greatness of the profession, by increasing its learning and intellectual character, the refining influence of a sound classical education is requisite. To adopt a combined form of medical and surgical education, is to afford the best security for the advancement of scientific improvement, by leaving individuals to consult their natural dispositions in the course subsequently pursued.

Though it would be for the benefit of the three nations, England, Scotland, and Ireland, that their medical institutions should be made equal in general and particular education, without any authority of one over the others, in conferring greater privileges or distinctions in practice, it is very difficult to assign just grounds for the participation of Scotch graduates in the appropriate tenures of the



English universities, and London College of Physicians. To such offices, appointments and corporate property as may belong to them, the members of other bodies can have no right in common. In the admission of the graduates of the rival universities, the London college should undoubtedly be enabled to fix such terms, as would protect the interests of its own members, and give others no undue advantage over them. The conditions might fairly require the expiration of a certain term of years, a higher fee than from the graduate of the English university, and a certificate of having adopted a strictly respectable course in practice.

Again, we cannot see how the establishing of certain charges against the London College of Physicians, is any proof of the right of the licentiates to arrogate admission as fellows of that body. When the medical institutions of Great Britain are assimilated as schools, their tendency to blend with each other, will be



greater, and not till then. The London college has acted like all other subordinate bodies, when entrusted with power, perverted it from its original purposes for their own private advantage; but what will it profit the profession at large, to renovate its institutions for the interest of a particular set of individuals, half of whom, when they had pushed their adversaries from their stools, would commit the same errors. The Licentiates have at least, the country at their disposal, which is no inconsiderable domain.

In several fundamental points, there is not now, and may never be any equality between these three countries. England, is a richer, but more expensive; Scotland, a cheaper, but poorer country. If Scotch universities teach medicine more perfectly than the English, they have less reputation for classical learning. If they do not lead to equal profligacy, they cannot boast of the same manifestation of high breeding, and so strict observance of the



habits of polished life among the pupils ; and whether or not, these comparative differences diminish, greater expence must necessarily be attached, under any changes, to medical education in England. According to the state of society in the three countries, the Scotch and Irish universities, would remain economical schools, and our universities open to those to whose ambition and pecuniary resources they are most fitted.\*

It is full time, that Oxford and Cambridge should be made, either to surrender, or fulfil

\* Previous to 1792, the expence of graduation in the University of Paris, amounted to 62,000 francs, in the provincial universities to 600 francs. "This enormous expence was found an effectual bar to many from studying at Paris." The English universities would not suffer from being more expensive than the Scotch, within moderate bounds. The whole cost of academical education at Paris, during four years, now amounts to £45.; and, if the arrangement with respect to previous degrees in arts and science, did not preclude English students from graduation at Paris, it is to be feared that few would resort to our own schools, shackled as they are in their anatomical studies, by the restraints, which the insanity of ultra-aristocratical feeling, and increasing hypocrisy has imposed.



their functions as schools of medicine. Some are of opinion, that the theoretical and practical part of medical education cannot be put asunder ; and that a great capital only, can provide an efficient school. Others think, that the English universities might be easily re-modelled. At present, their under-graduates in medicine are not so numerous, as to make a separation from medicine any sacrifice ; but, if tenacious of physic, no insurmountable difficulties can prevent them from becoming qualified to confer the preliminary degree in arts, at an early age to pupils in medicine\*, and so divide medical education between themselves and the capital, as to accomplish every end for their own interests, and those of the student. To the English universities, under some such arrangements, reform would be great gain.

\* The Dublin University confers it as early as sixteen years in age.



Under a constitution so simple and complete as that of France and America, the impoverishing and degrading multiplication of divisions in the profession, with all the animosities which their inequalities excite, would be exchanged for one class of practisers under one degree, and of one rank, without any subordinate branch, except that which should combine the apothecary and retail druggist, like the pharmacien of France.

At present, the profession in England is in a most contemptible, wrangling, and artificial state, full of supernumerary divisions, and disputants for ideal distinctions, between physicians educated at certain universities, where nothing is taught, and a slovenly unhandsome corse is not suffered to come between the pupil's wind and his nobility, with more diploma-mongering colleges annexed, where the crime of having ever been a surgeon must be recanted, ere the sacred altar of *pure medical legitimacy* can be approached ;



and physicians of other universities, which, as schools of medicine, possess an infinite superiority. Not only are British physicians thus battling among themselves for their different shades of purity, but, like the boy chasing the rainbow, they are struggling with the surgeon, in a very losing squabble on their sides, for imaginary boundaries of medical and surgical practice. In the mean time, the country is covered with as many divisions of the profession, as there are absurd sects in religion ; and quacks and impostors fatten in the best pastures, without check or control. "They manage these things better in France." The wisdom of French prohibitory jurisprudence,\* has wholly annihilated quackery in

\* In 1390, royal statutes were issued, to forbid any one that had not been examined and accounted duly qualified, from practising in medicine and surgery ; to maintain, at a height of respectability, a science so important to mankind, which would soon have been degraded by the admission of unqualified persons. In 1792, the regular admission of Physicians and Surgeons ceased, and "those who had



that country ; but in England, our medical institutions are too complicated in their arrangement, and consequently imbecile in government. Formed in times of darkness, they are as inapplicable to those in which we live, as old court dresses, hoops, fardingales,

*studied their profession, saw themselves confounded with those who were almost ignorant of it. Patents were granted every where, equally to the one or the other, and the lives of the citizens were in the hands of men, as rapacious as they were ignorant. Credulity was abused by the most dangerous empiricism, and most barefaced quackery ; and as no proofs of knowledge or qualification were necessary, the science of medicine seemed on the point of falling into decay." Such now is the profession in England! There was but one way of checking these encroachments on the respectability of the science, and that was the restoration of the old system of examination and admission, which was decreed on the 10th of March, 1803. Any person practising as a physician, and taking the title when not legally qualified, was subject to a fine not exceeding 1,000 francs, (£40,) or, if he practised under the title of *Officier de Sante*, to a fine of 500 francs, (£20.) Any woman practising illicitly as a midwife, was subject to a fine of 100 francs, (£4.) All these fines, upon repetition of the offence, to be doubled, or accompanied by imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months. Doctor Johnston's History of Education in France, 1827, p p. 54, 102, 103, 119, 120.*



and ancient habitations, to the purposes of modern life.

*College of Surgeons.* The College of Surgeons of London, require the candidate for the Diploma to be twenty-two years of age ; to have been engaged six years, (viz. five years as an apprentice, and one as follows) in the acquisition of professional knowledge ; attended three *winter* courses of anatomical and physiological, and one winter course of surgical lectures ; of having performed two winter courses of dissections ; and attended one year, the practice of St. Bartholomew's, St. Thomas', the Westminster, Guy's, St. George's, the London, and Middlesex, in London ; the Richmond and Steeven's, in Dublin ; the Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh ; the Royal Infirmary in Glasgow, or the Royal Infirmary in Aberdeen ; or twice that term in any such provincial hospitals, as contain one hundred patients under chirurgical treatment, provided a student shall have previously



attended two courses of anatomical lectures, and two courses of dissections in any of the recognised schools of anatomy, viz. London, and the Universities of Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen; or under physicians or surgeons to a recognised hospital in one of the schools of anatomy. Members of the legally constituted Colleges of Surgeons in the United Kingdoms, or graduates of British universities, who shall have performed two or more courses of dissection, or attended the surgical practice of an hospital for one year, are eligible to examination for the Diploma.

Candidates found deficient on examination, may be referred from one to three months, or rejected. If rejected, they are admissable to re-examination after the expiration of six months.

The expences of Surgical Education in England, are Lectures in Anatomy and Physiology, £10 10s.; Dissections, or Demonstrations, £10 10s.; in Surgery, £5 5s.;



Hospital Attendance, £27; and the Diploma, £22.\* Private Lectures, include Anatomy and Demonstrations for £10 10s. Certificates of having served an apprenticeship of *five* years to a surgeon or apothecary is required.

This college admits only one class; viz. Members. It is governed by a council of twenty-one individuals; but the members are now contending for the same powers as are possessed by the Colleges of Ireland and Scotland, and in event of their success, a new system of surgical education in England is projected. Each pupil is examined separately by the whole body of examiners.

The College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, was incorporated in 1505, and erected into a college in 1778. It consists of Fellows and Members. The entire government devolves on the Fellows, who elect annually,

\* In the time of the Corporation, £27 : 10s, to those about to practise in, and within seven miles of London, and half of that sum to Country Surgeons.



the President, Examiners, and other officers, and regulate every measure relative to the body, at their general meetings. Both Fellows and Licentiates practise in Edinburgh and its environs, but as Lecturers, the tickets of the latter are not received.

Candidates for diplomas and licenses must have pursued their studies, either in some university of good repute, or under teachers, who are members either of the Colleges of Physicians or Surgeons of London, Dublin, and Edinburgh; or of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. The university pupil, who becomes a candidate, must produce certificates of having attended lectures on anatomy, chemistry, institutions, or theory of medicine, practice of medicine, principles and practice of surgery, clinical surgery, midwifery and materia medica, for a period of three or more winter sessions, and a public hospital for one year. Apprenticeship, with a regular practitioner, of three or



more years, excuses one session's attendance on the above lectures, and the omission of lectures on *materia medica*. Attendance of the lectures on clinical surgery in the hospital, midwifery, and practical anatomy, are directed to take place at the same time.

The Fellow and Licentiate pursue the same course of study; but the former is examined on two or three separate days, in the presence of the whole college, on the subjects above enumerated, and defends a thesis written in English; and the latter only once, in the presence of the examiners. The admission fee to fellowship, is £100 to the apprentice of a fellow, and £250 to other students, which goes to a fund for the support of the widows of fellows. The licentiate's fee is £6.

The examination and rank of fellow in the College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, are highly respectable; but some few years since, the examination of the licentiate was regarded as



superficial, and, as a practitioner, his station in the profession, such as would not gratify a member of the College of Surgeons of London.

It is to be regretted, that the omission of Clinical Lectures on Surgery, in the schools of London, should preclude the English student from the licence of the College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. The course of study prescribed by the College of Surgeons of London, would otherwise qualify him for the examination.

The inferiority of Scotch academical surgery, and of Edinburgh, as a school of surgery, have caused this college to rank low in the estimation of English students. It is to be hoped, that the shameful persecution which Mr. Liston has endured for the misfortune of possessing superior talents, will not preclude him from the Royal Infirmary. Scotland has never known, and may never know his equal as an operator. The improved



character of Scottish surgery, in the opinion of the world, will depend upon the future public position of that individual, and the exertions of the rising race of surgeons in the Scotch capital. The petty personal jealousies of this college, and their *esprit de corps* malevolence towards individuals of their own body, with superior powers of mind, have been equally disgraceful and incapable of defence. As public opinion has been chiefly governed by the principles of clanship, the meanest and most illiberal passions of human nature, are armed with a power in Scotland, which is almost unknown in England. In England, oppression produces the very reverse of its intention ; but in Scotland, discretion and self-consideration prevent the protection of injured merit against arbitrary power and outrage.

The Scotch surgeon's apprenticeship, which is only three years, is generally taken in the three years attendance on lectures, &c.

His actual servitude to pharmacy, rarely exceeds six months, which is more than enough to acquire all that can be learned in a shop. If placed with an eminent surgeon, or anatomical teacher, he may obtain an education equal to that of the pupil to a London hospital surgeon, at very little more expence than the *premium* paid with an apprentice to a respectable English apothecary.\* After the term of apprenticeship has expired, the Scotch surgeon may become a medical graduate of the university, as well as a fellow of the college, without additional attendance on lectures, &c.

The curtailed apprenticeship and cheapness of education, are the best parts of the Scotch system. English apprenticeship is a tedious mixture of galling slavery, and unprofitable

\* The Apprentice fee to a Fellow, is about sixty guineas. Dissection may be carried on with great privacy and quietness, but the cost of subjects, and its want of unison with the genius of the place, make it "unfashionable" to dissect in Edinburgh.



labor; which, if this country had been enlightened, would have been long since abolished. Like our other systems, it was founded in an age of comparative darkness, during the reign of Elizabeth, upon a vulgar analogy to common trades. It is a course of barren and loathsome toil, to the loss of the student, and the gain of the master only; during which, what was previously learned is forgotten, and the mind is rendered unfit, by the habits, which are contracted for what is afterwards to be acquired. It is a waste of invaluable years in the pollution of manual labor, without one gratifying reflection; and to every end and purpose, a shameful imposition on the public. Sir Astley Cooper says, that the youth of the country come deplorably ignorant to the schools, where they have to teach them every thing; which is not to be wondered at, so long as obsolete customs and prejudices shall continue to be hugged and venerated, and render us callous to reason and dupes to the selfish and interested.



The members of the faculty of surgery at Glasgow, are called masters. Their education is the same as that of the graduate of medicine, except that they attend fewer courses, and are engaged in study only two years. Practical anatomy is prosecuted with more facility and cheapness, than at Edinburgh; and, as well as surgery, is said to be taught in the best manner.

*Dublin College of Surgeons.* The student having passed an examination in the greek and latin classics, is registered as a pupil of a member or licentiate, who cannot take more than two pupils, at one and the same time. If an *extern*, the premium is one hundred and fifty, if an *intern*, three hundred guineas. Of the receipt of which, the master's certificate is required, or *nothing*. He is at liberty to select what courses of lectures he may prefer, either in Dublin or elsewhere. The five years having expired, and certificates of having attended lectures



and hospitals during that period being produced, he pays thirty guineas to the college, and is examined publicly in the presence of the members and licentiates, on two several days, in anatomy, physiology, theory and practice of surgery, surgical pharmacy, and form of prescriptions. The examination is so severe, that rejections at the first or even second time is not uncommon. The rejected candidate is not admitted to a second examination, until two years have elapsed. Doctors of physic, and regularly educated surgeons are also examined by this college, and licensed in midwifery, for which ten guineas are paid. No apothecary or druggist can be admitted a member, nor any member practice pharmacy under pain of expulsion. To refuse consultation with any of the body, incurs censure to consult with practisers not of the college expulsion; to solicit votes for vacant offices disqualification for such offices.\*

\* Bye-laws and Constitutions, of the College of Surgeons in Ireland, 1804.

The six examiners, to whose office no remuneration is annexed, undertake only one candidate a time. The members exercise the same privileges, as the fellows of the Edinburgh college. The licentiates practise in Dublin, under the same privileges as the members, and after three years have expired from the date of their license, are admitted members by ballot, and the payment of twenty guineas. Black-balling is rare; and all who practise in Dublin, are said to be members of the college. The members of the Irish college are well spoken of, as learned and able surgeons. Their station in society, and professional emoluments, render them equally respectable with the hospital surgeon in London. In both these respects, the liberality of the Irish capital is remarkable. The member of the Dublin college, who is astonished at the comparative rank of the members of the London college with himself, may trace the mean consideration of the latter, to



inferiority of education, vulgar combinations of surgery with the business of the apothecary and druggist, and the absence of legal restrictions on the usurpation of the name.

This system of the Irish college, is said to render the education of the student too exclusively surgical; and the deficiency in physic has been much felt, when surgeons *alone*, as is customary in Ireland, have been appointed to Irish infirmaries, and also in naval and military appointments; but many graduate in physic, before they become members of the college, though the university degree confers no real privileges, and the titular distinction must even be disclaimed.

It is evident that the surgical, partake more of the nature of universities, and possess greater unity and simplicity of constitution than the medical colleges of Great Britain. They require only to be restrained from ever exercising unjust and illiberal restrictions, and encroaching on the individual rights and



privileges of those who have no power of resistance ; in fact, from debasing themselves by approximating to the character of medical corporations.

*Surgeons.* Among the ancients, surgical operations were performed by the physicians, or slaves whom they kept for the purpose. “ Among the moderns, it has often been promiscuously practised by the same men, for example ; Hildanus, Severinus, and Bartholine, and many others of distinguished genius and literature. But in many parts of Europe, both formerly, and at this day, surgery has not been reckoned among the liberal professions, but surgeons have ignominiously been classed with the corporation of barbers.”\*

In the monkish times, till the twelfth century, it was entrusted to *women* and ignorant pretenders,† when it became a distinct profession on the continent. The monk-physi-

\* Gregory, p. 40.

† Pasquier, recherches de la France.



cians sent their servants, who were barbers to bleed and perform minor operations, for “*L’eglise n’abhorre rien tant que le sang,*” says Pasquier!! These barber surgeons, were remarkably addicted to shaving the head, and applying cold water on all occasions. Lay scholars of the universities, performed the capital operations. Up to the twelfth and thirteenth century, England was supplied with physicians and surgeons from France and Italy. One Richard de Lay, in 1360, was made surgeon to Edward III which was the first regular appointment of king’s surgeon in England,\* and continued ever afterwards. Henry the Fifth, in his first expedition to France, took only one surgeon and twelve assistants; but, in the second expedition, he issued an order for pressing all the surgeons and instrument-makers that could find.† The surgeons still continued

\* M. S. Sloan, 4581, 133.

† Henry’s History of England, vol. ix. p. p. 237, 252, 363.

to shave, but as people suffered their beards to grow, the office was rare, and not degrading; and when performed, as in the installation of knights of the bath, rewarded with high fees.\* In 1461, Edward IV. incorporated the barbers as surgeons; who, from the less complex nature of wounds, inflicted by the wooden artillery of the archer, upon men, protected by "iron clothes," (armor) managed tolerably without anatomy, which was regarded with horror. In 1506, the barbers and surgeons of Edinburgh were incorporated, after having set forth in a petition to the city council, as follows;—"And also, that every man that is to be made freeman and master amongst us, be examined and proved in the poyntes following. That is to say, that he know anatomia, nature and *complexions* of every member of humans body; and likewise, that he know all the vaines of the

\* Rymer Tom, II. p. 182.



samen, that he may make phli-bothmia in *due tyme*. And, also, that he *knew* in *quhilk membir* the *signe* has *dominatione for the tyme*: for every man aught to know the nature and substance of every thing that he works in, or else he is negligent. And that we may have *once in the year*, a condemned man, after he be dead, to make anatomia of, quhair throw wee may have experience ilkane to instruct others, and we shall doe sufferage for the saule. And that na barbour, master, nor servant within this burgh, haunt, use, nor exerce this craft of surregiare, without he be expert, and know perfittle the things above writin. Item: that na master of the said craft, shall take ane apprentice or servant man in tyme coming, till use the surregiane craft, without he can baith *read and wryte*." In 1512, reign of Henry VII. the corporation of surgeons consisted of eighteen members; of whom twelve were thought equal to the metropolis, and exempted from



ffices.\* All physicians and surgeons were now examined by the Bishop of London, Dean of St. Paul's, four physicians, and four surgeons ; or seven miles beyond London by the vicar-general of the diocese. In the succeeding reign, shaving and fire-arms came into use, and Henry the VIIIth, forbade the barbers to "occupy any thing belonging to surgery, drawing of teeth only excepted ;" but united the companies, which saddled the surgeons with the degrading connection of the tonsors for more than two hundred years afterwards. In Elizabeth's reign, the college of physicians prosecuted the members of this company, for practising physic, even in chyrurgical cases : and it was maintained, that in every surgical case, a surgeon must be had to apply plasters, a physician to order purges, and an apothecary to put them up, greatly to the relief of the pockets of patients, and good

\* Andrew's History of Great Britain, vol. 1.



order of the profession. In 1595, Lord Chief Justice Popham decided, "that no surgeon, as a surgeon, might practise physic; no, not for any disease, though it were the great pox;"\* which first appeared in the reign of Henry VII. and very much augmented medical practice. But James I. re-chartered the surgeons, with permission to prescribe both external and internal remedies, in the exercise of their art: their dissensions however continued till the reign of Ann. Surgery now advanced rapidly in France, and was greatly assisted by the wars of Louis XV; but in England, the barbers were very reluctant to separate from the surgeons, and introduced into the company, bagnio-keepers, drapers, and carpenters,—

" Black spirits and white,  
Blue spirits and grey,"

being entitled to the freedom of the city by

\* Alston, p. 115; Goodall, p. 344.



birth, though the surgeons were admitted by examination only. But most of the seven great hospitals having been formed before 1745, and surgery having rapidly advanced, the barbers consented to a divorce, upon the terms of the hall, and all the property of the company being given up to them; and George II. now formed them into two distinct corporations. The corporation, subsequently to 1780, amounted to sixteen hundred members, and petitioned to be formed into a college, which was opposed by the dread of many members, that they should be degraded into licentiates; and from fear that an amazing swarm who administered comfort to the afflicted, *in various ways*, viz. men-surgeons, and women-surgeons, barber-surgeons, and cobbler-surgeons, and surgeons who understood some diseases, and others who understood none at all," would be sacrificed; but, with many new provisions and improvements, as to the studies of anatomy and



surgery, and without restrictions upon irregulars seven miles out of London, their object was accomplished in 1800.\*

The Irish corporation of surgeons, and barber-surgeons, was formed into a college in 1784: the Scotch in 1778. In France,† the professions of physic and surgery were united, but the physicians, as medical science rose in importance, refused to practise the manual part. An ignorant, and ill-educated race of surgeons sprung up, who admitted *women* among them, and separated into two classes; surgeons of the long robe, and surgeon-barbers. After violent contentions, the latter gained the superiority, both in practice and knowledge. The physicians, who used all

\* See History of Surgery in England, by T. Chevalier, A. M. C. S. Second Edition, 1797.

† See Chevalier's and Johnston's Accounts. Till reign of Henry the Eighth, France supplied England with best physicians and surgeons. French Surgeons have held highest repute in Europe up to the present moment: Dupuyréou as an operator and pathologist, "the first of living surgeons."



means to keep down the surgeons, adopted the surgeon-barbers, as their *proteges*, under the implied condition of complete subserviency to them. At last, the knights of the scalpel and razor, were united in 1656, and in 1743, the latter were abolished; and in 1803, the same system was appointed in the university of Paris, for surgeons and physicians.

After the surgeons were embodied into colleges, distinct from their *confreres*, the barbers, they rose rapidly in respectability and public esteem, and became dangerous rivals to the physicians. As might be expected divisions as pernicious to society, as unworthy of scholars and gentlemen, began between the two, from the ancient fulminations in France, about 1750, to the late foolish manifesto of the royal college of physicians, which Sir Astley Cooper has magnanimously treated with silent contempt. The public became the friends and protectors of the surgeon. The physicians, from encroachments without,



and excess within, found themselves insufficiently employed, and stripped of what they deemed their birthright, and the heir-loom of their collegiate distinctions. They charged the surgeon with irregularity, and called out for the subordination of surgery to physic, but the surgeon not forced on the public by clamorous assertions of self-constituted or imaginary claims, not obtruded by legislative authority, nor municipal power, devoted to the exercise of one exclusive and monopolizing policy, but by the most legitimate of all causes, the natural necessities of mankind ; though not the physician of the university, grew more and more the physician of the people, without undue influence or sinister practices. To his jealous antagonist, he had a sufficient reply, in that he, the physician, had lost what he had never gained, and was only desirous to get from the actual possessor. In the beginning, each was free to select his profession, and as to comparative merit or



incapacity, the surgeon was unjustly singled out, so long as the graduates of Aberdeen and St. Andrew's, should continue practising physicians? The physicians found every where, that when the superior utility of the surgeon had acquired the public confidence, the public could not be induced by nominal distinctions, to abandon him.

In these wars, the human body became a question of property ; and the physician contended for the division of it into two provinces, of which he claimed the interior for himself, and vouchsafed the exterior to the surgeon. But each at different times overstepped the line of demarcation ; and, hence, as Dr. Gregory observes, " the separation of physic and surgery in modern times, has been productive of the worst consequences." The surgeons claimed to themselves, not only the exclusive privilege of performing all operations, but likewise the management of most external diseases, and some internal ones,



where operations were supposed to be often necessary : by which means, the method of cure in many diseases, was directed by ignorant and illiterate people. But, adds this able writer in favor of the surgeon, "it must be apparent to every sensible and ingenuous observer, that the diseases of the human body are so intimately combined, that it is *impossible to understand some of them perfect<sup>ly</sup> and be entirely ignorant of all the re<sup>st</sup> and,*" against the unanatomical physician "equally impossible to understand any of them, without a *proper knowledge of anatomy, and the animal economy, both in its sound and morbid state.* Every disease, external as well as internal, falls under the cognizance of the physician; and it is a reflection on him, to be ignorant of them; neither is it possible to *fix any such precise boundaries between external and internal diseases, as to render the distinction in any degree useful or applicable in practice."*



“ The genius, discernment, and education, requisite to make a good physician, are not necessary to make a good operator. What is most peculiarly necessary to make a good operator, is a resolute collected mind, a good eye, and a steady hand. These talents may be united with those required to make an able surgeon, but they may also be separated. If surgery was confined to a set of men, who were to be merely operators, it might justly be expected, that the art of operating would be more quickly brought to perfection by such men, than by those who follow a more complicated business, and practise promiscuously all the branches of medicine. The same advantage would accrue to pharmacy, *if apothecaries were to be confined to the mere business of compounding medicines.* But, in fact, this is not the case. In some parts of Europe, surgeons act as physicians in ordinary; in others, the apothecaries do this duty. The consequence is, that in many



places, physic is practised *by low illiterate men, who are a scandal to the profession.* On the other hand, whilst all the branches of medicine are indifferently practised by men, formed into separate societies, *differently educated,* and having different interests, it is plain, that *none of the branches can be cultivated to the greatest advantage, and that the interests of mankind, must often suffer from the jealousies and jarrings of professions, whose boundaries are not fixed, though they will much oftener suffer by the vilest collusion between these several professions.* It is a known fact, that in many parts of Europe, physicians who have the best parts, and best education, must yet *depend* for their success in life, upon *apothecaries, who have no pretensions either to one or the other ;* and that this *obligation* is too often *repaid* by what every one who is concerned for the honour of medicine must reflect on *with pain and indignation."*



“ I only contend for a very evident truth,” concludes the doctor, “ either that the different branches should be separately professed ; or if one person will profess them all, *he should be regularly educated to, and thoroughly master of them all.* I am not here settling points of precedence or heraldry, or insinuating the deference due to degrees in medicine.”

In this last opinion, we most perfectly concur, and we shall add a few observations, which will explain the relative pretensions of the physician and surgeon, now, and heretofore. Formerly, the physician acquired only the anatomy and physiology of the brain, belly, and chest, the theory and practice of medicine, botany and chemistry ; and was expected to be well seen in general knowledge and worldly accomplishments. The surgeon, upon whom it devolved to remove those diseases, which arise from such morbid changes of structure, as come within the



reach of the knife, cultivated anatomy, both longer and less superficially than the physician, to render himself perfect in the analysis of situation, to be able always to recognize the various tissues and elementary parts of the body, and explore them at will. To an education so much more perfect in anatomy than that of the physician, he began to connect a considerable study of medicine, and the collateral sciences; for as Dr. George Fordyce observed, "though surgery pretends only to what is obvious to the eye, as it is from things obvious to the senses, that we can infer those to which they are secondary; it is necessary, for the surgeon, although he may content himself with a less knowledge of the art, to be acquainted with internal diseases, as well as external."\* Previously perhaps, to the combination of medical, with surgical education, the surgeon might have been very

\* Lectures in M. S.

deficient out of the mechanical part of the profession ; and even since, in particular instances, from a predominant turn for the operative part. But, at all events, medical is now, by custom and law, combined with surgical education.

Where the scope of practice is very extensive, society naturally solicits the highest perfection of skill in physic and surgery. The surgeon, entrusted with large hospitals, and the exclusive teaching of his art, with anatomy and physiology, shapes his practice according to his skill and popularity. If his applications in surgery are numerous, he confines himself more to that alone, and, as his practice cannot be gleaned wholly from his immediate vicinity, he looks for after-patronage from his pupils, and endeavours to extend his reputation as universally as possible. But the number of those who become exclusively operators, is necessarily very limited. Few of the largest cities afford



sufficient cases for the knife, to support a single surgeon. Sir Astley Cooper's practice is said to have been in the proportion of more than double the amount of medical to surgical cases. Hence, though some operators, with the peculiar pride of men, fitted for occasions of great peril and difficulty, despise the application of their talent, beyond the sphere of surgery, the greater part induced by necessity and inclination, permit themselves as far as society is disposed to concur with them, to include the subjects of a catarrh or a cancer; and of an inflammation, whether external or internal, in the same list. The surgeon in provincial cities, is almost persuaded to waive his scruples in this respect, more and more, since the general practitioner, thrust into small towns and clustered villages, "to wife and thrive as best he may," that he may "become monarch of all he surveys," has often exercised his several capacities, in a manner which has diminished the applicants



to country infirmary surgeons, until of late years so numerous, (the applicants) from the gross ignorance of village apothecaries.

In great cities, where talent and genius have been found united in individuals, it has been of small import, notwithstanding private intrigue and disingenuous endeavours, under what artificial distinction they have presented themselves: as far as circumstances would admit, they have, in general, with perseverance, been ultimately rewarded. The physician educated in the last century, has been equal in few or no qualifications to the modern surgeon; else he has excelled him only in general accomplishments. But a long and ruinous war was accompanied with the conversion of the *bourgeois* of the empire into medical men, and a style of manners and conversation, too frequently inseparable from an early ill-breeding and defective education, gave to physicians that superiority, which, mingling with the world and gentlemanly



breeding are almost indispensable to produce. The physician, however, has derived no advantage from this incidental and irrelevant aid, when he has come in contact with surgeons, who had added the ornamental habits and corresponding ideas of refined society, to their professional acquirements. Minute knowledge of anatomy, which has been almost exclusively possessed by surgeons, gave them vast superiority in discriminating the seats and the distribution of diseased actions, in the most inmost and secret labyrinths of the human body.

Mr. Cline, Sen. in his lectures, was wont to relate an anecdote of a physician, who mistook the natural projections of the skull, (the ossa triquetra) for morbid enlargements. The physician deprecated the erudite fingers of the surgeon, and looked foolish in the eyes of the patient.

Mr. Alcock, on this subject says, "I abstain

from adducing instances of gross ignorance, and of fatal errors, which tell no tales.”\*

In the early part of his career, Dr. Baillie was considered the first and only anatomical physician in the metropolis; and it was predicted that on that account, he could not succeed in practice!!! It is but fair, however, towards physicians, to state, Sir Astley Cooper’s declaration, that they are now better versed in anatomy than formerly.

The surgeon, less under the government of medical theories, and the doctrines of the schools, often adopts not so prejudiced and perhaps bolder and more direct principles in the treatment of diseases. As he acquires his power of discrimination chiefly from minute anatomy, he relies more upon natural distinctions, in his judgment of cases, than the arbitrary definitions of nosology.

\* Transactions of Associated Apothecaries, and Surgeon Apothecaries, Vol. I, p. 126. This writer coincides in many of his views with ourselves.



One of the most popular physicians of the day, Dr. Armstrong, "very properly contradistinguishes those physicians in this country who, observing and thinking for themselves merely deem symptoms the indications of disease, and strive to connect them, as closely as possible, with the condition of different parts of the body upon which they depend with those practitioners who still pursue the nosological method of affixing to certain symptoms, an abstract name, without a knowledge of the condition with which they are connected. It must be admitted, that the practice of such men, is mere empiricism, similar to that which the public passively adopt, and dangerously apply from tradition."\*

Medical education, as a comprehensive system, which embraces a solid basis of general learning, and many collateral pursuits may be viewed in one light, but, as it only

\* Medical Lectures, Lancet.



concerns the mere practice of physic, in a quite different light. If the practice of physic were really so difficult of attainment and use, as to demand separate attention, scarcely so many vague and ignorant minds would engage in it so successfully, and find in it that shelter and obscurity for deficiency, which surgery will not afford them.

In the most part of acute diseases, one man of clear and decisive mind, is well nigh equal to another. These, the most simple and medicable forms of disease, are known by a few distinguishing and characteristic symptoms; and successful treatment depends rather upon timely and effectual measures than great diversity of knowledge or extensive views. In chronic diseases, the learning of the physician perhaps may, and should be greater; but as the breaking up of the constitution is the original of them, few cases admit even of alleviation, and none scarcely cure. When relieved, recurrence is almost certain, inas-



much as neither nature nor art can cast anew the original powers which preserve human organization sound and entire. What avails the widest scope of knowledge, if, on the threshold, insuperable difficulties mar its application? When we have gone forth into the depths of pathology, the vanity of too much learning, fully appears; and there is a point of ultimate experience, where, though we know not all, we may know enough, it is candid and just, to regard with scepticism and contempt, the pretended potency of medicine, in a multiplicity of diseased states. It is this knowledge and conviction of the inefficacy of medicine, which has rendered the most scientific physicians and surgeons towards the end of their careers, so indifferent to a confident system of treatment, as to seem to the uninformed, irrationally inert in their practice. The opinions and practice of the late Dr. Baillie,\* were, in a remarkable

\* See his posthumous work, on Diseases.

manner, illustrative of the tendency of great experience, to confirm the belief of the inefficacy of medicine in chronic diseases, and of the aptitude of violent attempts to accelerate the advances of destruction.

The author of *Lacon*, says: "no men despise physic so much as physicians; because no men so thoroughly understand, how little it can perform. They have been *tinkering* the human constitution four thousand years, in order to cure about as many diseases. The result is, that mercury and brimstone are the only two specifics they have discovered. All the fatal maladies continue to be what they were in the days of Hippocrates, Galen, and Paracelsus."

After much, therefore is known, whatever difference may be between individuals in judgment and education, the common use of medical agents in diseases, is too easy and uniform, to warrant any great claim to superiority, in the hacknied paths of one part of



the profession over another. The positive remedies are few ; and nature has taught men to be physicians, art surgeons. Every curative process of the physician, is an imitation of the salutary operations of nature ; viz. spontaneous bleeding, evacuations, and the exchange of diseased actions by eruptions, &c. but when, in chronic diseases, the powers of the constitution are no more, all is vain.

To resume the comparison between modern physicians and surgeons ; if the country has been indebted to one class more than another it has been to the surgeon ; abroad, or home, in civil and military stations. Most of our ablest physicians, and most scientific men have been surgeons. In the improvement of anatomy, physiology, and medicine, the names of Wiseman, Hawkins, Bromfield, Cheselden, Pott, the Hunters, Turner, Abernethy, Cooper, the Bells, with many others claim the highest place. Vices, as heretofore fatal to the value and durability of medicine

doctrines, are mingled with the latest researches in medicine ; but far different has been the progress of surgery. Both in France, England, and America, the most solid advances have been made in that art ; in which is exhibited throughout, a pure induction and demonstrable certainty, which differs wholly from the vague and contradictory theories of physicians. We think with Celsus, that on account of the “*luce aperta*” of surgical science, it takes precedence of medicine.

“*Sacrum scientiæ flumen,*” says an eloquent writer, “*quod nunc mirum et pene immensum contemplamur et veneramur, ex parvo et ignoto fonte derivatum, labitur atque labetur per omne ævum ; primo exiguus rivus, incrementis quæ plurima, quamvis lenta accipit, crescit paulatim in amplissimum amnem, confluentibus nimirum undique innumeris rivulis, quorum singuli cum tanti mole comparati, nihil fere ad ejus magnitu-*



dinem conferre videntur, omnes vero, omnibus congestis aquis, flumen tandem efficiunt, quale jam spectamus, vastum, amænum, felicia quæ præterfluit arva irrigans atque fæcundans.”\*

Such are the circumstances which have promoted the interests of the surgeon, at the expence of the physician. In Paris, in 1822, with a population of 800,000 people, there were 600 physicians, 128 surgeons, and 181 apothecaries ; a total of 909. In London, with a population of 1,200,00, there were but 174 physicians, and 1,000† surgeons, 2,000 apothecaries, and 300 druggists.‡ The Courier, commenting on this statement, observed, “the great mass of the medical practice of London, has fallen into the hands of the surgeon ; for though the meddling with

\* Gregory, Conspect. Medicinæ in pref.

† One of the London Journals says, 1,500 surgeons, at the present time.

‡ From a work published on the subject.

the knife is a surer sign of boldness, than of knowledge ; yet, the habit of dissecting, is upon the whole, more akin to the knowledge of the human body, than the composition of Latin, or the construing of Hippocrates. Of the college of physicians, the utmost that can be said is, that it has probably been mischievous, and is certainly harmless. The members have lately sold their house in Warwick Lane, to a pawnbroker's company, and built a sort of mausoleum in Charing Cross, where they have been seen by the curious in scarlet robes. This is the euthanasia of a corporation."

Whilst in great cities, the surgeon has carried with him the favoring gale of public opinion, in some of the largest of those places, which are frequented by the fashionable and more artificial part of society, the physicians are in the proportion of two to one surgeon. Indeed, in the atmosphere of these places, some peculiar vice or infirmity of mind is



generated, through which, acknowledged talent is treated with petty local malignity by some, and unless it defiles itself with the murky touch of quackery, with neglect among others, by whom, from false notions, minds of no real consideration, and empyrics of every kind, are valued and supported.

Interested parties contribute to keep up the artificial distinctions between physicians and surgeons, and create certain injustice to the latter. Many, who are self-actuated indeed, are governed by the ostentatious consideration of being attended by a name, to which a degree may be attached. On these points, the ever liberal opinions of Dr. Gregory, are worthy of general reflection.

“As a doctor’s degree can never confer sense, that title alone can never command regard ; neither should the want of it deprive any man of the esteem and deference due to real merit. If a surgeon has got the education and knowledge required in a physician,



he is a physician to all intents and purposes, whether he is a doctor or not, and ought to be respected and treated accordingly. In Great Britain, surgery is a genteel and honorable profession. In *most* parts of it, surgeons are the *physicians in ordinary*, to most families, which their *education and knowledge often gives them a title to be*; and a physician is only called, where a case is difficult, or attended with danger." "But, I imagine," he afterwards adds, "a physician of a candid and liberal spirit, will never take advantage of what a nominal distinction, and certain real, or supposed privileges, give him over gentlemen, who, in point of real merit, are his equals; and that he will feel *no superiority*, but what arises from *superior learning, superior abilities*, and more liberal manners. He will despise those *distinctions* founded in *vanity, self-interest*, or the *caprice of the world*; and will take care, that the *interests of science and mankind*, shall never be hurt



by a punctilious adherence to such formalities."\*

It is not strange, that the numerous persons, who settle down like grasshoppers, that camp in the hedges at night, in their medical caravansaras of green and gold, should create those embarrassments, which sometimes accompany the demeanour of persons of fashion, even towards the respectable surgeon. When three or four species of the profession are embraced under the one generic term of "Surgeon," the respectable public are perplexed and withdrawn from the simple and dissociated perception of the line between ignorant apothecaries, with others, who usurp the name; and the surgeon, who wishes to support the respectability of his profession, by pursuing a respectable course in it.

The respectable surgeon occupies a private dwelling. In his practice, as in his education,

he embraces both surgery and medicine. He may dispense his own medicines *privately*; but, if his avocations are extensive, and circumstances admit of it, he withdraws from pharmacy. In Edinburgh, almost alone, the most eminent surgeons keep medicines. In Dublin, the surgeon prohibited from pharmacy by the college, holds the most respectable station in society. In this case, in England, the surgeon is remunerated by fees, or charges for attendance, according to the circumstances of his patients. If his prescriptions are sent to a druggist, the sum paid to him for medical or surgical attendance, added to the druggist's bill, except to the very opulent, varies but little from the general amount of an apothecary's bill, in case of an apothecary's attendance—besides the benefit of very superior professional knowledge. The more general practitioner may be absolutely required in scattered and poorer districts; but there are certain landmarks and



divisions, which do not form merely artificial distinctions, as to comparative rank and intelligence. When an individual becomes more of a general practiser, than is described ; his commerce with petty details, and extended intercourse with the inferior ranks of society, prevent the same reasonable and solid opportunities of dedicating himself to the more instructive pursuit of his profession, as when his place in life is more private. It is a long exploded notion in the profession, that men “ are always the most experienced, who see the *greatest number of patients*. The understanding does not gallop so fast as the doctor does. A physician, who is constantly on the trot, may see too much, and think too little.”\*

As many misrepresentations are artfully circulated in society, to cause a great and general undervaluing of the surgeon in the estimation of fashionable circles, by true state-

\* Mementos of the Medici Family, p. 14.

ments of the relative expences, as well as qualifications of the physician and surgeon, the public may be enabled to form a just and accurate comparison. The Edinburgh graduate now in practice must have passed two years and three quarters, before he could have been regularly invested with academical honours, for which he must have been subject to the following expences.

## EDINBURGH.

|                                      | £  | s. | d. |
|--------------------------------------|----|----|----|
| Matriculation, and Six Classes . . . | 27 | 10 | 0  |
| Graduation Fee . . . . .             | 23 | 13 | 0  |
| Hospital Pupillage . . . . .         | 8  | 8  | 0  |
| Grinder's Fees . . . . .             | 6  | 6  | 0  |
| Total                                | 65 | 17 | 0  |

## GLASGOW.

|                                   | £  | s. | d. |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|
| Ten Courses of Lectures . . . . . | 29 | 0  | 0  |
| Hospital Attendance . . . . .     |    |    |    |
| Degree . . . . .                  | 25 | 0  | 0  |
|                                   | 54 | 0  | 0  |

From which may now be deducted two years attendance passed at Paris, which will have cost the student

220 francs, or . . . . . 8 16 0



## LONDON.

|  | £   | s. | d. |
|--|-----|----|----|
| To become a licentiate—A degree, or<br>two years attendance in an univer-<br>sity, about . . . . . | 70  | 0  | 0  |
| License . . . . .  | 57  | 0  | 0  |
| Total  | 127 | 0  | 0  |

If the farce of a medical education at Oxford and Cambridge, has been prosecuted with a view to become a candidate for a fellowship in the London College, the expence of a physician's education must of course be greatly enhanced.

## SURGEON'S EDUCATION.

|                                       | £   | s. | d. |
|---------------------------------------|-----|----|----|
| Apprentice's Premium . . . . .        | 300 | 0  | 0  |
| Two half-year's Hospital Attendance . | 27  | 0  | 0  |
| Lectures and Demonstrations           |     |    |    |
| Anatomy . . . . .                     | 21  | 0  | 0  |
| Surgery . . . . .                     | 5   | 5  | 0  |
| Theory and Practice of Physic . . .   | 8   | 8  | 0  |
| Chemistry and Materia Medica . . .    | 12  | 12 | 0  |
| Midwifery . . . . .                   | 10  | 10 | 0  |
| Dissections . . . . .                 | 10  | 10 | 0  |
| Diplomas, Hall and College . . . . .  | 28  | 0  | 0  |
|                                       | 423 | 5  | 0  |

If apprenticed to an Hospital Surgeon

|                                |      |   |   |
|--------------------------------|------|---|---|
| in London. Out Door Pupil pays | 500  | 0 | 0 |
| In Door . . . . .              | 1000 | 0 | 0 |

EDINBURGH.

|                                      | £   | s. | d. |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----|----|
| Apprentice Fee . . . . . £50 to      | 100 | 0  | 0  |
| Lectures and Hospital Attendance . . | 40  | 0  | 0  |
| Licence . . . . .                    | 7   | 0  | 0  |
| Dissections . . . . .                |     |    |    |
| Total                                | 147 | 0  | 0  |

For a Fellow in Edinburgh, the additional expence is from . . £100 to 300 0 0

GLASGOW.

Master in Surgery, about two-thirds of the expence of graduation in Physic.

DUBLIN.

|   | £   | s. | d. |
|---|-----|----|----|
| Apprentice Fee. Out Door . . . . .                              | 157 | 10 | 0  |
| In Door . . . . .   | 315 | 0  | 0  |
| Five years attendance on Lectures, not to be computed . . . . . |     |    |    |
| License . . . . .   | 31  | 10 | 0  |
| Midwifery License . . . . .                                     | 10  | 10 | 0  |
| Diploma of Member, (additional) . .                             | 10  | 10 | 0  |
| Total   | 527 | 0  | 0  |

It will be proved from this statement, that both in time and money, the expence of the



surgeon's education, preponderates greatly over that of the physician—and the apprentice-fee of the pupil to a London Hospital Surgeon, may be considered a full set-off for achieving the honours of the medical corporation late of Warwick Lane. In practical anatomy, the proportion of expence, is, in every school, much greater to the surgeon. As to contingent expences, those affect all parties equally, according to the system of living, whether more or less liberal.

We have entered into these statements, chiefly that the discriminating and unprejudiced, may be induced to search well into the surgical character, in those places, where it is obviously undervalued.

They, who illustrate it, may not be men, whose names they will find most often on the lips of every habitual puffer, from the ruling gossip of fashion, down to the old nurse, or venal bribeling; or raised to notoriety, by pretending "to cure the incurable;" by



putting forth absurd nostrums, worthless lucubrations on liver diseases, mercury and spas, and the infallible inspiration of a voyage to a warm climate ; by declaiming puritanical jargons, in assemblies of religious enthusiasts, and dispatching their "*cara sposas*," to gather evangelical copper, to convert unconvertible Jews, or swelling the funds of a doubtful Bible Society, or on the like intensioned errand of converting slight acquaintances into *bona fide* patients. But they are men, who will be found quietly and steadily laboring in the field of solid knowledge, and endeavouring to contribute to the improvement of the profession, and generally exercising sincerity, candour, and disinterested conduct towards their patients. Most of the class we mean, have too much confidence in the desert of real merit, and too much of the honorable pride peculiar to it, to attempt to attract private confidence by trite literary deceptions, professions of competency to per-



form cures, by means which can never perform them; and other hollow and artful practices. Nor may they depend altogether on the difference of a diploma, "as the chiefest thing of all," so much as upon the real and trustworthy grounds of rational and natural distinctions; and it may confidently be said of them, that they can actually comprehend liver diseases, and even prescribe blue-pill, and mineral waters—and otherwise pursue the useful parts, and administer the available resources of their profession, although a contrary creed may be propagated among the *peculiar* people of certain places, where, as in Lilliput, every Gulliver is a giant.

Common sense will ever insist on the superiority, which a profound intimacy with practical anatomy must give these men, over any class, under any appellation whatever, who are exonerated from it. We have strictly abided in our views, by the sentiments of

Dr. Gregory, and other distinguished men ; among whom are a Cooper, Abernethy, Lawrence,\* and a Bell. An evil, says Mr. Abernethy, seems to me to have arisen from the artificial division of the healing art, into the medical and surgical departments. This division has caused the attention of the physician and the surgeon, to be too exclusively directed to those diseases, which custom has arbitrarily allotted to their care." Mr. Charles Bell observes ; " let us study anatomy, not in opposition to authority, but as that *sure guide*, which renders the *perusal of authors safe*, and without which *theory takes place of facts*. In comparing the means possessed by the physicians and surgeons, as contrasted with each other, for forming an opinion on a matter of this kind, I have sometimes persuaded myself, that the surgeon has some advantages. The necessity on his part for

\* See Introductory Lecture, Lancet, 1827.



the concentration of every power he possesses, natural or acquired, is an equivalent for the greater learning of the physician.”\*

Towards those physicians, we feel not as illiberally, who are distinguished ornaments of the profession. Among *scientific* physicians, we have known many amiable friends, and seen a spirit of liberality, which is never known in mere traders, under the parchment banner of a medical degree.

The profession of physic, ever must, and ever will exist; but it has been ennobled only by those, who have been possessed of an acute penetrating genius, of a clear solid judgment, and of a quickness of apprehension, which instantaneously perceives where the greatest probability of success lies, and seizes the happy moment of action: whence is derived, that “knowledge of nice discriminating circumstances, which makes the great

\* Appendix to the Papers on the Nerves, 1827.

difference between a physician who has genius, and one who, practising by rote, and prescribing for some of the more obvious symptoms has none."

Many of the recent graduates of Edinburgh and Glasgow, who have availed themselves of the present free communication with the continental schools, we have found men so excellently skilled in anatomy, surgery, and medicine, as to be competent to the performance of operations with the greatest address, and at the same time, to the practice of physic, with all its modern improvements. Such men, would have felt lowered by comparison with the mass of the physicians, who educated in the last century, are practising in this.

Since the distinction between physicians and surgeons, is a mere matter of names and forms, it is prognosticated by our greatest men, that both will be ultimately blended in this country, to which the examples of France



and America, and of the university of Edinburgh, are favorable. The union is perfectly practicable; and we hesitate not to say, that men who possess both the qualifications of the physician and surgeon, and are authorized to practise as both, are best calculated to fill the high places of the profession. It may be urged, that the mechanical part, will ever require a particular genius and exclusive study. Formerly, it is true, few country surgeons exceeded the province of the apothecary, and provincial cities alone furnished the country with men, who could perform operations. But owing to the improvement of education, and the increase of dispensaries, circumstances have changed; and even small towns and villages contain men, who evince in their aptness to operative surgery, that the difficulties of the art, have been greatly exaggerated. The whole number of systematic operations is not great; and may always be acquired by the diligent practice of surgical

anatomy ; and kept up by the reiterated use of the hand, in private practice upon the dead body.

The only impediment lies in the scantiness of surgery ; but, by the proposed change, an equal foundation would be laid for either division of practice ; and the destiny of individuals subjected to no arbitrary impediments except those which spring from circumstances not to be controlled. The grounded candidate might pursue, and perfect himself in any department, to which his situations and inclinations might lead him.\* There is a wide difference between natural and artificial limitations : the latter has a tendency to make what might have been a good surgeon, a bad physician, and *vice versa*. But nature errs not, when suffered to strike out her own path.

As Mr. Locke has observed, “ the great evil

\* See some excellent remarks on this head, in Dr. Stewart's pamphlet, on Division of Labor.



of our learned institutions is, that their systems tend to force the original bent of the mind out of its voluntary course."

Many contend, that society requires a minor order of practisers, upon the most fallacious and interested principles. What has France gained by the *officiers de sante*, except a class of men, who destroy the interests of the first class, and form very imperfect practitioners.\*

So long as artificial divisions and subdivisions shall exist, those jealousies and jarrings, those clashings of separate interests, must continue to the prejudice both of physician and surgeons. The physician must persist in casting himself upon ignominious confederacies with the expiring race of apothecaries, and the more equivocal support of the druggist. When the gradual advancement of free inquiry and bold discussion, have com-

\* See Johnston, p. 172 and seq. It is expected that they will be shortly abolished.



pleted the extinction of the apothecary, he will find his situation, still more than now, dubious and unfortunate. Society, in many places, must be deprived of respectable surgeons, by the multiplication of those several inferior classes, who "beggar and shame" the profession in this country. But a simple and efficient constitution, would consolidate British practisers under one head, and one denomination, with such arrangements as would provide an equivalent for the general practitioner, where he is absolutely required ; and, as in Ireland and France, resolve the apothecary into the retail druggist.

XI. A regular *academical education* furnishes the only presumptive evidence of professional ability, and is so honourable and beneficial, that it gives a just claim to pre-eminence among physicians, in proportion to the degree in which it has been enjoyed and improved : *Yet, as it is not indispensably necessary to the attainment of knowledge, skill,*



*and experience, they who have really acquired, in a competent measure, such qualifications, without its advantages, should not be fastidiously excluded from the privilege of fellowship.* In consultations, especially as the good of the patient is the sole object in view, and is often dependent on personal confidence, the aid of an intelligent practitioner ought to be received with candour and politeness, and his advice adopted, if agreeable to sound judgment and truth. Thus Percival.

*Academical Education.* An author remarks, that “some enamoured of collegiate distinctions, will become regular practitioners; others founding their choice on their own observations, and their real or supposed knowledge of human nature, will prefer being irregular.”\* Irregularity may be a matter of necessity, but never of choice; for none, who

\* Essay on Medical Reform, p. 45.

value their own peace, or who have known the precarious nature and bitter experience of reliance on their mental powers alone, would voluntarily be without distinctions; which have never been so difficult to be obtained, but that fools have been found in possession of them, who have had time and money to bestow.

Where society is in an artificial state, distinctions of forms and names are more esteemed than the highest mental qualifications, and often without farther labor or merit, smooth the way to appointments and patronage, which the utmost excellence of intellectual character cannot acquire without them.

“Nothing, in my opinion,” observes Dr. Gregory, “can justify any physician from refusing to consult with another, when he is required to do so. If he is conscious he cannot behave with temper, and that his passions are so rankled as to impair his judgment, he may, and ought to refuse it. But such



circumstances, as the place where the person he is to consult with, had his degree, or indeed, whether he had a degree from any place or not, cannot justify his refusal. That it may be said, is sacrificing the dignity and interests of the faculty. But I am not here speaking of the private policy of a corporation, or the little arts of a craft. I am speaking of the duties of a liberal profession, whose object is the life and health of the human species, to be exercised by gentlemen of honest and ingenuous manners. The dignity of such a profession, can never be supported by means that are inconsistent with its ultimate object, and that can only tend to swell the pride, and fill the pockets of a few individuals."

"But if there is no mutual confidence; if opinions are regarded not according to their intrinsic merit, but according to the person from whom they proceed; or if there is reason to believe, that proposals delivered with openness, are to be whispered abroad, and mis-

presented to the public, without regard to the obligations of honor and secrecy ; and, if in consequence of this, a physician is singly to be made responsible for the effects of his advice, he is justified in refusing to consult with another.”\*

Dover, speaking of the Fellows of the London College of Physicians, says, in his Legacy, with much truth, “I would caution many people against one thing ; which is, not to take every graduate for a physician, nor a clan of prejudiced gentlemen, for oracles.” When artificial distinctions are insisted upon with loud boasts, and odious comparisons and illiberalities, it may be justly suspected, that degrees are the last refuge of those whose understandings can provide them with nothing better to depend upon.

A graduate of the English universities, advances in one of the periodical works of the

\* See Gregory, p p. 38, 39.



day, that “ a man holding a degree denominated honorary, *whatever be his merits*, however *long standing*, in other branches of the profession, is neither more nor less than assuming a right to tamper with the lives of his fellow-creatures, in a branch of the profession, for which he has neither been *prepared by previous studies*, nor *acquired by practice*.” Henceforth, a Cooper, an Abernethy, and a Lawrence, “ may hide their diminished heads ;” for inasmuch as they are not *regular-bred* physicians, their talents and experience must go for nothing. As the writer of this article, under peculiar opportunities and circumstances, without any merit on his own part, may lay claim to a classical education, such as not every student can convey to, or even bring from an university ; whilst he insists on the necessity of such an education, he is entitled to contend with Dr. Gregory, that “ the study of physic is the study, which qualifies a man for being a



physician :” and that the reading of Hippocrates in Greek, or Celsus in Latin, are weak grounds indeed, for the arrogant and invidious claims, which are so often advanced, to the disgust and contempt of those who know their folly. A writer in the *London Medical and Physical Journal*,\* speaking of the graduates of Aberdeen and St. Andrew’s, says, “let them be pointed out as impostors of a double dye. An impostor who claims a title at his own hand, may perhaps be excused, but the men, who falsely obtain, and those who falsely confer the sanctions of an university, are certainly the most abandoned. The degree of an university, should be sacred to merit. When a man assumes the title of physician, the public naturally confide in his knowledge and abilities : but when with this, he publishes the sanction of an university, their faith becomes stronger. What must be

\* Vol. XII. p. p. 162, 272.



the result of this confidence, in the case of a man destitute of knowledge? It is like committing the charge of a ship, in this most critical situation, to a man who has never handled a rudder, nor seen a compass." An opponent replies, "does not the writer see physicians belonging to every college, who merit not the honorable name. He would do well to remember the old proverb; "Jack will never make a gentleman;" and change it a little, "a degree will never make a physician." How many physicians have I had occasion to meet, who, God knows, knew very little of their business, and would have looked upon a worthy practitioner as contemptible, because he was not a fellow of the same college. It would be better for the world, if *sterling merit was more prized than sterling honors*. I glory that I have long practised under the banner of a degree from the ancient and honorable College of St. Andrews. I have the highest veneration

for many, whose talents and genius give lustre to the profession ; but I entertain an abhorrence of illiberal sarcasm and unmanly reflection. A diploma has not the powers of *Ægis*, described by the poets ; nor has any man the exclusive right of employing the shafts of ridicule. Those, who in controversy maintain an independance of reasoning, and who support the important character of a physician or surgeon, with feeling and humanity, must ever meet the approbation and esteem of all good men." The first party rejoins, "that no man of common sense, learning, and observation, will esteem himself greater by a St. Andrew's diploma ; and that respectable characters, who so avail themselves, are to blame for setting the example." He relates, that a young *weaver* in his neighbourhood, who left the loom, and went to London for five months, came into the country, got a practice, and bought a degree !!!

Honorary distinctions, and a regular educa-



tion, confer additional splendor, when united with the display of skill, and superior science, in practice ; but it brings contempt on artificial distinctions and colleges, when they give men such an excessive inward satisfaction with themselves, that they exult more in the forms than realities of the profession ; when they clothe themselves in the whole armour of legitimacy, as if merely to qualify themselves, as geese to hiss, and cravens to crow. A specimen of the spirit and temper of graduates of the English universities, and of fellows of the college of physicians of London, is afforded in the above specimens ; and individuals of those bodies, have come under our observation in country practice, who have viewed themselves among other practisers, “as snowy doves trooping with crows ;” or, as those who should look down upon others with contempt, because they were raised above them by stilts. These bodies, have in consequence, been fruitful of still-births and abortions. A fellow



lately very high on the list of the London college, but now deceased, from a practising physician, became a banker, a member of parliament, and a colonel of local militia.

The graduates of Aberdeen and St. Andrew's, have generally been men, who, having been a length of years in practice, procure diplomas to ease their labors in the decline of life. Such men, cannot be deemed incompetent; and as a return to the elements of their art, is, as Dr. Johnson observes, most irksome to those who have acquired the knowledge of experience, it is scarcely wonderful, that they shun going to school again, in their elder days. Few *young* men who have procured venal diplomas, have ever succeeded. However, it is not meant here to support the practice of Aberdeen and St. Andrew's;—gross abuses must accrue from it; though, as long as our medical schools are in their present state, and the prohibitory laws against quackery, nugatory, many standards of



opinion must exist, and regularity continue to be viewed with too general indifference. When there shall be but one approach to the profession, by which all must enter, or be entirely excluded, no injustice will be done, that can compromise the rational liberties of the subject; and the profession will possess the respectability and security, to which it is entitled.

XII. *Punctuality* should be observed in the visits of the faculty, when they are to hold consultation together. But as this may not always be practicable, the physician or surgeon, who first arrives at the place of appointment, should wait five minutes for his associate, before his introduction to the patient, that the unnecessary repetition of questions may be avoided: no visits should be made but in concert, or by mutual agreement: no statement or discussion of the case should take place before the patient or his friends, except in the presence of each of the attend-

ing gentlemen of the faculty, and by common consent : and no *prognostications* should be delivered, which are not the result of previous deliberation and concurrence.

XIII. *Visits* to the sick should not be *unseasonably repeated* ; because, when too frequent, they tend to diminish the authority of the physician, to produce instability in his practice, and to give rise to such occasional indulgences, as are subversive of all medical regimen.

Sir William Temple has asserted, that “ an honest physician is excused for leaving his patient, when he finds the disease growing desperate, and can, by his attendance, expect only to receive his fees, without any hopes or appearance of deserving them.” But this allegation is not well founded : for the offices of a physician may continue to be highly useful to the patient, and comforting to the relatives around him, even in the last period of a fatal malady ; by obviating despair, by alle-



viating pain, and by soothing mental anguish. To decline attendance, under such circumstances, would be sacrificing, to fanciful delicacy and mistaken liberality, that moral duty which is independent of, and far superior to all pecuniary appreciation.

XIV. Whenever a physician or surgeon *officiates* for another, who is sick or absent, during any considerable length of time, he should receive the fees accruing from such additional practice : but if this fraternal act be of short duration, it should be gratuitously performed ; with an observance always of the utmost delicacy towards the interest and character of the professional gentleman, previously connected with the family.

XV. Some general rule should be adopted by the faculty, in every town, relative to the *pecuniary acknowledgments* of their patients ; and it should be deemed a point of honour to adhere to this rule, with as much steadiness, as varying circumstances will admit.



For it is obvious, that *an average fee, as suited to the general rank of patients*, must be an *inadequate* gratuity from the *rich*, who often require attendance not absolutely necessary ; and yet *too large* to be expected from that *class* of citizens, who would feel a reluctance in calling for assistance, without making some decent and satisfactory retribution.

But in the consideration of fees, let it ever be remembered, that though mean ones from the affluent are both unjust and degrading, yet the characteristical beneficence of the profession is inconsistent with *sordid* views, and *avaricious* rapacity. To a young physician, it is of great importance to have clear and definite ideas of the ends of his profession ; of the means for their attainment ; and of the comparative value and dignity of each. Wealth, rank, and independence, with all the benefits resulting from them, are the primary ends which he holds in view ; and they are



interesting, wise, and laudable. But knowledge, benevolence, and active virtue, the means to be adopted in their acquisition, are of still higher estimation. And he has the privilege and felicity of practising an art, even more intrinsically excellent in its mediate than its ultimate objects. The former, therefore, have a claim to uniform pre-eminence.

Dr. Percival adds in a note ; at a period when empirics and empiricism seem to have prevailed much in Rome, the exorbitant demands of medical practitioners, particularly for certain secret compositions which they dispensed, induced the Emperor Valentinian to ordain, that no individual of the faculty should make an express charge for his attendance on a patient ; nor even avail himself of any promise of remuneration, during the period of sickness ; but that he should rest satisfied with the donative voluntarily offered at the close of his ministration.\* By the

\* Vide Cod. Theodos. Lib. XIII. Tit. III.

same law, however, the Emperor provided that one practitioner, at least, should be appointed for each of the fourteen sections into which the Roman metropolis was divided with special privileges, and a competent salary for his services ;\* thus, indirectly, yet explicitly acknowledging, that a physician has a full claim in equity, to his professional emoluments. Is it not reasonable, therefore, to conclude, that what subsisted as a *moral right*, ought to have been demandable, under proper regulations, as a *legal right*? For it seems to be the office of law to recognize and enforce that which natural justice recognizes and sanctions.

The Roman advocates were subject to the like restrictions, and from a similar cause. For their rapacity occasioned the revival of the Cincian ordinance—" *qua cavetur anti-quitus, ne quis ob causam orandam pecuniam*

\* The Neapolitan Physicians are now paid by the State. Ed.



*donumve accipiat.*" But Tacitus relates, that when the subject was brought into discussion before Cladius Cæsar, amongst other arguments in favor of receiving fees, it was forcibly urged, *sublatis studiorum pretiis, etiam studia peritura*; and that, in consequence, the prince "*capiendis pecuniis posuit modum, usque ad dena sestertia quæ egressi repetundarum tenerentur.*"\*

A precise and invariable *modus*, however, would be injurious both to the barrister and the physician, because the fees of each ought to be measured by the value of his time, the eminence of his character, and by his general rule of practice. This rule, with its antecedents, being well known, a *tacit compact* is established, restrictive on the claims of the practitioner, and binding on the probity of the patient. Law cannot properly, by its ordinances, establish the custom, which will

\* Annal Lib. XI. Pag. 168. Edit. Lipsii.

and ought to vary in different situations, and under different circumstances. But a court of judicature, when formally appealed to, seems to be competent to authorize it if just, and to correct it if unjust. Such decisions could not wholly change the honorary nature of fees ; because they would continue to be increased, at the discretion of the affluent, according to their liberality and grateful sense of kind attentions ; and diminished, at the option of the physician, to those who may from particular circumstances, require his beneficence.

From the Roman code, the established usage, in different countries of Europe, relative to medical fees, has probably originated.\*

\* The Visigoths made it unlawful to demand a fee, unless the patient recovered ; inflicting a fine of one hundred and fifty sols if he were weakened by bleeding ; and if he died, giving up his physician to the surviving relatives, to be by them disposed of as they pleased. They protected physicians from being confined for debt. Vide Spence upon the Laws and Constitutions of Europe. Ed.



This usage, which constitutes common law, seems to require considerable modification to adapt it to the present state of the profession. For the general body of the faculty, especially in the United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, are held in very high estimation, on account of their liberality, learning, and integrity. And it would be difficult to assign a satisfactory reason why they should be excluded from judicial protection, when the just remuneration of their services is wrongfully withheld. Indeed, a medical practitioner ; one especially, who is settled in a provincial town, or in the country, may have accumulated claims from long protracted and even expensive attendance ; and his pecuniary acknowledgments may be refused from prejudice, from captiousness, from parsimony, or from dishonesty. Under such circumstances, considerations of benevolence, humanity, and gratitude, are wholly set aside : for when disputes arise, they must be sus-

pended, or extinguished ; and the question at issue, can only be decided on the principles of commutative justice. Thus Percival.

'There are persons, more especially in the middle and commercial stations, who often engross the time of medical men with the most unsparing effrontery, and afterwards regard their obligations to them with equally unprincipled indifference. With these persons, as in the Dutch caricature, the practitioner enters as an angel, during attendance, but as a demon with cloven feet after recovery. Respectable medical men, should bind themselves by mutual agreement, to pursue in every instance, one and the same decided course towards such persons, for the general support of public principle. For example, they should peremptorily refuse attendance below a certain rate agreed upon among themselves, which would prevent discord between them and their patients, and advantage from being taken of it, by inferior per-



sons in the profession. Unfortunately, in many places, the profession is altogether too motley and discordant; and too much swayed by mean jealousies, and interested motives, to procure mutual co-operation.

A surgeon of our acquaintance, made it a rule to hang up all *dishonorable* transactions of this nature, on the part of patients, with their names and statements of their accounts, in his surgery, for the interest and amusement of all who came. In the limited business of a country practiser, it proved the defalcation to a great amount, from persons of professed and apparent responsibility. By this means he lost none but paltroons, who sent for him from considerable distances, and caused him great fatigue, and, properly exposed characters, who, according to the general rule of defaulters, to excuse their own knavery, had defamed his treatment to other medical men, and the public. When the expence of education, labor of mind, and long waiting for

practice, are taken into account, the withholding of the pecuniary rights of a medical man, by a patient, is one of the most grovelling actions of a base and despicable nature. This is a real evil ; and it is painful to say, of constant occurrence.

On the other hand, medical rapacity ought to be exposed.\* It has been communicated to us, that some *man* in Bath, charges twenty guineas per month, and from one to three guineas a day for attendance ; and that a physician in Cheltenham, has taken four guineas *per diem*, from a patient, not of the highest class. Of course, the *most* respectable part of the profession, in those places, act otherwise. The College of Physicians, very properly forbade their members to bargain at a certain price, to restore patients to health.

\* Much is said of it in watering and such other places, as *strangers* resort to, for change of air and scene, where "I was a stranger, and *they took me in*," is too often the order of the day.



Addison would never take more than the customary fees of office, he says, "I might keep the contrary practice concealed from the world, *were I capable of it* ; but I could not from myself ; and I hope that I shall always *fear the reproaches of my own heart*, more than those of all mankind." With respect to taking fees of friends, he adds, "I may have an hundred friends, and if my fee be two guineas, I shall, by relinquishing my right, lose two hundred guineas, and no friend gain more than two ; there is therefore no proportion between the good imparted, and evil suffered.\* The late Dr. Baillie refused more than the ordinary fee ; and would take none after he had appointed another physician to consult with him. Ed.

XVI. All members of the profession, including apothecaries as well as physicians and surgeons, together with their wives and chil-

\* Johnson's Lives of the Poets.

dren, should be attended *gratuitously* by any one or more of the faculty, residing near them, whose assistance may be required. For as solicitude obscures the judgment, and is accompanied with timidity and irresolution, medical men, under the pressure of sickness, either as affecting themselves or their families, are peculiarly dependent upon each other. But visits should not be obtruded officiously, as such unmasked civility may give rise to embarrassment, or interfere with that choice, on which confidence depends. Distant members of the faculty, when they request attendance, should be expected to defray the charges of travelling. And if their circumstances be affluent, a pecuniary acknowledgment should not be declined: for no obligation ought to be imposed, which the party would rather compensate than contract.

XVII. When a physician attends the wife or child of a member of the faculty, or any person very nearly connected with him, he



should manifest peculiar attention to his opinions, and tenderness even to his prejudices. For the dear and important interests which the one has at stake, supersede every consideration of rank or seniority in the other; since the mind of a husband, a father, or a friend, may receive a deep and lasting wound, if the disease terminate fatally, from the adoption of means he could not approve, or the rejection of those he wished to be tried. Under such delicate circumstances, however, a conscientious physician, will not lightly sacrifice his judgment; but will urge, with proper confidence, the measures he deems to be expedient, before he leaves the final decision concerning them to his more responsible coadjutor.

XVIII. Clergymen, who experience the *res angustæ domi*, should be visited gratuitously by the faculty. And this exemption should be an acknowledged general rule, that the feeling of individual obligation may be

rendered less oppressive. But such of the clergy as are qualified, either from their stipends or fortunes, to make a reasonable remuneration for medical attendance, are not more privileged than any other order of patients. Military or naval subaltern officers, in narrow circumstances, are also proper objects of professional liberality.

XIX. As the first *consultation* by *letter* imposes much more trouble and attention than a personal visit, it is reasonable, on such an occasion, to expect a gratuity of double the usual amount. And this has long been the established practice of many respectable physicians. But a subsequent epistolary correspondence, on the further treatment of the same disorder, may justly be regarded in the light of ordinary attendance, and may be compensated, as such, according to the circumstances of the case, or of the patient.

XX. Physicians and surgeons are occasionally requested to furnish certificates, justifying



the absence of persons who hold situations of honour and trust in the army, the navy, or the civil departments of government. These testimonials, unless under particular circumstances, should be considered as acts due to the public, and therefore not to be compensated by any gratuity. But they should never be given without an accurate and faithful scrutiny into the case; that truth and probity may not be violated, nor the good of the community injured, by the unjust pretences of its servants. The same conduct is to be observed by medical practitioners, when they are solicited to furnish apologies for non-attendance on juries; or to state the valetudinary incapacity of persons appointed to execute the business of constables, churchwardens, or overseers of the poor. No fear of giving umbrage, no view to present or future emolument, nor any motives of friendship, should incite to a false, or even dubious declaration. For the general weal requires



that every individual, who is properly qualified, should deem himself obliged to execute, when legally called upon, the juridical and municipal employments of the body politic. And to be accessory, by untruth or prevarication, to the evasion of this duty, is at once a high misdemeanour against social order, and a breach of moral and professional honor.

XXI. The use of *quack medicines* should be discouraged by the faculty, as disgraceful to the profession, injurious to health, and often destructive even of life. Patients, however, under lingering disorders, are sometimes obstinately bent on having recourse to such as they see advertised, or hear recommended, with a boldness and confidence which no intelligent physician dares to adopt, with respect to the means that he prescribes. In these cases, some indulgence seems to be required, to a credulity that is insurmountable. And the patient should neither incur the displeasure of the physician, nor be entirely deserted



by him. He may be apprized of the fallacy of his expectations, whilst assured, at the same time, that diligent attention should be paid to the process of the experiment he is so unadvisedly making on himself, and the consequent mischiefs, if any, obviated as timely as possible. Certain active preparations, the nature, composition, and effects of which, are known, ought not to be prescribed as quack medicines. Thus Percival.

*Curemongers.* In an old pamphlet, entitled "When a man's name is up, he may lie a-bed or the Grand Quack ;" the writer says, "we frequently see some enterprising spirits start up, who live merely by imposing on the public. I have heard of a couple of extravagant fellows, who, having spent their patrimony, consulted how to subsist for the future. One proposed the highway ; but that was objected to as dangerous. They, therefore, concluded to pitch upon some trade, where ignorance could not be easily discovered ; for

it would be easier to set up for a statesman, than a taylor. But as being made a minister depended on the favor of others, they sought to find out something that might depend on themselves ; and as law and physic were professions, which required but little stock, they fixed upon these. This being agreed upon, they drew lots, and one was dubbed a counsellor, and the other a doctor. In the course of their practice, one ruined his clients, the other killed his patients ; yet both grew eminent, rolled in their coaches, and left great estates.”

On a small monument in the cathedral of Saltsburgh, is the following inscription to the memory of Paracelsus. ‘ Insignis medicinæ doctor qui dira illa vulnera, lepram, podagram, hydropsim, alia que *insanibilia*, corporis contagia, *mirifica arte* sustulit, ac bona sua in pauperes distribuenda collo cum digno honoravit.” “ Thus,” observes a commentator, “ the power of removing incurable



diseases, and all the attributes of generosity are ascribed to a quack, who was only desirous of blinding the world by the extraordinary advantages he promised them. He promised to divulge the secrets of alchemy, and died a beggar in the hospital of Saltsburgh, where the wealth he left to the poor, could be of no use but to add two more lines to his epitaph. He professed to have the secret of longevity, to the age of one hundred and fifty, free from diseases; and he himself died at thirty-seven, loaded with distempers. Nothing of all this, would persuade any rational individual of his probity or erudition.”\*

Paracelsus was the father of an order of practisers, who have flourished in this country under the denomination of Curemongers.†

\* Voyage en Allemagne, par Charles Patin, M. D. Lyons, 1676, p. 288

† The name of Curemonger, or Physicmonger, occurs in Gerard.



Their popularity arises from a supposed superior faculty for making cures, inherent and intuitive in their natures. Whether regularly or irregularly educated, they rank in the profession, under its honorable members, and above the common quack; like the bucentaur, which was half man, and half one of the lower animals.

To succeed in this character, the boldness of the prophet's predictions must be exceeded only by the impossibility of their performance. Like the "*medecin malgre lui*," he must be prepared to say of himself, that he "can cure anything;" and represent every case as the most anomalous of anomalies, and the practice of all who have preceded him as the most consummate ignorance. His views of cases, must be quite peculiar to himself, and his remedies possess a miraculous agency. He must "partition out to himself, a little Goshen in the intellectual world, where light shines, and as he concludes, day blesses him."



He must needs be "poetical in his prose;" even till he become, what Old Wilding calls, "a constitutional liar, telling you more lies in an hour, than all the circulating libraries put together, publish in a year." He must invert the order of nature, and make the mouse produce the mountain, and swell his frogs into bulls. He must be "the forward, bold, positive *Corinthian thruster-on*, sworn with the poison of his own opinion, as if he were the acme, and top branch of the profession, and, right or wrong, go on; if for want of aim, or a steady hand, he should hit the wrong mark, and kill the patient instead of the disease, it should no more trouble him, than if he had fired at a flock of geese."\* At all events, after decrying all who preceded him, he will have the merit of having discovered the important malady, though "unhappily too *late* for the patient's relief."†

\* Baynard, on Cold Baths, 1700.

† See Parry's *Posthumous Works*, p. 335.

In the reign of the Merry Monarch, William Salmon “who was an ordinary man, and of no university,” set the successful example of a peculiar finesse, which was followed by every “physick-monger,” as late as the reign of Anne; for Garth, says of one Birch, a popular apothecary, that

“Cowslips and poppies o’er his eyes he spread,  
And Salmon’s works he laid beneath his head.”

He lived at the Blue Balcony, at Fleet Ditch, and “incrimed one of his physical books to King Charles; another to King William; and a third to Queen Mary; and to as good purpose, three more might have been to the Czar, Grand Signior, and Great Mogul. For it is not to be supposed, these august princes should be judges of such writings, were ever likely to see them, or trouble themselves about them.”\*

\* A Body of Medicine, by the Author, Thomas Fuller, M.D.  
Cantab, 1719.



It is a curious picture of the arts exercised in that day, where Salmon, in his "Practice of Curing," intersperses long prayers among his prescriptions, and the horoscopes of patients, whose planets he had ruled, to give them a superstitious confidence in his skill. He may be suspected of having adopted that spiritual quackery, which flourished under the name of puritanism; and as Sir Walter Scott observes in "Woodstock," was assumed by men more in compliance with their own interests, than real religion. Garth thus describes one of his followers.

Long has he been of that amphibious fry,  
Bold to prescribe, and busy to apply;  
His shop, the gazing vulgar's eyes employs,  
With foreign trinkets, and domestic toys.  
Here mummies lay most reverently stale,  
And there, the Tortoise hung her coat of mail:  
Not far from some huge shark's devouring head,  
The flying fish their finny pinions spread;  
Aloft, in rows, large poppy-heads were strung,  
And near, a scaly alligator hung.  
In this place, drugs in musty heaps decay'd;  
In that, dried bladders and drawn teeth were laid.



*An inner room receives the numerous shoals,  
Of such as pay to be reputed fools.*

Globes stand by globes, volumes on volumes lie,  
And planetary schemes amuse the eye ;  
The sage, in velvet chair, here lolls at ease,  
To promise future health, for present fees.  
Then, as from tripod, solemn shams reveals,  
And what the stars know nothing of, foretels.

Moliere's " *Medecin Malgre lui*," was taken from the woods ; and as he persisted in affirming, that he was no physician, was drubbed, till he confessed that he was both " a physician, and an apothecary too." " Oh !" exclaim the messengers, " we rejoice to see you come to your senses, and ask pardon ten thousand times for what you have forced us to do. Can a learned and famous physician like you, try to disguise himself to the world, and bury such fine talents in the woods ?" " Perhaps," he replies, " I am deceiving myself, and am a physician without knowing it. But, dear gentlemen, are you certain I am a physician ?" *Ans.* " Yes ! the greatest physician in the world." *Mock*



*Doctor.* "Indeed!" *Ans.* "A physician that has cured all sorts of distempers. That has made a woman walk about a room, six hours after she was dead."

Although "*dignior baculo quam bacco*," the modern mock-doctor's modesty, may require no such violence; he may be taken similarly by surprise, to receive the public confidence, being an object of anxious search, and well suited to the intellect of the times in which we live. As Herbalists are not revered, witches burnt, and exorcists confided in as formerly, the mummary of the shop and planets may be dispensed with, and a more modern species of magic and fantoccini, put in practice, to raise him to what is now popularly called, "a fairyman!"

*In trifling shew his tinsel talent flies,  
And form the want of intellect supplies;  
Hourly his learned impertinence affords,  
A barren superfluity of words.  
The patient's ears remorseless he assails,  
Murders with jargons, where his medicine fails.*

Some address and ingenuity, are required in the arrangement of accessories, to keep public attention alive, and sustain the idea of his supernatural talent. A certain pomp and circumstance,

With books and money placed for shew,  
Like nest eggs to make patient's lay.

HUDIBRAS.

a visage flexibly expressive of the marvelously profound, and the suddenly penetrating; language mysteriously deep, and parts of speech promiscuously arranged.

“If I did but know a few physical hard words!” says the patient. “A few physical hard words,” replies the mock doctor! “Why, in a few physical hard words, consists the science.” Like Atlas, the whole world must seem to rest on his shoulders. Venal agents, factitious journeys, portentous messages, summonses out of public places, forced introductions, &c. will assist the cause.

“Those men of front,” observes Fog’s



Journal, " who resolve to impose upon the world, mostly profess some trade or science, of which they are altogether ignorant ; and indeed seldom trouble themselves to acquire a knowledge in their business. Many a quack has made a good estate, before he understood one term of his profession. *They make their court to some person, who has a numerous gang of dependants ; or to the chamber maid of some kept woman, to speak to her mistress, to speak to the rich Franciscan, her cully, to cry up the doctor. This often has such an effect, that the great vulgar or rich mob, will hear of nothing but a doctor in vogue ; and many will take the pill, though they feel no indisposition, because they would not for the world be out of fashion.*"

" There are many meddlers," says Izaak Walton, " in physic and divinity, who think themselves fit to meddle with hidden secrets, and so bring destruction to their followers."



When Harlequin jumps into the boat, he fills the sails with a bellows; and, to the curemonger, a puffer is requisite. Ladies are said to perform the chief character in the Critic, to most advantage; and a wise virgin of *post meridiem* bloom, or married beldame, is equally capable. A petticoated puffer was pointed out in a watering place, whose recommendation was valued at five hundred pounds per annum. It was asserted by one of these persons, that her favorite performer of cures, "had studied anatomy in caves under the earth," and "had restored a child to life, by encrusting it with dough, and baking it in an oven."\* An old stager in the art, speeds from habitation to habitation; and proclaims a *cure* in that stupendous hyperbole of coloring, which arises from the most intimate connexion between wonder and ignorance. She makes its importance, place her *protege*,

\* Salmon used to apply hot dough.



in the coterie, in the light of a divinity. She fills the air with the same tumult of magnificent ideas, as *Gulliver* filled the natives of Lilliput, till they are incapable of bearing the prodigious might of the miracle, with moderate composure. She rushes to sip her gentian at the fashionable drug bazaar, and perflates it with paroxysms of eulogium, that might well nigh shake the temple of fame itself. The “*turba ingens stultorum*,” catches the echo and magnify a common cold, by diversity of description, and extravagance of relation, into a prodigy.

Addison tells us of a quack, in Paris, who had a boy walking before him, publishing with a shrill voice; “my father cures all sorts of distempers.” To which the Doctor added, in a grave manner; “the child says true.”\*

But on the part of the curemonger himself

\* The Medici Family, in Modern Times, by Unus Quorum.

the more indirect mode of puffing may be advised which was practised formerly when the warm Bath waters had made cures of those, with whom "the vital flame was even blinking in the socket, and the soul (one foot over the threshold,) was burning out of its tattered and decayed tenement." An admiring crowd pursued the patient; and when, if a lady, she went into the church, or came out of her chair, to walk in the grove, she was pointed at, saying, "there she is! that's she! that's the lady that was so weak, &c."\*

As there are people, who regard those who have no pretensions, either to education or medical science, as best qualified to perform extraordinary cures, the hopeful disciple will be desirous to know what originally and exquisitely potent agents, are employed by these magicians. "True knowledge of medicine, is like the horse-shoe stuck at the man's

\* An old Author.



girdle, (whose life was saved by it ;) quoth he, " I see a little armor will serve the turn, if it be but put in the right place ;" but should any doubt arise, about the nature and seat of the disease, and the proper remedies ; " like shooting at a bird with small shot ;" he may " put into a gun, bullets enough, and one or other must hit." Otherwise, he may " jalap the north, and bleed the south," and where diuretics have been given, administer purgatives, and *vice-versa*. But the magic of cure-mongering, has almost always centered in one remedy ; and if the possession of one idea, is the token of a superior understanding, the professors of the *art* may have their claim allowed to the gratitude of posterity. Dr. Baynard says, that they reminded him " of a whimsical fellow, that so doated on *buff*, that they called him *Captain Buff* ; for nothing could please him but *buff* ; *buff*-shirt, band, beaver, boots, &c. all *buff* ; and dwelt in a *buff*-budget, like Diogenes in his



tub; and could eat nothing but tripe, because it looked like *buff*; and I doubt we have too many of these *Buff Captains*, in the now *prostitute* and *degenerate* profession of physick. One for example, Dr. Stewtoad, sets up for *miracle* and *mystery*, and always makes honey of a dog's ——; this martyrs more toads, than popery has heretics, and crams his patients with *bufo*, instead of beef; (for a toad is as innocent as a fish,) though the Pulvis *Æthiopicus*, as they call it, has no more virtue in it than the powder of *pickled herring*: and yet these *Sir Positives* will be no more stirred than a *mill-stone*; and in consultation, they are always moved with a *lever*; they are too heavy and unwieldy, to be stirred from their own opinions.\*

In every age, some particular part of the body has been the origin, and some particular remedy, the cure for all diseases. Garth

\* Id. p. 18.



expresses surprise, that a popular cure-monger, who lived in his day, by him called Colon, after having risen into great practice did

“ not forbear

That operation which the learn'd declare,  
Gives colics ease, and makes the ladies fair.”

Had Garth analysed closely, the most mysterious associations and sympathies of the human mind, he would have discovered the policy of connecting *peculiar parts* of the frame, with interested views in physic. In some modern watering places, Captain Buff's system, still flourishes to an almost incredible extent; and among those single organs which have been destined here and there, to be the source of all diseases, and of great wealth the Rectum has achieved more celebrity than the north-west passage, and proved more lucrative than a gold mine. Indeed, touched with the enchanter's wand, like Midas, it has turned every thing into gold.

Voltaire says, that when Louis the XIVth. was cut for *fistula in ano*, all the French court would have the disease, and be operated on, like their ancestors, who were

After letting blood and purging,  
Condemned to voluntary scourging.

In a similar manner, it has become so fashionable to have contractions of the rectum, and to be poked with a bougie, that scarcely visitors of any age or sex, go to some certain places, who do not devote their persons to that curious process. In the fashionable circles, those who have been "turned and winded by the tail," recommend it to others; as if in removing disorders,

The rudder of the rump, was  
The same thing as the stern and compass;

and even the ladies, who reside in the sphere of this practice, vaunt of the increase of the local celebrity, since the discovery of the great passage, which often leads to many



ludicrous mistakes. 'The only objection which females who puff the practice, will admit, is, that as in the beautiful view of Loch-lomond in Joe Millar, "nature is exposed." They minutely describe miracles performed by this "single stick," more astonishing than the wonders produced by the divining rod of an Indian juggler, till we are disposed to exclaim like the purse-proud Dutchman in Sir Roger L' Etrange's fables, who had a *megrim* "why, certainly, these people are all mad who talk of curing a man's head at his tail."

Their descriptions vary. According to some, the patients are drawn up in ranks, and bow themselves forwards, like a row of Carmelites, at matins or vespers. An usher of the black rod, waves it in the air, and having pronounced several very solemn and pompous exclamations, in a peculiar verbiage to inspire confidence, then completes the introduction. A line of Rectumites or Fundamentalists each with a black stick, protruding *a poste*



*riori*, like the tails of those horses, which are called rat-tailed, and docked and denuded of hair, with a profusion of bougies of all sizes spread out on a table, is said to compose a very curious spectacle. When they walk lame afterwards, they boast how bountifully they have been pioneered, and augur well from the sensations. The first apprehension of the black rod, brings the bowels into action, in the same manner as the application of the clyster *pipe*, *without the clyster*, has often had the same effect as with it.\* This effect is assisted perhaps by the contraction of the Rectum upon a foreign body poked up with considerable distending force.

Dr. Zachary Grey, speaking of the mental impression of the clyster-pipe, alludes to the incident in Hudibras, of

Him that took the doctor's bill,  
And swallowed it, instead of the pill.

\* See Dr. Turner de Morbis Cutaneis, ch. xiv. p. 135, Ed. 2d. Montaigne's Essays, vol. I. Book 1. chap. xx. p. 122.



and asks, whether a paper with a prescription might “not operate as well as the ugly parson at Oldham ; the very sight of whom in a morning, would work beyond Jalap or Rhubarb ; so that a doctor prescribed him to one of his patients, as a remedy against costiveness. The bare sight of a purgative or emetic, frequently excites the action of the bowels.” At all events, when the rectum becomes familiar with the stick,

“ The charm dissolves apace :

And as the morning steals upon the night,  
Melting the darkness, so their rising senses,  
Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle  
Their clearer reason.”

Like the process of old, with a red hot spit, some, however, obstinately persist in declaring, that it produces a charmed effect.

For as when slovens do amiss  
At other's doors,  
The learned write, a red hot spit,  
Being prudently applied to it,  
Will convey mischief from the dung,  
Unto this part that did the wrong ;  
So did this healing, and as sure,  
As that did mischief, this would cure.

The original discoverer of the black rod, used it with discernment ; but, as with many discoverers, his invention advantaged himself little, for others, like Hyder Ali, who, seeing a bullet proof cap on another's head, took it off, and put it on his own, usurped it with great gain of wealth and notoriety. Six months are required for what is called a fair trial ; at the rate of one to three guineas a day, or twenty guineas per month. An Honorable, who had consulted many eminent physicians, underwent the process, for a disordered stomach, paid three hundred guineas, and departed *in statu quo*. Another tried it for an indolent swelling on the prepuce, after consulting Dr. Baillie, and the London surgeons with the same ill success. " Infatuated Wretches !" as Maw-worm exclaims. The pougie is like the new invented miraculous cures, in Mr. Cobb's farce of the " Doctor and Apothecary : the patient asks " whether they cure gun-shot wounds ;"—the Apothecary answers, " every thing !"



Those who are disappointed, being told of infallibility at some other spa, depart with a fresh cargo of hope; and, as in one place they found, "the rump's the fundament of all," so, in another, "we have changed all that;" and the universal cause is the stomach; and the universal cure, a deluge of cold water poured on their devoted heads; borrowed probably from the practice of the surgeon-barbers of old, who shaved and pumped upon the heads of all their patients. Eighty *jeu d'eau*, are said to be in constant play; and he, who has been impaled in one place, may waste his money in another, upon what a thunder storm, or a watering pot, would have supplied him with at home.

With circumstances favorably combined, at a particular place and juncture, the disciple of this art, cannot fail to rise, by the confidence reposed in sagacity *without* knowledge, and inspired by promises what never can be performed; and the sympathy excited for such

as "swims or sinks, or walks, or creeps, or flies;" violating credit or honor, to effect his purpose. Taking full advantage of their weaknesses, he must measure well his proper objects, as

Foxes weigh the geese they carry;  
And ere they venture o'er a stream,  
Know how to size himself and them.

The love of his followers, is as the love of women, described in Sampson Agonistes:

It is not virtue, wisdom, valor, wit;  
Strength, comeliness of shape, nor amplest merit,  
That woman's love can win, or long inherit.

He is the idol of a peculiar people, who, instead of discovering his vulgarity or ignorance, ascribe his extravagances, like the rhodomontade of the Mock-doctor in Moliere, to the mere eccentricity of an extraordinary man.

Nor has he need to apprehend, that reason or exposure will have power to change public opinion. The common reward of truth, is public resentment, and unjust imputations



against those who advance it. When once established, as the veiled Mokannas of his worshippers, even empiricide may be exposed to public view, without injury to his reputation.

“How many thousands,” says Dr. Baynard, “has Dr. Morpheus locked up in his leaden coffin, by needless intempestive and wrong apply’d paregorics ; hung their *Herse* with garlands of night shade, and sung requiems to their souls in wreaths of poppy ! When their drowsy prescriptions have proved their credentials, or a warrant to nap on, till the day of judgment. But where he by *policy* or *party* has gained his point, and set up his standard in the opinion of fools ; where his spaniels range through a *city* to spring his *game*, and *Tray* is rewarded with the offals of the quarry, there the physick-*hawk* flies only at *gold* ; the welfare of his patient, is but the *sideboard* of his business, and *collaterals* of his cure. But this *Galloper* is a



*saint* to the sharer ; those that go snips with their *apothecaries*, *villains of the first magnitude* ; (in modern times, the coalition between galloper, saint, and apothecary, is very general. Ed.) Here the patient is in a pretty pickle, being sure to be doused according to the depth of his own *purse*, or the Doctor's *conscience* ; and this I call both *felony* and *murder* ; for the man is first robbed, and then *killed* : these *pulse-pads*, these bedside *banditti*, are the worst of *robbers* ; for either through *ignorance* or *avarice*, they never give quarter, but fire at you, a *quid insipidum* ; a white powder, which makes no noise. But these things only *pass* upon *weak minds* ; people of superficial, little or no thought ; at least of such shallow thinking, that the short legs of a *louse*, might wade their understandings, and not be wet up to the knees, or else they could never be *gulled*, and led by the dading strings, but by people of as little depth as themselves ; for there is



an unaccountable *sympathy between fools*; and *where'er they come, though in a crowd, or other company, they always find one another first*: their distant *effluvia*s, which make the sphere of activity, won't mix with those of a wise man's, but like *Exchequer tallies*, will only fit their own sticks."\*

Popularity, founded on the more irregular qualities, and whimsical opinions of human nature, may be subject perhaps to sudden subversions. The years of a curemonger's reign, are according to the subtlety with which he can blind his followers. Garth elegantly compares the search of the uncommon, and the love of being deceived to a distant prospect, which the mind may people with sundry ideal creations, and the truth to a nearer approach, which vexes and *ennuye* the mind, by the

\* Letter on Cold Baths, addressed to Sir J. Floyer, M. D. of Litchfield, Knight, by Edward Baynard, Fell. Coll. Phys. London, 1706. A fine specimen of the old Vandyke drawing, and bold composition of our high spirited, and open-dealing ancestors.



discovery of its real barrenness and dreary tracks. But caprice ever looks after novelty ; and the novelty of a deceptive character wears out. The curemonger, like an eastern despot, begins with universal sway, and ends with sudden destruction : he is raised up an idol, and falls like Nebuchadnezzar's image.

Such my applause, so mighty my success,  
Some granted my predictions, more than guess ;  
But doubtful as I am, I'll entertain  
This faith, there can be no mistake in gain ;  
For the dull world, most honor pay to those,  
Who, on their understandings most impose.  
First man creates, and then he fears the elf ;  
Thus others cheat him not, but he himself ;  
He loaths the substance, and he loves the show ;  
You'll ne'er convince a fool, himself is so ;  
He hates realities, and hugs the cheat,  
And still the only pleasure's the deceit.  
So meteors flatter with a dazzling dye,  
Which no existence has but in the eye,  
As distant prospects please us, but when near,  
We find but desert rocks, and fleeting air.  
From stratagem to stratagem we run,  
And he *knows most, who latest is undone.*

The same field seldom bears fac-similes ;  
and to achieve this implicit and infatuated



confidence, there must be as well as in the system, an enigmatical something—cunning, ingenuity, whatever it may be called, in the *man*. This fascination is never a *transferable*, and seldom an imitable quality. Hence, regular-bred men, who begin with chaste conduct, and afterwards falsify their character by adopting the intrigues of persons of this class, generally want their ingenuity, in concealing their deformity, and plunge into perdition.

“ We have known great cures performed, and shall go where we can be best served,” is the language with which those who patronise cure-mongering, vindicate themselves, and induce others to follow their example ; like the people who shewed Diogenes the Temple of Neptune, and the pictures of those who had escaped shipwreck, by paying their vows to him ; and asked him if he thought it folly to invoke Neptune in a tempest ? Diogenes replied more shrewdly than most in the pre-



sent case; "*where are they painted, who are drowned?*" It is well observed by Dr Gregory, that the people of this country are governed more by opinion than observation; by example than judgment. The link between the human and the monkey race, is more close than is supposed. The man who carries his bowls of pitch into the woods, and washes his hands in a bowl of water, and the apes who descend from the trees, stick their paws in the pitch, and so are caught, represent too faithfully the views of the quack, and the intellectual character and imitative principle of those whom he deludes. Their faith in cures, is of the same kind as that of twenty persons in company together, of whom one beholds an apparition, and the rest believe and propagate his description, and succeed in making dupes of innumerable others. In matters of demonstration, it is certain that two and two make four, but in matters of tradition, though twenty persons successively



meet in the street, and tell each other one and the same story, it does not follow that the relation is established truth. But should those twenty persons submit the phenomena with every testimony to a committee of twelve disinterested individuals, away from the scene of action, and all its jealousies and contentions, no rational mind could fail of conviction to the verdict; and the parties themselves would evince that they were governed by the dictates of pure reason. But upon how vague and speculative evidence is fame in medicine built! An observer has said, that the illiterate form two thirds of the whole nation, and yield that conviction to prejudice and credulity, which they refuse to solemn evidence and irrefragable exposure. By fallacies in physic, the wise as well as foolish are caught. The smoke puffed out by many chimneys, darkens the whole atmosphere, and obscures the clearest as well as thickest vision.

It may be asked, on what criterion, except

performed cures, is the reason to rest? The learned Dr. Young says, that every man may judge whether a physician cures his patients? Let the educated acquaint themselves with the philosophy of disease, and in the analysis of pretended cures, learn to separate truth from error. One fails, and another gives remedies; the patient recovers. But after a long and seeming fruitless use of remedies, do not diseases often undergo spontaneous improvement? Do no intermediate circumstances ever interpose, to influence the result of treatment at one time, which may not have conspired to effect an auspicious change previously; for example, a more congenial atmosphere, a more tranquil frame of mind, which are agents of great power?

“It was said by the chemists, of their darling mercury, that if a thousand lives should be spent upon it, all its properties would not be found out.” Regarded as equally wonder-working in modern times, principally by



its means, many crazy constitutions are cobbled for a time, which recede afterwards; and ought such cases to be considered cures, before they have stood the test of one or two years at least?

The genius of the constitution, and its variable dispositions, are taken into no account by those, who, unaccustomed to reason soundly upon the dependencies of events in physic, constantly ascribe effects to false causes, by the rule *ergo hoc propter hoc*. The same vulgar errors occur, in ascribing the causes of diseases. The cholera-morbus, or bowel complaint, which is usual in the solstice, owing to certain atmospherical influences, is always imputed to the last act of deglutition; and the exciting causes are therefore as numerous, as the gastronomical luxuries contained in the “Domestic Cookery, by a Lady.”

In the March to Finchley, Hogarth makes the anxious countenance of a serjeant, who is micturating against a wall, suddenly illumined



by the sight of Dr. Rock's advertisement, of an infallible cure for a disease, the most acute sensations of which, he, at that moment experiences. Implied faith, between the patient and the practiser, is the sheet anchor of both. 'Take this, and it will make you whole, is a cordial to the heart. By faith, John Hunter's pills cured timid bridegrooms, and dissipated refractory gonorrhœas. An ague, that has defied a college, has vanished before the spell of a village witch, and the apostolical forgeries of a Hohenlohe. The contact of the black sticks, used to detect the absurdity of Parkin's metallic traitors, gave excruciating torture to the sailor in the hospital. A patient, who bore about him a mortal malady, surrendered himself to a curemonger in a watering place, with an understanding that he was not to expect a change before six months. A friend, who saw the daily fee, and daily deceit, expostulated with the sick. "For God's sake!" exclaimed the patient,



“destroy not the hopes that man holds out ; upon them I live, without them I die.” It was his last rest upon a broken reed ; and the change came true to the time, but not to the bond. Some years since, the child of Lord A. lay ill at Cheltenham. His lordship requested that he might send express for an old woman in London, who scared death from his prey, by wagging her thumb over the patient. An eminent physician in attendance, Dr. ———, expressed no objection, provided the policular flexion would cure the disease. “Oh !” said his Lordship, “she is infallible !” but the thumb was wagged and wagged, and the infant expired. This woman is said to net One Thousand Pounds per annum, at the expence of aristocratical wisdom !!!\*

The dilemma never occurs, that there is no alternative between patronizing ignorance and cunning, and employing imbecility, which

\* Moore's History of Vaccination, relates this anecdote.

may sometimes be seen even in learned and worthy men. It therefore implies a culpable perversion of the faculties, which God has given to man, that they should exalt individuals of inferior education, of palpable deficiency, even in the common use of their own language, over others of superior capacity and skilfulness; and thus level and confound the chief distinction between men and brutes. It is not the least important consequence, that society is thus deprived of valuable and efficient members of the profession.

But it would seem, that through the imperfection of medical science, cunning and fraud are ever to enrich themselves at the cost of folly. In no other art, can men be brought to believe, that consummate ingenuity is the result of intuition and inspiration. The excellence of a painter, is always ascribed to talent early cultivated, and labor long continued, and fame and profit are the results of visible merit. Surgery, being a demonstra-



tive art, the senses are apt to inform those right, whose reason leads them wrong.

When they have attempted surgery, cure-mongers have seldom failed to betray the want of that real talent, which is almost never joined with cunning.

The daughter of an English Baronet, having a white swelling of the knee, was attended by two eminent provincial surgeons, who recommended amputation. The family shrinking from the operation, was urged to employ a noted performer of cures. A cure was most confidently promised, and as confidently expected. However, a few months dissipated that illusion, and the performer was called upon to evince his skill in surgery. The great master declared, that the mechanical, was beneath the regard of so eminent a professor as himself, of the intellectual part of the profession ; and that he could only provide those, who would act under him, and were qualified to undertake the operation.



As the regular surgeons in the place would not co-operate with him, two lads who had spent a few months in London, were at last induced to make the attempt; and after a specimen of mangling, such as was scarcely ever witnessed in the most barbarous eras of surgery, the operation was completed in half an hour. The father, in his visit to make the *amende honorable* to the two surgeons first employed, related these circumstances.

A curemonger went to cut out for a man of fashion, a portion of the tendon of the extensor muscle of his foot, which was enlarged by pressure; but timely interference saved him from being lamed for life. An Irishman, having a small subcutaneous tumor, was induced by a paragraph in a Dublin newspaper, stating that certain friends had sought advice in the same quarter, to go to an eminent curemonger in an English watering-place. A few week's attendance, at the simple rate of three guineas a day, for directing in



vain the energies of red pill, and decoction of the woods, brought him full of "strange words and fury," to Dublin; where Mr. Crampton instantly concluded with the knife, the *improbus labor* of sarsaparilla and cure-mongering. A gentleman, who was always seeking curemongers, consulted the son of one who flourishes in the neighbourhood of London. This junior performer proposed to cut out a portion of the spine; and only the timely intervention of Sir Astley Cooper, prevented a most melancholy catastrophe. Hundreds of instances might be adduced, to prove, that where surgery has been meddled with, deception has exposed itself.

It is to be lamented, that the fashionable people of this kingdom, are made the main instruments of supporting and propagating quackery. Among them are many amiable and accomplished persons, but quite unpossessed of those solid habits of reasoning, and sound judgment, which nothing but practical

knowledge of human character, in various ranks of life, and actual intellectual exertion can produce. Moved like machines, and drawn by each other from all points, into the same common trap, their preferences and rejections are reduced to an affair of coteries : manœuvering regulates the system, and the worst among them lead the best. There is nothing of any validity or pitch soever, that may not sink in their estimation into abatement, and low price ; nor ever so artful and unprincipled, which may not be plucked from the chaff and ruin of the times, and elevated to the pinnacles of favor.

The credulous bias of the most refined and barbarous classes, springs from the same cause, want of sound mental cultivation.

The intellectual state of this country, has been geologically viewed. The metropolis has been considered as the transition into a region of clearer discernment, the intermediate country as of the secondary, and Wales



the primitive order, in which the human mind, unchanged since the days of Caractacus, is in its first conditions of sterility, and "beggary rudiments." Imposture and quackery in the metropolis, represent merely the given portion of folly, which must exist in a so vast confluence of human minds, but which in many provincial situations predominates; and where consequently, they acquire pre-eminence. A great city, as Johnson observes, is the only situation for talent, where it is not kept back, as in country towns, by petty competition, envy, and prejudice. In the one, talent is always acknowledged, and finally rewarded, as far as circumstances will admit; in the other, it has no necessary connection with success.

According to Mr. Chamberlayne's statements, (in the London Physical and Medical Journal, 1801,) South Britain returned fourteen thousand pounds annually, in stamp duty, upon an augmenting sale of quack



medicines, and other injurious compositions, exclusively of duty on advertisements; whilst North Britain returned not more than fifty pounds per annum. This difference between North and South, is as the difference between good sense and education, and the want of them.

The western boundaries of this island, however much throughout them the exterior luxuries and refinements of life may be diffused, are sacred to quackery, and vulgar infatuation in medicine. Express delineations may have little weight in a part of the island, hitherto so callous both to ridicule and exposure; but to guide the reflecting part of society, it becomes a duty to add to the past descriptions of the more rank some intimations of the less notorious features of the *astutia medica*. The larger watering places, in this section of the kingdom, form the common centres which attract and extend all around, the murky uses of empiricism; and



it cannot be otherwise than judicious, for strangers to discourage the petty artifices, which shine forth visibly in these places. However reluctantly a few examples may be given to put them on their guard. A gentleman sent for a young physician in C——m ; on the following day, the wife of the latter, called on the lady of the patient ; in appearance, to make a visit of ceremony or friendship, but in reality, to enlarge on her husband's numerous engagements and superior abilities. This paltry species of manœuvering, to which none of real acquirements condescend to have recourse, is nevertheless frequently successful where invalids resort, for short periods of time. Here young physicians sometimes affect to be precipitated into redundant practice, and languishing under its fatigues, make themselves appear in conspicuous assemblages, as martyrs to messenger in breathless haste.

“ To hurryings to and fro, and signals of distress.

We have known one, who on returning to an evening party, from which *he had been summoned*, called surrounding attention to the golden trophies of his exertions, by holding up to view, two sovereigns between his finger and thumb. This ridiculous part, he has several times repeated, till it has led some to imagine, that those identical coins, like the guineas given to the Vicar of Wakefield's daughters, were always to be shewn, but never to be changed. In other quarters, similar glittering apparitions are seen constantly to peep from the niche of a desk; and phials, with six varieties of golden colored fluids, are held out to patients, to detect the nice shades of certain excretions, as if it did not follow, in every case, that calomel or blue pill, was prescribed in a similar form and dose. The use of specimens, is borrowed from the urine doctors; of whom, one in his red robes, in an old Dutch painting in the Louvre, is seen emphatically drawing a fatal



prognostic from the water of an expiring patient. In some cases, the wives of physicians may be seen at evening parties, systematically seeking introductions to any strangers who may be present; or running after fresh arrivals, to secure patients. Individuals, who follow these practices, live principally by sojourners, whose residence is generally too short to admit of their just discrimination of medical characters.

It may befall the unsuspecting visitor, whom it will behove to have a heed to the warning, "Cavete Romane," when he enters the saloon of a circulating library, to take up some literary fixture, inscribed on the covers, "Not to be removed from this table." Opening at the preface, he may find the first and last sentences, purport that the author has voyaged to some warm climate, "quaffed deep and quiet draughts" of medical inspiration, and returned freighted with infallibility in liver diseases; upon which, follows as



a natural consequence, the mention of his numerous applications, and great experience. Treatises of this kind, are not confined to one species, but are a multiplying and various race, of which diet, digestion, the stomach, and mineral waters, form the principal themes. They supersede the necessity of sticking a bill, whilst they comply with a taste for perpetrating that offence. The mode of manufacture is very easy, as like the wares of the "fellow crying razors up and down," they are made to sell, and not to shave. A single organ being selected, the elementary descriptions of Bell and Fyfe, of its anatomy, supply the preliminary chapter; and notes of lectures in the second chapter, furnish some account of the more common forms of disease, to which it is liable. These, though not the most novel, are the least culpable features of the *farrago libelli*. In the next chapter, the author's views are extended beyond the boundaries of rational observation and con-



jecture, and diseased actions, however remote or unconnected as to the time of their occurrence, origin or situation, are *nolentes volentes* ascribed to the malific dominion of one organ, to fall into chorus with the mis-begotten prejudices of the day; and render Hygeia a procuress to the libertinism of self-interest. The good taste, education, and capability of the author, are generally evidenced in a species of cant, which has no other tendency than to fill the literary discussion of medical subjects, with gross corruptions and improprieties. In this part of the performance, Priscian seldom escapes only moderately scratched. Reasoning, logic, and perspicuity speak for themselves, in the endeavour to explain the *ignotum*, which is inexplicable or lost to the writer, for want of minute and consecutive anatomical and pathological observation, thro' the *ignotius*, signified by some such verbrage as "sympathy, torpor," &c. However, at the end, a dozen *successful* cases, with, or



without a single dissection, triumphantly crown the whole. Whether recoveries from remedies applicable to various constitutional and local derangements, can be admitted as proofs of the author's doctrines, or whether the cases could possibly have been treated with success, the experienced reader may have serious doubts. But, in the author's regard, even the very errors described, are virtues, as the commission of them is testimony that he is not a *theoretical*, but practical man ; and as the power of seeing with one eye, proves it a disadvantage to possess two. To assume whatsoever he pleases, and to be always right in his own opinion, is the peculiar prerogative of having troubled with his presence, some distant clime, prolific of opportunities. He seems incapable of suspecting, that a perpetual calenture may have been placed before his eyes, and that all is green to his disordered vision ; or, as with the Israelites of old, that a pillar of smoke moves con-



stantly before him. The quantity of materials, and not the power and operation of the mind employed, according to this wisdom, is the criterion of truth; although the lout, who as Dugald Stewart observes, amid his agrarian toils has the best means of observing nature, never condescends to give a clear and succinct picture of her operations, and the husbandman, who, previously to Sir Isaac Newton, had witnessed the precipitation of a whole orchard, left the laws of gravitation, to be inferred from the fall of a single apple.

Some such treatises as those described, by the common mænouvres of publishers, may have *anticipated* a fifth or sixth edition, and gained a tolerable harvest of temporary rewards; but they lead astray like the *ignis fatuus*, and their fame is as the mist of the hill.

It must be a matter of regret, as we know it is a subject of censure in the more respectable medical circles of London, that individuals so eminent as Doctors Philip and Paris,



in their last productions, should have stooped to obey the taste of the hour, and sanction, by example, those who supply a vitiated appetite with still more vitiated food.

As it is not our wish, to confound the claims of pure science and legitimate observation, with the tinkling brass and sounding cymbals of the authors described, we may concede the homage of genuine respect to the late Dr. Parry, who, in a literary, if not in every other view, is the only specimen of a great intellectual character, whom we can discover to have been reared in a British Watering place. Indeed, a man of genius, could seldom exist in those lethean shelters, unless to be told how they "hated his beams," to incur odium by his pursuits, and be known only by the melancholy test of Swift, of the dunces of the profession being all in confederacy against him, "those souls that

"peep out once an age,

Dull sullen prisoners in the body's cage ;

Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years,

Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres."



To promulgate a work of real merit in these places, is held by some of the profession of long standing in them, so little a virtue, that it is treated as a crime, unless as posthumously;\* when, like the flowers scattered on the grave of a Cambrian maid, it can only adorn the tomb of the dead, without interfering with the sordid interests of the living. But to pass to another subject.

Of old time, a class existed, denominated Hermetic men; who, uniting nostrum-mongering with religion, were accustomed

To seek out plants with signatures,  
To quack off universal cures.

Although the pretended followers of Hermes Trismegistus, an Egyptian philosopher, they

\* This is drawn from solemn facts. A gentleman having published a work, which was well received by the profession at large, the body of the faculty, at a large watering place in the West of England, communicated their sentiments, that they conceived it derogatory to the *purity* of the medical character *in such places*, to bring out a book during the lifetime of the author.

“ were nothing else,” says Dr. Zachary Grey, “ but a wild and extravagant sort of enthusiasts, who made a hodge-podge of religion and philosophy, and produced nothing but what was the object of every considering man’s contempt.” Hudibras’s Arctophylax is a vivid delineation of one of the order.

Learn’d he was in med’c’nal lore,  
For by his side, a pouch he wore ;  
Replete with strange hermetic powder,  
That wounds nine miles, point blank would solder ;  
By skilful chemist, with great cost,  
Extracted from a rotten post ;  
But of a *heav’nlier* influence,  
Than that which mountebanks dispense ;  
Though by Promethean fire made,  
As they do *quack* that drive that trade.

The hermetic doctors were revived in the age of Puritanism, and found that protection under its wing, which is never refused by proselytism to imposture. Oliver Cromwell’s doctors, especially the noted Kem and Bastwick, *preached, practised, fought, and plundered!* Till Jack Wesley’s time, who was



himself a dabbler in physic, this profanation of religion to the practice of medicine, had gone out of fashion. A Wesleyan school of physicians then arose, who prescribed in the morning, and preached in the evening.

Dissenting parsons became doctors of physic, and many with success; and some who did not turn doctors themselves, made their sons physicians. Of this last class was Mead. When called out of his father's chapel, the old gentleman *prayed aloud for the patient!*

With Wesley the interference of providence in practice, was by no means uncommon, and, in one instance, John and his horse, were simultaneously cured. *Unus Quorum*, thus eulogises a methodist M. D. "who practised in the morning and preached in the evening."

In this dirty hole, without e'er a soul,  
Lies the clay of a doctor and pastor;  
Who, north-west and south-west, both physick'd and fleec'd,  
None could e'er do it better and faster.

With the rise of the New Lights of the Protestant Church, so closely assimilated to the Puritans, a modern race of Hermetic doctors, have shewn themselves not unmindful of the sympathy between religious and medical quackery, and its applicability to their own interests. Accordingly, exterior piety, as a means of acquiring popularity at a small expence, has been adopted by the economical part of the profession so disposed.

“ And where the doctor fails, the saint succeeds.”

The more common quacks, have joined in the plan, and found, says a modern author, “ pretended piety very imposing. All their bills and books attest a variety of cures, done partly by their medicines, and partly by the blessing of God. This is very emphatical, and very effective in this age of cant.”\*

The tendency of fashionable devotion to

\* *Mementos of the Medici Family*, p. 67.



manifest its sincerity by display, has proved eminently propitious to the scheme. The literature of the Bunyans and Baxters, the histories of converted louts and hysterical girls, to catch the eye of devotees, are strewed in anti-rooms, as thick as leaves in Vallombrosa; and it only remains for the praying machine, which performs the worship of the Calmuc, to be introduced as a convenient *locum tenens* of mechanical piety.

The wary observer, who pursues this "true and heavenly way," as he calls it, to worldly success, finds in the sundry religious societies, and committees, now called into existence, an unexampled means of enlarging the sphere of his connections. To become a vehement distributor of tracts, and declaimer of a vague theological jargon, on such temporary stages, as are erected for the Reverend Bamfylde Moore Carews of itinerant societies, is requisite to ensure a deep impression upon the evangelical public, and a conspicuous place in



the newspaper reports of their proceedings. In the manner and language of these parties, nasally and sentimentally, he is readily initiated, and the art of turning upwards the eggs, or what, as being white, are called "the heavenly parts of the eyes," on the stages of the knights-errant of theology, is learnt by moderate practice before a mirror. So accomplished, he enters their several places of devotion, amongst *all* sects and *all* denominations, and pursues the great objects of evangelical associations, as "all things to all men." "The fool," says Dr. Baynard, "does less harm than the knave, Dr. *Wax*, that takes any impression, or stamps it on another, that always says as the *Dame* and *Nurse* says, and becomes all things to all *men*. That he may gain some *mony*, this physic-faber touches you tenderly with the *smooth file*, and fills his pockets from his own forge! This *chucks the church under the chin*, and spits in his hand, *strokes up the dissenter's forehead*, &c. In short, he



is like *Hudibras's Dagger*, good for every thing, and sticks at nothing to grow rich."

The conventional spirit of evangelical, like that of puritanical proselytism, selects its birds by the feather, even to the evangelical grocer and milliner; who, like sparrows, never mingle with any other birds. As it is the rule of the *saints*, wherever they are *paramount*, to lower the intellectual, "that they may exalt the spiritual character;" profession is held of more account, than even conduct or principle; and low cunning *within*, is valued more than the highest intelligence *without* their fold; which indeed is singularly fortunate if not defamed and oppressed, as well as excluded from employment, by their jesuitical interposition. Hence, "*godliness* has become great *gain*," and, after *conversion* and *regeneration*, men have have been deemed mete for monopolies of "the mammon of unrighteousness," who, before, were held as unworthy to prescribe for an Hottentot. A

Hunter, a Baillie, or a Babington, would find in modern times, in some fashionable places, that there was no alternative between exclusion from public patronage, and foregoing the useless possession of superior talent and sincere virtue for the course described, with “tea and bible” at their elbows at home, and the latter under their arms abroad; “the holders of this abominable creed, acknowledging no other title to their support, than abject submission to their doctrines; for by this test alone, do they estimate both merit and morality.”

Such is the new *Religio Medici*; which, as in the *holy* era of 1641, is made,

The means to *turn and wind a trade* ;  
And though some *change it for the worse*,  
They put themselves into a *course*, |  
And draw a store of customers,  
To thrive the better in commerce ;  
For all religions *flock together*,  
Like tame and wild fowl of a feather,  
To scrub the itches of their sects ;  
As Jades do one another's necks ;



Hence, 'tis *hypocrisy* as well,  
Will serve t' improve a church as zeal ;  
As persecution or *promotion*,  
Do equally advance devotion.

CANTO II. HUDIBRAS.

The exterior piety system of a minor description of physicians, has, of late, in some places, been successfully resisted by a more seductive mode of courting public patronage. Peculiar susceptibility of friendship, when wooed through the stomach, has been imputed to a particular nation. It is the character of that gay and unphilosophical people, the Irish, to see more in the convivial lure of ventricular seduction, than reciprocity of sentiment in theoretical religion.

Under the auspices of an evangelical peer, a bond of union, and mutual cooperation, exists between what by "a very happy sarcastic metonymy, have been denominated Saints," in England, and the same good people in Ireland. Dr. F. the nephew of a professor, formerly in the University of Edin-

burgh, received the tender of a medical post of some value in Ireland, from certain English Saints, whom their Irish brethren had commissioned to send over from this side of the channel, a Maw-worm “of the first grass.” Being a saint, was the *sine qua non* of official appointment, upon which the doctor candidly declared, that though he might have been to blame for coquetting with the “holy ones,” and worming himself into the cabinet of their petty intrigues and mænœuvres, he had been very much misconceived, and must decline the post. It may be too common conduct to notice, and not militate against sincere and pure christianity, that the same man should read a bible in an open vehicle, through the streets of a town, and sue for fees for attendance, where the only patient was an hospitable leg of mutton, twice or thrice a week, and the only operation the use of his knife and fork ; and that some *ci-devant* druggist, who may have acquired a practice in medicine and



surgery by evangelical mummeries, though his name appear in all printed charitable subscription lists, should, in the spirit of *saving* grace, instead of giving out of his private dispensary to his poorer patients, send them with prescriptions to his "better brothers," the druggists. Much it is to be feared, from all the examples we have ever seen, that the saints in general, exhibit small proof of their knowledge of the human heart, or regard for personal respectability in the choice of medical *proteges*. It may be, that selection in most cases, is reduced to a mere "hang-choice." The following life-drawn sketch, by an eloquent Irish writer, as well as an exact transcript of our own sentiments concerning them, is a most perfect and familiar picture of the Simeonites, and modern enthusiasts; and, wherever they have influence of their workings in the medical profession.

"With the religious tenets of this, or any other sect, we wish to be understood, that we



have nothing whatever to do. They may believe, for aught that it concerns us, that long prayers shorten the road to heaven, and that the more dismal they are here, the merrier they will be hereafter—at least, we shall never disturb a plait in the fantastic drapery of their respective creeds. But when it is sought to reduce the spiritual theory, to which we have just alluded, into practice in temporal affairs, it is quite time for every man who values the free exercise of his understanding, and expects that his deserts should not be overlooked in this world, for what he may conjecture about the next, to contribute his mite, if not in crushing, at least in exposing the horrors of a social hydra, that seeks to support itself at the expence of the rest of mankind. We know not how this system affects other countries, but in Ireland, to which our observations are confined, its effects have been long and extensively felt; its supporters having in a great measure the disposal



of the patronage of that country, their favors are economized according to the letter of their uncharitable creed. Is there an hospital, a county infirmary, or a village dispensary vacant; the question is not with the candidate, have I merit? No! is not such a bishop my friend, such a *tract*-lord, or majority member of parliament, my thirty-first cousin, am I not a 'Saint?' We need not add, that these claims are irresistible. We verily believe, that there is not a medical situation to be given away for years, and at the disposal of this body, that is not already mortgaged on a promissory note of reading the Bible 'without note or comment.' The pill must therefore breathe the odour of sanctity; the scalpel, like the sword of Gideon, flash with the light of the Lord; the prescription be chemically orthodox; and it is but meet, that the "babes of grace," should be ushered into a sinful world, by the holy fingers of an obstetrical saint. You are

watched in the church, dogged in the drawing room, hunted through all the privacies of domestic life ; and if you do not tie your cravat behind, dub your pence for tract manufactories ; sip tea at the pious orgies of the “ love feast ;” and turn up your eye to the precise point that gives efficacy to prayer ; as if heaven were to be moved by ocular distortion ; you may “ throw your physic to the dogs,”—there is no health in it for the nerves of a saint. By the common consent of this affiliated band of fanatics, you are deprived of the means of living in this world, and prejudged to hell in the next, for want of the necessary portion of soul-saving ignorance. It would be an endless task, to enumerate the various ways in which these moral assassinations are daily perpetrated. A hint, a shrug, a suspicion only once thrown out at a *coterie* of the “ Elect,” that you are a disaffected man, is quite sufficient to place under sectarian surveillance. The gentle fire of a lady-



saint's eye, as completely consumes your reputation now, as would the flames of an *auto-da-fe* have destroyed your material existence in former times. It is mere chance, whether your fame is blasted by an exclamation of pious horror at a game of whist, or sighed away in benevolent commiseration of your mental darkness over the leaves of a Bible. No man is safe, who denies the infallibility in matters of faith of this many-headed monster, from its ubiquitous vengeance. In short, there are but two keys to unlock the earthly Zion of this religious combination—folly, or hypocrisy. To partake of its bounty, you must either submit to its fantastic decrees, give up all right to the exercise of reason, and forfeit all claims to the dignity of a man. We contrast the bigotry of the former, with the liberality of the present times; through self-love, we presume, to enjoy a portion of our own praise. But the spirit of persecution remains still the same, though its garb be



changed ; the faggot, too, beside, has been extinguished, and the wheel broken ; but what was once accomplished by these formidable means, is now as perfectly executed by the tongue of slander. For our own part, we are not casuists enough to discover any difference between flinging a man on the pile, and depriving him of the means of earning his bread by the scandal of report—the balance is between poverty with a bad name, and death with a release from the miseries of life.”

Quackery took early root, and has preserved a strong and rank growth in the western sections of this island, and the nigher the approach to Wales, the more evident become the mental deficiencies of the people of all classes. It is curious, to compare the profession in these more refined, but more degenerate, with its condition in more unpolished and unintellectual states of society ; and it is humiliating to reflect, that whatever advances



the *art* of medicine may itself have made, the practice of it remains equally opprobrious, and the wisdom and discernment of society, equally doubtful.

In the reign of Charles II. Dr. Venner, in an "Essay on the Baths of Bathe,"\* furnished a similar representation of west-country empiricism; wherein he says, "*I am sure to gain little thanks; but I passe not for it; my purpose being to discharge a good conscience, and to do my country good.*"

He lays open more expressly, "Bathes deceitful dealing with such, as for the health of their bodies, resort to these baths." It is singular, that this notorious sink of quackery, is little ameliorated after the lapse of a century and a half. Not but that it possesses talent of a high order, which is neglected and overlooked, comparatively with the grossest empiricism. Venner's inimitable picture of

\* *Via Recta ad Vitam Longam*, by Tob Venner, M. D.  
Bathe, 1660. Fourth Edition.

this place, where marked with italics, will recall to the local reader, the watering places practices of modern times. We may glory in our supposed superior discernment over our unenlightened ancestors; but those who shall follow us, will find in the folly and gullibility of the present race, far greater scope, either for ridicule or commiseration.

“The gentlefolks of this our age,” begins Venner, “for the most part of them, very greatly wrong their judgments and understanding, in taking physic of the unlearned; and do not only wrong themselves, but others; for the meaner sort of people, follow their example; whereby in all likelihood, more untimely perish, (which I believe to *be true in the Western parts* of this kingdom) under the hands of empirics, than die otherwise.”

“There has been of late, in our land, a great inundation of physicians, and an irregular rise of doctors; which, excepting a few, are blind-folk like, without any method at



all, as your *Panaceans*, *meer chymists cum multis aliis*; who, by their irregular, absurd, and preposterous courses, by their confused, ill qualified and pernicious medicines, hurt and overthrow many, to the great disgrace of the noble art of physic. And this enormity, hath not only overspread the whole land, but our City of London also; (where the profession of physic hath been eminent, and the dignity thereof maintained) there is now such a chaos of physicians, that such as are learned in the faculty, may be even ashamed to own the profession. And there is an *ingens stultorum multitudo*, that makes use of any one that takes upon him the title of a physician; albeit, a very fungus or ignoramus; and which is most absurd, dub him with the title of a doctor."

"The thing I would have you to take notice of," he observes, "is how the people of that place, that keep houses of receipt, and their agents, (for such they have in every

corner of the streets, and also before you come to the gates) press upon you, importuning you to take your lodgings at such and such a house, near such and such a Bath; extolling the baths, near which they dwell, above the rest; respecting altogether, their own gain, not your good or welfare. And when they have got you into their houses, *they will be ready to fit you with a physician*, (perhaps *a doctor of their own creation*,) or some empiric, *upstart Apothecary*, or the like, or which is as bad, some mountebank-like doctor, *magnifying him for the best physician in the town*. I would have you to be cautious, and suffer not yourselves to be taken up by such as will press upon you, but rest yourself at your inn."

"Seeing," he continues, "that our City of Bath, is seldom free of impostures and unworthy physicians; especially in the seasons that are fit for bathing; I will give you a true character, whereby you may plainly



know and discern a mountebank-like cheating physician at the Baths. *He is of an insinuating disposition, and very submissive; he basely croucheth, not only to such as keep houses of receipt, and their servants, but also most disgracefully to the hostlers and tapsters, chamberlains, Bath guides, &c. and for this only end, to be commended by them to strangers, and extolled for the best physician in the city.* By these commendoes, he gets patients; by his arrogant boastings, and vain promises of cure, large fees in the beginning; and by his clinical and unnecessary observancies, a repute of his great care, and fees daily, for this is that money, which he hunts after. Moreover, you may know him by his needless frequenting the Bath sides every morning, which he doth, and that with much ado, that he may be known and taken notice of."

"You may also discern him by his looking up and down, now here, now there, crouching

unto one, insinuating with another, *bragging and vainly boasting of his own worth and skill*, as though *Æsculapius* were only included in his dishonest pate ; and by a common report, that you shall hear of the *numerous patients that he hath, and the great fees he receiveth* ; whereof, to get himself a note, he vainly boasteth." Venner then desires them to note, his disregard of personal disgrace, provided he may get the monies, which he so impetuously hunts after ; his making of voluntary tenders of his services, *per se vel per alium* ; the extraordinary persuasions of the Bath guides, to make use of such and such a physician ; " telling you of wonders that he hath done, but all lies ; for such you may be assured are his fee'd agents to get him work."

" *To cure diseases*," he observes, "*is beyond the power of sinful man* ; therefore, those physicians do *audaciously err*, that arrogantly warrant the cure of any disease,



*though never so desperate and incurable ; these are such physicians and impostors, as aim at your purse, that will sell their souls for money : and therefore suffer not yourselves to be cheated and deluded by them ; for when by their warrantizing promises, they have well dived into your purse, they will send you away with some trivial medicines, putting you in hope of health afterwards."*

" But it is strange to see, how vainly very many of our people are carried away, befooling themselves with such vain and arrogant promises, wherein they betray much levity and want of judgment. They look no further than the title, and enquire nothing concerning the manners of a physician. He is taken for a " profound doctor," especially if he be *verbose*, one that *can blatter out a great deal of nonsense, interlaced with some strange terms ;* for our people are easy to be deluded, and apt to delude themselves ; supposing



every *Ignoramus*, that hath a *few trivial, or ill-composed, I cannot say, remedies, to be a good physician.* And also, which is most absurd, dub such with the title of Doctor. What a sottishness is this? Verily, I think the Island of Anticyra, can scarcely yield Hellebore enough to purge the madness and fatuity of our people."

"It is curious," he says, "how *backward they are to give the learned Professors of physic their due, and ready to lay scandals upon them: but forward to magnify empirics, their physic, their honesty, their care; willing to excuse, and pass over their gross slips and absurdities!* I cannot but tax the most sort of people, that being affected with any great or difficult disease, which, by reason of the nature thereof, will have such progress, as that it cannot in *a short time*, by the medicines and best endeavours of the learned physician, how forcible soever, *be evicted, will reject their physician, and be-*



*take themselves to some ignorant sottish empiric.* But if it happen that they recover thereupon, they lay *an imputation upon the physician, and grace their empiric with the cure*; whereas, in very deed, the matter of their disease was wholly, or at least, the greatest part thereof, eradicated by such fit and powerful remedies, as the learned physician had formerly administered unto them: whereupon the residue of the cure was affected by the force of nature; not by the weak endeavours of the empiric, or trivial medicines of any whatsoever." Vain, and very absurd, is the conceit, which many have in favor of empirics; that "*if they do no good, they will do no harm.*" Admit that sometimes by their trivial petty medicines, they do no harm; yet, nevertheless, for that I must tell you, that they do much harm; for the sick body relying upon their skill, and they being not able to direct and execute such courses, as shall be fitting and effectual to



impugn the disease, while there is time fitting for the same ; the sickness gets the mastery, and then, perhaps, when the strengths are too much weakened, and the disease becomes incurable, they seek help of the learned physician."

" But seeing that no calling is more disgraced, than by men of the same calling, I wish all such as are graduates in the faculty of physic, to carry themselves worthy of their calling, to strive to maintain the reputation of their art, and not to *insinuate with any, or press upon them to be retained, or by detracting others of their own faculty, to get a note and repute ; vilifie their own worth, or disgrace so noble a faculty.* To do so is fidler-like ; a note, if not of some unworthiness in them, I am sure of a base mind."

Who that has sojourned in Bath and Cheltenham, and, perhaps other watering places, can say, that he has not seen the things which Venner describes.



*Inferior branches of the Profession.*

Many very ingenious men have confined themselves to the treatment of the eye, spine, &c. But the examples of Saunders, Lawrence, Travers, Green, Guthrie, and others in town and country, evince, that the union of the oculist and general surgeon, is compatible with the attainment of the most perfect skill in the treatment of the eye. The two need not, and perhaps will soon cease to be distinct. Some individuals, who settle in country-towns, may add "Oculist," to the general denomination of "Surgeon;" but it is not the practice of the eminent persons whom we have just named; nor, as far as we have seen, of any *respectable* surgeon.

Young practisers should be warned against endeavouring to make the public believe, that the eye is an "extremely sensible organ, and requires particular care," in compliance with a popular error long since exploded; or using other indirect puffs upon themselves, in



lengthy advertisements, for the purpose of forming eye institutions, which are unnecessary, where there are general dispensaries or infirmaries. Practices of this kind in the country, and we could mention Oxford for one place, have come to our knowledge.

There are three doubtful classes ; Mountebank, Rustic, and Vagrant Oculists.

The Mountebank Oculist is almost extinct. In the reign of George the IInd, Sir William Reed, an Oculist of this class, from a tinker, become a sworn operator; was knighted, and kept a chariot. The following lines were made on the Queen, who employed him.

Her Majesty sure, was in a surprise,  
Or else, was very short sighted ;  
When a tinker was sworn, to look after her eyes,  
And the Mountebank Reed was knighted.

“ This man,” says a writer, “ had the vanity to have his picture drawn upon copper; he presented one of these to a friend of mine,



who pasted it up in his house of office, with these lines underneath."

" See here the picture of a brazen face,  
The fittest lumber of this stinking place ;  
A tinker first, his scene of life began,  
That failing, he set up for Cunning Man :  
But wanting luck, puts on a new disguise,  
And now pretends that he can mend your eyes ,  
But this expect, that like a tinker true,  
Where he repairs one eye, he puts out two."\*

Druggists, or country youths, having passed a few weeks in some London Eye Institution, occasionally take upon them to act as Rustic Oculists. It is said, that they colour lotions and unguents, to make them seem different from those used by medical men in general, and usually decline operations as precarious. It may be said, that Mr. So and So, some Rustic-Oculist, is the first *on* the eyes out of London, according to the usual tenor of provincial nonsense ; but there is no

\* Gentleman's Magazine, 1735 to 7.

security, except in the hands of the respectable surgeon.

The Vagrant Oculist, wanders from town to town, and advertises cures, omitting failures. The cases advertized, are drawn up by the oculist, with appropriate puffs; but reported under the patient's names, and at their expence, in consideration of the Oculist's gratuitous attendance. Most of these cases being of the most simple nature get well under ordinary treatment, and are grossly exaggerated. The oculist, having thus spread his web, lies still like a spider, to receive the insects, who are allured from the surrounding country, to try his skill. He divides these, according to their means, into three classes of paymasters; of which, a patient of the first class, pays down £60.; of the second, £30.; and of the third, £20. A respectable person at Bath, who had the first two classes proposed to him, said he could not belong to either, and was then admitted into the third.



He received for £20. a phial with a colored fluid, and remained as he was. We have twenty similar cases. A well-known Vagrant Oculist, who lately arrived at Edinburgh, was exposed to the students of medicine, by Professor Duncan, Jun. who related that he found his general nostrum to be a solution of Belladonna. A few dupes of the first class, at the rate of £60. *per head*, furnish an income, which enables these *fanfarons* to expend thousands in advertisements, and support handsome equipages and establishments. One of these men, being asked in a crowded ball-room, "what he thought of such a lady? Was it not a pity she squinted?" replied, "Squint, sir, I wish every body in the room squinted; there is not a man in Europe, can cure squinting, but myself!"

As the means of becoming acquainted with diseases of the ear, and the surgical and medical treatment of them, are extremely limited, to talk of *the necessity* of a sub-division of



the profession, under the denomination of aurists, were to attempt the height of charlatanic imposition upon the ignorant. All that can be known of the ear, may be acquired by six weeks reading; and the deficiency of practisers in general, on the subject, is to be regretted, as it can only be ascribed to indolence. However, in deafness, little can be done.

Herodotus, in Euterpe, says, that Ancient Egypt, abounded in divisions and sub-divisions in medicine; every organ having a separate professor. This circumstance, merely proves the approach of the profession to a state of beggary. Among the monorganic family, we have not only the Hepatist, Siphylist, Gastrologist, and Rectologist, but the *Chiropodist*. The Chiropodist, is a surgeon to great toes; as, to use Shakspeare's phrase, a cobbler is a surgeon to old shoes. Some persons, who are suffered to profane the word surgeon, by calling themselves *surgeon-den-*



tists, profess both the teeth and the toes; and transfer their fingers promiscuously, from mouth to feet, at the same moment. Some of Swift's most humorous lines, were written on a Chiropodist.

A ball of new dropp'd horse's dung,  
Mingling with apples in the throng,  
Said to the pippin, plump and prim,  
See, brother! how *we apples swim!*  
Thus, Lamb, renown'd for cutting corns,  
An offer'd fee from Ratcliff scorns;  
Not for the world! *we doctors, brother,*  
*Must take no fees from one another.*

Sir Isaac Newton, Knight, to whom his present Majesty exclaimed, "Rise, Sir Isaac Newton," for exhibiting the quintessence of chiropodism on his royal person, resides at Cheltenham. Surgeons, however, now perform the extirpation of corns. Mr. Liston, of Edinburgh, cuts them out with a heart shaped instrument. The Dentist's, as much as mechanical labor is required in the construction of artificial teeth, is a necessary subdivision; but many who belong to it, are



grossly deficient in the anatomy of the jaws. The cupper is a very ancient division, and alluded to by Homer.

The early cuppers, had their scarificators letter-fashioned, for carving the names of their Rosalinds, on the barks of the Orlandos, who submitted to their operations. Ed.

XXII. No physician or surgeon should dispense a secret *nostrum*, whether it be his invention, or exclusive property. For if it be of real efficacy, the concealment of it is inconsistent with beneficence and professional liberality. And if mystery alone give it value and importance, such craft implies either disgraceful ignorance, or fraudulent avarice.

XXIII. The *Esprit du Corps*, is a principle of action founded in human nature, and when duly regulated, is both rational and laudable. Every man, who enters into a fraternity engages, by a tacit compact, ~~not~~ not only to submit to the laws, but to promote the honour and interest of the association, so



far as they are consistent with morality, and the general good of mankind. A physician therefore, should cautiously guard against whatever may injure the general respectability of his profession; and should avoid all contumelious representations of the faculty at large; all general charges against their selfishness or improbity; and the indulgence of an affected jocularitv or scepticism, concerning the efficacy and utility of the healing art.

XXIV. As diversity of opinion and opposition of interest may in the medical, as in other professions, sometimes occasion *controversy*, and even *contention*; whenever such cases unfortunately occur, and cannot be immediately terminated, they should be referred to the arbitration of a sufficient number of physicians or of surgeons, according to the nature of the dispute; or to the two orders collectively, if belonging both to medicine and surgery. But neither the subject matter of such references, nor the adjudication,



should be communicated to the public; as they may be personally injurious to the individuals concerned, and can hardly fail to hurt the general credit of the faculty.

XXV. A wealthy physician should not give advice *gratis* to the affluent; because it is an injury to his professional brethren. The office of physician can never be supported but as a lucrative one; and it is defrauding, in some degree, the common funds for its support, when fees are dispensed with, which might justly be claimed.

XXVI. It frequently happens, that a physician, in his incidental communications with the patients of other physicians, or with their friends, may have their cases stated to him in so direct a manner, as not to admit of his declining to pay attention to them. *Under such circumstances, his observations should be delivered with the most delicate propriety and reserve. He should not interfere in the curative plans pursued; and should even*



*recommend a steady adherence to them, if they appear to merit approbation.*

XXVII. A physician, when visiting a sick person in the country, may be desired to see a neighbouring patient, who is under the regular direction of another physician, in consequence of some sudden change or aggravation of symptoms. The conduct to be pursued, on such an occasion, is to give advice adapted to present circumstances; to interfere no farther than is absolutely necessary with the general plan of treatment; to assume no future direction, unless it be expressly desired; and, in this case, to request an immediate consultation with the practitioner antecedently employed. Thus Percival.

The London College, enjoins their graduates neither by gestures, a forbidding silence, nor any other method, to traduce a previous physician to bye-standers, nor to call him "honest good sort of man," but to hold up his character in the same esteem as their



own, for the honor and dignity of the profession. *Statuta Moralia.* Ed.

XXVIII. At the close of every interesting and important case, especially when it hath terminated fatally, a physician should trace back, in calm reflection, all the steps which he had taken in the treatment of it. This review of the origin, progress, and conclusion of the malady ; of the whole curative plan pursued ; and of the particular operation of the several remedies employed, as well as of the doses and periods of time in which they were administered, will furnish the most authentic documents, on which individual experience can be formed. But it is in a moral view that the practice is here recommended, and it should be performed with the most scrupulous impartiality. Let no self-deception be permitted in the retrospect ; and if errors, either of omission or commission, are discovered, it behoves that they should be brought fairly and fully to the mental view.



Regrets may follow, but criminality will thus be obviated. For good intentions, and the imperfection of human skill which cannot anticipate the knowledge that events alone disclose, will sufficiently justify what is past, provided the failure be made conscientiously subservient to future wisdom and rectitude in professional conduct.

XXIX. The opportunities, which a physician not unfrequently enjoys, of promoting and strengthening the good resolutions of his patients, suffering under the consequences of vicious conduct, ought never to be neglected. And his councils, or even remonstrances, will give satisfaction, not disgust, if they be conducted with politeness; and evince a genuine love of virtue, accompanied by a sincere interest in the welfare of the person to whom they are addressed.

XXX. The observance of the sabbath is a duty to which medical men are bound, so far as is compatible with the urgency of the cases



under their charge. Visits may often be made with sufficient convenience and benefit, either before the hours of going to church, or during the intervals of public worship. And in many chronic ailments, the sick, together with their attendants, are qualified to participate in the social offices of religion ; and should not be induced to forego this important privilege, by the expectation of a call from their physician or surgeon. Thus Percival.

The true Christian, appears “ in the hidden man of the *heart*, in that which is not corruptible ; even the ornament of a *meek* and *quiet* spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price,” not to use Moustier’s phrase, in the “ *canaille de celestes*,” of wily hypocrites and selfish spoilers, who, from worldly ambition and want of talents, to rise by less exceptionable means, connect themselves with the religious enthusiasts, and religious quackery of the day. Of the first order, were Harvey, Sydenham, Arbuthnot, Boerhaave, Stahl, Hoffman, and Haller, who were great and



beautiful in their lives, and in their minds unsurpassed. Of the second, are men, who are always making public spectacles of their piety, and exhibiting in the selfishness and inconsistency of their actions, the very reverse of the spirit which they profess.

Religious enthusiasts, as history exemplifies, may be divided into three classes; impostors of the first magnitude, as Calvin, Knox, and Judge Hale;\* all three of whom, were

\* The amiable Servetus, who was very nigh discovering the circulation of the blood, on leaving Geneva, to practise his profession, that of a physician, was dragged back at the instigation of Calvin, and burnt; whilst Calvin enjoyed the spectacle from a window. Knox burnt Perth; and if he could have got the sanction of the government, would have stabbed every catholic in the kingdom of Scotland. Hale burnt two unfortunate women for witchcraft; and committed such outrages on his daughters, that they ran away from him, and turned common prostitutes. (See his history, in the lives of the Norths, Earls of Guildford.) Yet these black-hearted ruffians, are on the lips of every evangelical rhapsodist of the day. The history of the past, and observation of the present, make the heart sick of religious enthusiasts. We recommend to the Student's perusal, Dr. Heylyn's History of the Reformation; Hudibras, with Dr. Zachary Grey's Notes; Dr. Milner's Works, and Creighton, on Mental Derangement, to give him just views on this subject.



accessary to murder : secondly, cunning knaves, who serve their own interests ; and thirdly, egregious dupes. Religious enthusiasm, begins in malignant passions, proceeds in the oppression and detraction of all without its murky pale, and the hypocrisy of two-thirds within, and ends like a bubble in the impracticability of its schemes ; and, like a siege, with performances of selfishness and rapine, where, and whenever the “ *soldiers of the good fight,*” as they call themselves, can compass their purposes.

Dr. Gregory lays down, that “ religion is natural to the human heart,” and that there is nothing in medicine, which leads to impiety, but rather to engage the heart on the side of religion, in the afflictive scenes which medical men so often witness,—and that it is barbarous to deprive expiring nature of its last support, by pressing scepticism on the mind ; and, lastly, recommends to young physicians, “ that religion which teaches us to *enjoy* life



with *cheerfulness*, and to resign it with *dignity*."

This excellent man, concludes with these manly and admirable remarks : " men whose minds have been *enlarged by extensive knowledge*, who have been accustomed to *think and reason upon all subjects, with a liberal and generous freedom*, are not apt to become *bigots to any sect or system whatever*. They can be steady to their own principles, without thinking ill of those who differ from them ; but they are *particularly impatient of the authority and controul of men, who pretend to lord it over their consciences, and to dictate to them what they are to believe in every article where religion is concerned*. This freedom of spirit, this moderation and charity for those of different sentiments have frequently been ascribed by narrow-minded people, to secret infidelity, scepticism, or, at least, lukewarmness in religion ; while, at the same time, some men, who were sincere and

devout christians, exasperated by such reproaches, have expressed themselves sometimes in an unguarded manner, and thus given their enemies an apparent ground of clamor against them." p. p. 58, 9.

XXXI. A physician who is advancing in years, yet unconscious of any decay in his faculties, may occasionally experience some change in the wonted confidence of his friends. Patients, who before trusted solely to his care and skill, may now request that he will join in consultation, perhaps with a younger coadjutor. It behoves him to admit this change without dissatisfaction or fastidiousness, regarding it as no mark of disrespect ; but as the exercise of a just and reasonable privilege in those by whom he is employed. The junior practitioner may well be supposed to have more ardour than he possesses, in the treatment of diseases ; to be bolder in the exhibition of new medicines ; and disposed to administer old ones, in doses of greater effi-



cacy. And this union of enterprize with caution, and of fervour with coolness, may promote the successful management of a difficult and protracted case. Let the medical parties, therefore, be studious to conduct themselves towards each other, with candour and impartiality ; co-operating, by mutual concessions, in the benevolent discharge of professional duty.

XXXII. The commencement of that period of senescence, when it becomes incumbent on a physician to decline the offices of his profession, it is not easy to ascertain ; and the decision on so nice a point must be left to the moral discretion of the individual. For, one grown old in the useful and honourable exercise of the healing art, may continue to enjoy, and justly to enjoy, the unabated confidence of the public. And whilst exempt, in a considerable degree, from the privations and infirmities of age, he is under indispensable obligations to apply his knowledge and expe-



rience in the most efficient way, to the benefit of mankind. For the possession of powers is a clear indication of the will of our Creator, concerning their practical direction. But in the ordinary course of nature, the bodily and mental vigour must be expected to decay progressively, though perhaps slowly, after the meridian of life is past. As age advances, therefore, a physician should, from time to time, scrutinize impartially the state of his faculties; that he may determine, *bona-fide*, the precise degree in which he is qualified to execute the active and multifarious offices of his profession. And whenever he becomes conscious that his memory presents to him, with faintness, those analogies, on which medical reasoning, and the treatment of diseases are founded; that diffidence of the measures to be pursued, perplexes his judgment; that, from a deficiency in the acuteness of his senses, he finds himself less able to distinguish signs, or to prognosticate events;



he should at once resolve, though others perceive not the changes which have taken place, to sacrifice every consideration of fame or fortune, and to retire from the engagements of business. To the surgeon under similar circumstances, this rule of conduct is still more necessary. For the energy of the understanding often subsists much longer than the quickness of eye-sight, delicacy of touch, and steadiness of hand, which are essential to the skilful performance of operations. Let both the physician and surgeon never forget, that their professions are public trusts, properly rendered lucrative whilst they fulfil them; but which they are bound, by honour and probity, to relinquish, as soon as they find themselves unequal to their adequate and faithful execution.

## CHAPTER III.

*Of the Conduct of Physicians towards Apothecaries.*

I. IN the present state of physic, in this country, where the profession is properly divided into three distinct branches, a connection peculiarly intimate subsists between the physician and the apothecary; and various obligations necessarily result from it. On the knowledge, skill, and fidelity of the apothecary depend, in a very considerable degree, the reputation, the success, and usefulness of the physician. As these qualities, therefore, justly claim his attention and encouragement, the possessor of them merits his respect and patronage. Thus Percival.

*Apothecaries.* Apothecaries in England, serve an apprenticeship of five years, and are required by law, to attend on materia medica, one course; on the practice of physic, and the anatomy and physiology of the viscera,



each, two courses of lectures ; and the medical practice of a dispensary, infirmary, or hospital, in town or country, during, or subsequent to apprenticeship, six months ; and to undergo an examination at Apothecaries Hall, for a license to practice, of which the cost is £6. See terms of lectures, &c. p. 202.

According to the form of examination, two latin prescriptions are given to the candidate to be construed. An assortment of the *materia medica* is next placed before him, with which he must show himself to be acquainted, both by sight and name. The botanical history of some, and the chemical history and decompositions of others, with their doses, he must then explain. Questions in the anatomy and physiology of the viscera, and practice of physic conclude the examination, which occupies about an hour, and is moderate ; and would generally be sufficient, were it not in every other subject, except the latinity of the pupil, often too lenient to ignorance and negligence.



In Scotland, the examination in all the above branches of medical science, and the qualification to practice as an apothecary, is included in that of the surgeon. In Ireland, no youth can be apprenticed to the "*mystery*" of the apothecary, without a previous examination, to ascertain whether his general education be such, as to qualify him to learn the nature, difference, effects, and qualities of medicine, and to prepare and vend it.\* None, until so examined, can be employed as foremen or shopmen. Rejected candidates may be re-examined after six months. Persons "then refused a certificate," may appeal to a general council within ten days, which has power to reverse judgment. The cost of this certificate is five shillings; the term of apprenticeship seven years; and the license to open shop, ten shillings. The Irish Apothecary is

\* Act for regulating the Profession of Apothecary in Ireland, 31st. Geo. III. Dublin, 1810.



forbidden, under a penalty of £5, to keep arsenic, oils, or colors, where medicines are compounded; and under a penalty of £20, to sell less than one pound of arsenic, without the entry in his books, of the name, and place of abode of the buyer, in his own handwriting. This regulation prevents those numerous suicides, to which druggists and apothecaries are constantly, but it is to be hoped, unconsciously accessory in England.

Adam Smith, reckons apothecaries among the "wealth of nations;" and, certainly, looking over the obituaries of a century, of the Gentleman's Magazine, we find more wealthy apothecaries, than wealthy members of any other division of the profession. Except in London, Bath, and some few other cities, the *pure* apothecary has been superseded by that much more valuable personage, the General Practitioner; and the Retail Druggist, who compounds prescriptions at a lower rate. The apothecary is as ancient as holy



writ itself; but now retained in this kingdom rather in conformity with custom than utility.

The best interests of society, require that the College of Surgeons of England, should possess a power of prohibiting the random and murtherous exercise of *apothecarian-surgery*, and the appointment of *apothecary-surgeons* to dispensaries.

Persons educated *formerly*, chiefly comprehend this kind, who are what Churchill calls, "half-surgeons;" affiliated to the profession and its callings, by gradations not easily to be traced, nor explained. Nothing short of legal prohibition, can prevent such persons from acquiring extensive practise, and even excluding others, infinitely before them in talent and qualifications. The apothecary-surgeon flies like a cormorant. He is a bone-setter and contrives a reduction of from three to six inches in the longitude of an extremity. He makes a fractured patella act like an iron bar upon the flexion of the knee-joint. He leaves



dislocated shoulders in the axilia. He employs mercury for gleans, gonorrheas, and buboes, and destroys constitutions wholesale. He punctures the bladder, for retention of urine, where a surgeon with facility, afterwards passes a catheter. In fact, taking care not to burn his fingers with operations, which require art, he strips the surgeon of what is called "common-sense surgery;" and exhibits in his frightful trade, the "*first lines*" of Motherby's dictionary. In physic, he too often limits his diagnosis to "the bile," and his practice to the panaceal exhibition of mercury. These men, not surgeon-apothecaries, but *apothecary*-surgeons, are of rural dominion; for, the London apothecary, to his credit, be it said, seldom interferes with surgical practice.

Also, in Ireland, where although the *physician and surgeon are excluded from pharmacy*, the apothecary being *not* prohibited from the practice of *medicine and surgery*,



imposes himself on the world, in characters unjustifiably assumed, and for which he is entirely disqualified. Of course, the evils just described, are as common as in this country. The author of the "Letters on Medical Reform," observes: "too many instances, (in Ireland) have come to my own knowledge, of their deadly interference, in cases beyond their skill, to leave a doubt upon my mind. In every branch of medical practice, I have seen instances of this deleterious inaptitude. I have known a practitioner of this class, have the temerity to cut into the bladder, in order to remove a stone impacted in the neck of it; yet this undaunted operator had never witnessed a single dissection—and, in truth, knew not the difference, either in organization, or vital properties, between a nerve and a tendon. The consequences, as may be supposed, were fatal; the stone having remained unremoved, and urine being effused into the cellular membrane of the scrotum.



Many illustrations of a similar nature, could I adduce, both in physic and midwifery ; in which latter, the apothecary is perhaps less reprehensible for embarking, inasmuch as every old woman is said to be competent to undertake it. Yet this is the condition of medical practice ; which some say should not be interfered with ! For my own part, I have given this subject, long and scrutinizing investigation. I have seen *evils, and of a magnitude to appal the most steady mind, result from the ignorance of apothecaries.*" p p. 80, 81.

What has been pointed out as a proper constitution of the profession in England, would, in event of its adoption, in better times, and in a less degenerate state of society, be rendered utterly useless, unless apothecaries and retail druggists, should be modelled as in France and Ireland, and completely prohibited from interfering with medical or surgical practice.



It is preposterous, as was lately observed in the *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*, of some parents in this country, to apprentice a youth, who is designed for a Surgeon or General Practiser, to a "Patriarchal Apothecary, in his ideal shop;" (see remarks on apprenticeship, p. 161) and equally absurd, that the surgeon and general practiser should afterwards be cast into the jaws of the Apothecaries' Company, who form a distinct body, and ought to have power only to legislate for themselves.

The amount of apothecaries' charges, and the mode of remunerating themselves are frequently gross abuses in this country. We have known in London, and in some watering places, twenty draughts a day sent by fashionable apothecaries to one patient, and even left on the door-step, though countermanded.

It is to be feared, that these gentlemen were accustomed to open the day with the physic-reckoning Apothecaire in Moliere.



The consulting surgeon, is generally to be had at less expence than the apothecary, for we have known three fees, and a few prescriptions made up at the retail druggist's, determine a case; which, when of the same nature and occupying the same time, in a former instance, had cost the same individual £15. under an apothecary. We remember being once present, at the dissection of a lady with *cancer uteri*, and seeing carried out a buck-basket of phials, the fruit of three months' apothecary's attendance, in a case so surely fatal, that it could have required only a nightly dose of opium. However, we are not pronouncing from partial experience, but the observation of years. It was ever an awful trade in this respect. Dover, who was accused by the apothecaries in London, of killing three noble patients, whom he never attended, thus accounts for their slander towards him. "I never affronted any apothecary, unless ordering too little physic, and curing a pa-



tient too soon, is, in their way of thinking, an unpardonable crime. I must confess, I could never bring an apothecaries bill to £3. in a fever; whereas, I have known some of their bills in this disease, amount to 40, 50, and £60. Though Sydenham's and Radcliff's bills, never amounted to forty shillings in a fever, the apothecaries would never call in a physician, who did not put fifteen or twenty shillings a day in their pockets. If they can't cure with less charges, I can't forbear saying, that I have the same opinion of their integrity as I have of their understanding. The less apothecaries gain, the better patients may afford to see their doctors." But, he recommends notwithstanding, "the most venerable sages of the profession," to court the apothecaries, for "whose reputation, he asks, can long stand the shock of an universal change rung upon their melodious mortars?" Dover condemned the moral statutes of the college, as vieling the ignorance of the apothecaries,



and ignorance in each other, and having produced great abuses. He says, "that the apothecaries always describe diseases in the fashion of the day," which is a true and shrewd observation. "At one time, every body died of polypus of the heart, but being laughed out of the polypus, mortification of the bowels came in fashion; and when a patient was dead, the surgeon was paid to make out the disease incurable."\* Ed.

II. The apothecary is, in almost every instance, the precursor of the physician; and being acquainted with the rise and progress of the disease, with the hereditary constitution, habits, and disposition of the patient, he may furnish very important information. It is in general, therefore, expedient, and when health or life are at stake, expediency becomes a moral duty, to confer with the apothecary, before any decisive plan of treatment is adopted;

\* *Dovers Legacy*, p. 224.



to hear his account of the malady, of the remedies which have been administered, of the effects produced by them, and of his whole experience concerning the *juvantia* and *lædientia* in the case. Nor should the future attendance of the apothecary be superseded by the physician : for if he be a man of honor, judgment, and propriety of behaviour, he will be a most valuable auxiliary through the whole course of the disorder, by his attention to varying symptoms ; by the enforcement of medical directions ; by obviating misapprehensions in the patient, or his family ; by strengthening the authority of the physician ; and by being at all times an easy and friendly medium of communication. To subserve these important purposes, the physician should occasionally make his visits in conjunction with the apothecary, and regulate by circumstances the frequency of such interviews : for if they be often repeated, little substantial aid can be expected from the apothecary, because he



will have no intelligence to offer which does not fall under the observation of the physician himself; nor any opportunity of executing his *peculiar* trust, without becoming burthensome to the patient by multiplied calls, and unseasonable assiduity.

III. This amicable *intercourse* and *co-operation* of the physician and apothecary, if conducted with the *decorum* and attention to *etiquette*, which should always be steadily observed by professional men, will add to the authority of the one, to the respectability of the other, and to the usefulness of both. The patient will find himself the object of watchful and unremitting care, and will experience that he is connected with his physician, not only personally, but by a sedulous representative and coadjutor. The apothecary will regard the free communication of the physician as a privilege and mean of improvement; he will have a deeper interest in the success of the curative plans pursued; and his honor



and reputation will be directly involved in the purity and excellence of the medicines dispensed, and in the skill and care with which they are compounded.

IV. The duty and responsibility of the physician, however, are so intimately connected with these points, that no dependence on the probity of the apothecary should prevent the occasional inspection of the drugs, which he prescribes. In London, the law not only authorizes, but enjoins a stated examination of the simple and compound medicines kept in the shops. And the policy that is just and reasonable in the metropolis, must be proportionally so in every provincial town, throughout the kingdom. Nor will any respectable apothecary object to this necessary office, when performed with delicacy, and at seasonable times; since his reputation and emolument will be increased by it, probably in the exact *ratio*, thus ascertained, of professional merit and integrity.



V. A physician called to visit a patient in the country, should not only be *minute* in his *directions*, but should *communicate* to the apothecary the *particular view*, which he takes of the *case*; that the indications of cure may be afterwards pursued with precision and steadiness; and that the apothecary may use the discretionary power committed to him, with as little deviation as possible from the general plan prescribed. To so valuable a class of men as the country apothecaries, great attention and respect is due. And as they are the guardians of health through large districts, no opportunities should be neglected of promoting their improvement, or contributing to their stock of knowledge, either by the loan of books, the direction of their studies, or by unreserved information on medical subjects. When such occasions present themselves, the maxim of our judicious poet, is strictly true, "the worst avarice is that of sense." For practical improvements usually



originate in towns, and often remain unknown or disregarded in situations, where gentlemen of the faculty have little intercourse, and where sufficient authority is wanting to sanction innovation.

VI. It has been observed, by a political and moral writer, of great authority, that “apothecaries’ profit is become a bye-word, denoting something uncommonly extravagant. This great apparent profit, however, is frequently no more than the reasonable wages of labour. The skill of an apothecary, is a much nicer and more delicate matter than that of any artificer whatever; and the trust which is reposed in him is of much greater importance. He is the physician of the poor in all cases, and of the rich when the distress or danger is not very great. His reward, therefore, ought to be suitable to his skill and his trust, and it arises generally from the price at which he sells his drugs. But the whole drugs which the best employed apothecary, in a large



market town, will sell in a year, may not perhaps cost him above thirty or forty pounds. Though he should sell them, therefore, for three or four hundred, or a thousand per cent profit, this may frequently be no more than the reasonable wages of his labour charged, in the only way in which he can charge them, upon the price of his drugs.”\*

The statement here given, exceeds the emoluments of the generality of apothecaries, in country districts. And a physician, who knows the education, skill, and persevering attention, as well as the sacrifice of ease, health, and sometimes even of life, which this profession requires, should regard it as a duty not to withdraw, from those who exercise it, any sources of reasonable profit, or the honorable means of advancement in fortune.

Practices prevail in some places injurious to the interest of this branch of the faculty,

\* See Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, book I. chap. x.

which ought to be discouraged. One consists in receiving an *annual stipend, usually degrading in its amount, and in the services it imposes, for being consulted on the slightest indispositions to which all families are incident, and which properly fall within the province of the Apothecary.* We could name a physician in Bath, who, though a *Saint*, acknowledged that he farmed whole families in this way; and in Cheltenham, we are told, that a physician farms a respectable individual, in a public situation, at £25. *per annum*; and a veterinary surgeon, farms his horses at £200.

VII. Physicians are sometimes requested to visit the patients of the apothecary, in his absence. Compliance, in such cases, should always be refused, when likely to interfere with the consultation of the medical man usually employed by the sick person, or his family. It would be for the interest and honour of the faculty to have this practice alto-



gether interdicted. Physicians are the only proper substitutes for physicians; surgeons for surgeons; and apothecaries for apothecaries.

VIII. When the aid of a physician is required, the apothecary to the family is frequently called upon to recommend one. It will then behove him to learn fully whether the patient or his friends have any preference or partiality; and this he ought to consult, if it lead not to an improper choice. For the maxim of Celsus is strictly applicable, on such an occasion; *Ubi par scientia, melior est amicus medicus quam extraneus*. But if the parties concerned be entirely indifferent, the apothecary is bound to decide according to his best judgment, with a conscientious and exclusive regard to the good of the person, for whom he is commissioned to act. It is not even sufficient that he selects the person on whom, in sickness, he reposes his own trust; for in this case, friendship justly gives preponderancy; because it may be supposed



to excite a degree of zeal and attention, which might overbalance superior science or abilities. Without any regard, to any personal, family, or professional connections, he should recommend the physician, whom he conscientiously believes, all circumstances considered, to be best qualified to accomplish the recovery of the patient.

IX. In the County of Norfolk, and in the City of London, benevolent institutions have been lately formed, for providing funds to relieve the widows and children of apothecaries, and occasionally also members of the profession, who become indigent. Such schemes merit the sanction and encouragement of every liberal physician and surgeon. And were they thus extended, their usefulness would be greatly increased, and their permanency almost with certainty secured. Medical subscribers, from every part of Great-Britain, should be admitted, if they offer satisfactory testimonials of their qualifications. One com-



prehensive establishment seems to be more eligible than many on a smaller scale. For it would be conducted with superior dignity, regularity, and efficiency ; with fewer obstacles from interest, prejudice, or rivalry ; with considerable saving in the aggregate of time, trouble, and expence ; with more accuracy in the calculations, relative to its funds, and, consequently with the utmost practicable extension of its dividends.\*

\* Dr. Percival recommends the formation of District Dispensaries, and, in an excellent pamphlet on the Farming of Parishes by surgeons, a practicable plan now acted on in Warwickshire, for superseding that wretched mockery of medical aid, called "Parish Doctoring," by District Infirmaries, is suggested by Mr. H. L. Smith.

The proposed Institutions, would help to provide for the excess of young practisers, who now every where burthen the profession, give to the poor the collective medical aid of surrounding districts, and open a wider field for the cultivation of medical science. Ed.

FINIS.



## UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN.

121 —

WE beg leave to correct an error made in the statements, page 118, from want of means of information. The University of Dublin, now possesses a Botanic Garden, and a course of Clinical Medicine is given in Saint Patrick Dunn's Hospital. Attendance on the Six University Classes is £4. 4s. each; Dissections and Demonstrations, £7. 7s.; one year's hospital attendance, to pupils in arts, is £2. 2s.; to pupils of the second class, £3. 3s.; Degree, under £30.; Matriculation fee, 5s. There are two systems of graduation; the first class, study three years for the degree of B. A.; three for that of B. M.; and wait five years more for that of M. D. The second class, study three years, conformably to the former Edinburgh system. The examination, which is public, of the Literary Graduate, is mild, and conducted by three Professors only; of the second class, conducted by six professors, and so severe, that they are generally *spun*. The examination of B. M. lasts from one to three o'clock, p. m. The form for the degree of M. D. consists in four readings, on four different days, an hour each day, of whatever parts of Galen and Hippocrates, the candidate pleases, and answering for two hours, two questions proposed. Candidates for the degree of bachelor or doctor of medicine, may now acquire their knowledge, how or where they please, and take their degrees after the service of a certain number of terms, the statutes require no certificates for lectures or dissections, the examination being now the only check in this university.



# ERRATA.

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Page 17 line | 5 omit <i>his</i> .   |
| 21           | 12 for <i>from</i> society, read <i>with</i> society.             |
| 34           | 16 for <i>repeated varied</i> , read <i>repeated and varied</i> . |
| 64           | 19 for <i>clucking</i> , read <i>ducking</i> .                    |
| 70           | 13 for <i>contented</i> , read <i>satisfied</i> .                 |
| 90           | 1 for <i>subversions</i> , read <i>subversions</i> .              |
| "            | 7 for <i>pruriency</i> read <i>pruriency</i> ,                    |
| 103          | 13 for <i>eundum</i> read <i>eundem</i> .                         |
| 105          | 9 omit <i>he</i> .  |
| 110          | 6 for <i>graduate</i> read <i>graduates</i> .                     |
| 144          | 17 for <i>qualifications</i> , read <i>qualification</i> .        |
| 145          | 20 for <i>Thornton</i> , read <i>Thompson</i> .                   |
| 154          | 4 for <i>require</i> , read <i>requires</i> .                     |
| 164          | 16 for <i>practice</i> , read <i>practise</i> .                   |
| 165          | 3 for <i>a time</i> , read <i>at a time</i> .                     |
| 166          | 13 for <i>confer</i> , read <i>confers</i> .                      |
| 167          | Note for <i>researches</i> , read <i>Recherches</i> .             |
| 174          | " before the first of seq. &c. insert <i>is said to be</i> .      |
| 211          | 12 for <i>situations</i> , read <i>situation</i> .                |
| "            | 15 for <i>has</i> , read <i>have</i> .                            |
| 212          | 15 for <i>surgeons</i> , read <i>surgeon</i> .                    |
| 234          | 12 before <i>defalcation</i> , insert <i>possibility of</i> .     |
| 239          | 22 for <i>XV</i> , read <i>XX</i> .                               |
| 243          | 20 for <i>collo cum digno</i> , read <i>collocandæque</i> .       |
| 254          | Note for <i>fimily</i> , read <i>family</i> .                     |
| 259          | 10 for <i>visitors</i> , read <i>visitors</i> .                   |

















