

The life of Asclepiades, the celebrated founder of the Asclepiadic sect in phisic ... / From the Italian.

Contributors

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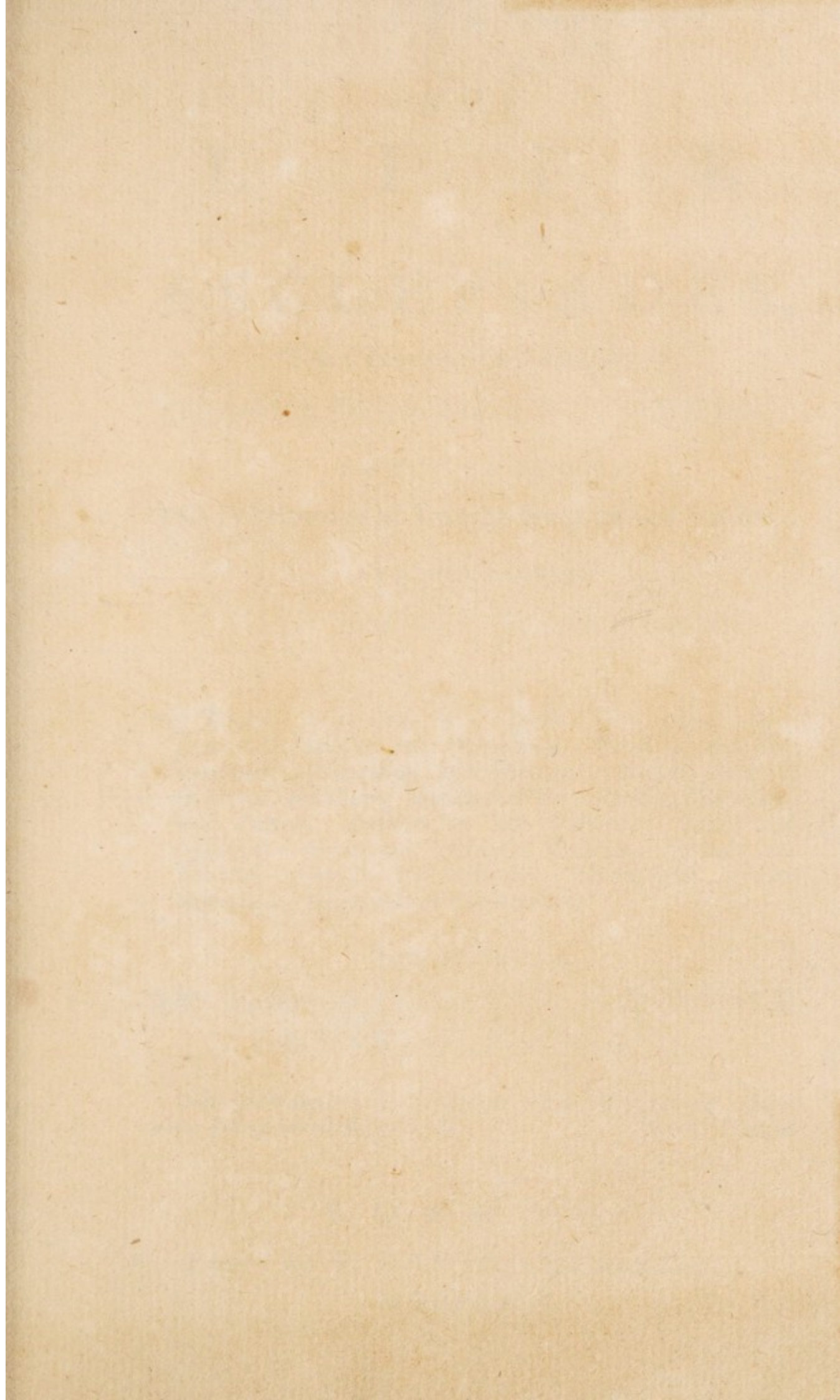
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T H E
L I F E
O F
A S C L E P I A D E S,
The CELEBRATED FOUNDER of
The ASCLEPIADIC SECT in PHISIC.

COMPILED FROM
The Testimonials of Twenty-seven antient Authors.
AND CONTAINING
The most Authentic Account procurable,

O F
His Name. Attestations of Authors. Monuments. Age.
Places of Nativity and Habitation. Relations and De-
scendents. Condition and Fortune. Health, Personal
Qualities, and Form. Genius and Wit. Studies, Education,
and Masters. Authors by him followed. Spirit and
Manners. Deeds and Sayings. Writings. Friends and
Enemies. Disciples and Followers. Encomiums from the
Antients. Judgments of the Moderns.

From the Italian of
The Signior ANTONIO COCCHI,
Late Profeffor of Phisic in FLORENCE.

Οὐδεν γὰν Θαυμαστον ἦν καταφρονειν τετῶν εἶπη Ζητοῦντες εἶχομεν
αὐτῶν βελτιω και αληθέστερα ευρειν.
PLAT. GORC.

L O N D O N :
Printed for T. DAVIES, in Covent-Garden.
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A S C L E P I A D E S.

AMONG the most excellent and the most fortunate men that antiquity has to boast, and whose name has descended to us with the greatest honor, the physician Asclepiades may well take rank. This was a Greek, of the kingdom of Bithinia, who at Rome, now about eighteen hundred years ago, made a great figure in that art he professed, and in which he was, besides, considered as one of its most valuable authors.

Though at present all his works are lost, nor is there extant any history of his life; my intention is to investigate all the curious particulars that can be found of him, both as to his person, and exercise of his profession.

The name of Asclepiades, which, in its origin, signifies a son, or descendant of Esculapius, was borne antiently by many.

By some, single and personal.

By others conjoined in the manner of our surnames, and ofteneft, given to phificians.

And it was fometimes affumed, out of a certain vulgar vanity, in order to boast a respectable, but false, pedigree, as if those who bore it were descended from that ideal personage Esculapius, who was antiently feigned, and considered by the poets, as that part of the unknown power of nature, which sometimes cures diseases of itself, and on that account was acknowledged as a deity, or presiding God of health. In that character he was commonly worshipped even by the most learned nations, while the polytheistic system of divinity prevailed among them.

Our Asclepiades had this his name in the first and plainest signification, of merely specifying his person.

And as in books there occur more than forty other Asclepiadeses, some greater, some lesser characters, it is proper to precaution against any of them being confounded with ours, a mistake into which some, otherwise learned, writers have not escaped the falling.

The usual distinction for him is, either his having his name mentioned singly, without any adjunct, as being the most eminent of all, or joined with the epithets Bithinian, or physician, or with some circumstances appropriable to him.

The antient writers, in whom the mention of him in any degree or manner is to be found, so far as is come to our knowledge, are, in number twenty-seven, eleven of whom were Greeks, and sixteen Latin.

Of the eleven Greek writers, there were five physicians, Cassius, Erotianus, Galen, Oribasius, Œtius; three philosophers, Plutarch, Sextus, and Stobeus; two geographers, Strabo and Stephanus, and one divine, Eusebius.

Of the sixteen Latin, there were five physicians, Celsus, Scribonius, Celius Aurelianus, Marcellus, Theodorus; three philosophers, Cicero, Seneca, Chalcidius; six miscellaneous, Pliny, Apuleius, Censorinus, Macrobius, Martian and Cassiodorus; and two Divines, the supposed Clement, translated by Rufinus, and Tertullian.

In some of the testimonials of the above-mentioned writers, there are moreover to be found quotations concerning him from ten other writers, nine Greek, and one Latin, whose works,

at least those that speak of him, are lost. Five of them were physicians, Athenæus Attalensis, (founder of the order of the spiritualists, Menodotus Empiricus, Metrodorus, Moschion, and Soranus, two were philosophers, Antiochus preceptor to Cicero, and Athenodorus, to Augustus, two historians, Varro and Herennius Philo; and one Divine, Dionisius, bishop of Alexandria.

Of the aforesaid twenty-seven antient writers, actually now extant, there are only four, who have wrote any thing at large about him.

The most antient of these is Cornelius Celsus, who, though not a physician by profession, yet, assisted by Greek books, and perhaps by some able physician his friend, wrote a whole treatise on physic, in his own language, in a stile of great simplicity, and withal of great beauty, with exactness and judgment; insomuch, that this work, which is preserved to our days, is now considered as the first and best book upon physic that is to be found among the antient Latins. And as his merit depends principally on the opinions which he produces, or quotes of authors now lost; for that reason, perhaps, the Roman writers, who lived near his time, such as Columella and Quintilian, have but sparingly praised him. Nor does Pliny appear to have made any account of that his medical work, where, not remembering him, he says that very few of the Romans had touched upon

upon the subject of phisic, and that those who had, had written in Greek.

Celsus then confesses in general, to have followed Asclepiades in many points. He often quotes him with approbation ; and if sometimes he does not agree with him in opinion, he gives the reason of his dissent with all decent respect.

The next author that writes much of Asclepiades, is Pliny, a courtier, both in a military and ministerial character, who, for his own entertainment, compiled a great book of Natural History, which contains a prodigious medley of natural, moral, and historical particulars, extracted, according to his own account, from above two thousand books, the which are now almost all lost; a circumstance that renders his the more valuable to us.

True it is, that many of the allegations of Pliny, or, as they stand in his book, being examined by men of letters and judgment, are found not to be exact, so that he is not to be quoted or resorted to without great caution.

It is particularly observable in him, that he meddled much with phisic, which he had never practised, or could have any grounds in it, since he himself declares that the medical art was the
only

only one of the Greek arts that had not yet been exercised by the Roman gravity *. He then pretends to discover the mysteries of it, by producing some receipts from the Greek books; and by this means aims at rendering the professors of that nation useless; against whom he takes every occasion, no one can tell for why, to manifest a very illiberal envy, and a desire of lessening, as much as he can, their authority. This is what he has particularly attempted, as to Asclepiades, who was dead many years before; unless indeed it may be believed, that what he says, being rarely original, or his own, he may have copied some writer, cotemporary to that great man, and what is not uncommon, an envious and malignant detracter from his merit.

But be that as it may, we have the obligation to Pliny, for some particularities, which, without him, might probably have remained unknown; after which, from his testimonials, it is our business to draw just consequences, and make due distinctions.

The third author who makes much mention of Asclepiades, and that for the most part with disapprobation, is Cælius Aurelianus, of the town of Sicca, in Africa, of whom we have a treatise of phisic, in a rough and barbarous latinity; in which he professes himself little more

* XXIX. Cap. i. §. 5, 8. p. 669.

than a translator of Soranus, who flourished in the beginning of the second century. He is, however, estimable for his quotation of authors, whose works are lost; as to what appears of his own stock, it is not of much value. To judge by his stile, he appears to be of the fifth century, but, by certain sentences and quotations, I am inclined to think him somewhat more antient.

The fourth is Galen, who lived towards the end of the second century, whose ability is known, as well as the liberty he unfortunately allowed himself, of often wrongfully criticizing all the most illustrious physicians since the time of Hippocrates; so that his greatest merit also consists in the fragments of the antients, whom he quotes for the most part, in order to confute them. This honour he frequently enough does to Aesclepiades, whom, in other respects, he allows to have been most ingenious, most learned, and eloquent to the highest degree, but an adversary to his peripatetic system of theory.

Any one may plainly see the disadvantage of being obliged to take our informations from the testimonials of unfavorable writers; but as they are not to be come at elsewhere, we must make the best use we can of the facts furnished us by the antients, whatever their disposition was in furnishing them, so as that we do not lose the
unalienable

unalienable right of judging of points of reason, according to the lights of our knowledge.

Besides these testimonials of authors, and of common fame, we have still remaining of Asclepiades a beautiful antique busto, intire, and exhibited to the public view, in that magnificent collection in the museum of the capital of Rome, bare-headed, his hair short, without a beard, and with a cloak (or pallium) such as the Greek sages wore, and with Greek letters on the face of the square antique basis, expressing his name. This busto was discovered about forty years ago, or towards the beginning of the current eighteenth century, under ground, within the walls of Rome, near the Porta Capena, where, not improbably, it might antiently have served for a scientific decoration of some portico, some library, some school, or other public building, in that principal quarter of the town. Being carefully considered, and examined with all the material circumstances, and conformably to all the rules of the antiquaries, it seems, by the learned who have described it *, to have been more justly attributed to our Asclepiades, than to any other of the same name, but not of equal reputation and merit.

From this busto, and from seeing, in Pliny † that
that

* *Blafs. Caryophil. diss. miscell. Rom. 1718 P. 331. and Jo. Bottari mus. Capitolin. Tom. 1. Tav. 3. Rom. 1741 and 1750.*

† XXVI. Cap. 3. Sect. 8. upon which Hardouin conjectures that the surname of Asclepiades should be $\Delta\omicron\sigma\psi\upsilon\chi\eta\varsigma$. I should rather think it $\Psi\upsilon\chi\epsilon\delta\omicron\tau\eta\varsigma$.

that Varro mentioned Asclepiades (though the particular book out of the great numbers which he wrote, is not specified) it might not unreasonably be conjectured, that that father of the Roman erudition, had given him a place in his curious work, which is lost, of the images or of the hundred Heptomads or constellations of seven worthies, in which he collected the portraits of seven hundred of the most illustrious characters, of whom the bustos used to be placed in the libraries of those days, and for each of which he had composed an appropriate epigram, as may be gathered from the said Pliny*, and from the letters of Symmachus†, in whose time, that is to say, towards the end of the fourth century, those eulogiums were still extant.

From the authority then of these documents only, it remains for us to trace out the conduct and opinions of this celebrated physician, by collecting together the scattered accounts or indications of him, and by deducing from thence the most probable conjectures.

We must in the first place, ascertain, with all the exactness we can, the time in which he lived.

* XXXV. Cap. 2. §. 2. p. 175.

† Symmachus, Epist, I. 4.

The antient writers, who generally speaking, were much less accurate in their chronological disquisitions than we are, furnish us only such imperfect lights, as rather fix our doubts, than they remove them. Pliny says he lived in the time of Pompey *, which may be seen repeated by almost all the moderns who have mentioned him. But this expression, which is however too vague, should it seems the most probable, be understood of Pompey's age of manhood, when he was the principal character of the Roman republic, and even this epoch cannot be well allowed to go by Pliny's account further back, than the age of twenty eight years, just after the death of Sylla, which happened in the six hundred and seventy sixth year of the foundation of Rome,

But the authority of Cicero † rather induces me to believe that Asclepiades was somewhat more antient, and that he belonged to the times preceding those of Pompey, because in his dialogue on *The Orator*, he makes Lucius Crassus speak of him as of one already deceased. Now this dialogue, though it was written by Cicero when he was fifty two years of age, that is to say, in the six hundred and twenty eighth year of the foundation of Rome, was feigned to have

* XXVI. Cap. 8. §. 7. p. 444.

† De Oratore I. 62.

been spoken in the consulship of Phillippus, that is to say in the six hundred and thirty third year, when Cicero himself was but a boy of thirteen years of age, so that he himself not having been present at it, he makes it recited to him afterwards by Cotta, who was one of the interlocutors in it, and who died in the six hundred and eightieth year of the foundation of Rome.

In this dialogue then Cicero does not appear to speak in his own proper person : he put what he had to say in the mouth of Lucius Licinius Crassus, at whose country seat he lays the scene of the conversation. As to this Crassus, who was a senator celebrated for his great eloquence, as well as for his political knowledge, and who was at that time forty years old, and died a few months after, Cicero makes him say many things alluding to the circumstances of those times, and among other men of merit he makes him mention Asclepiades, as having been his physician and friend, as well as the other worthy and noble personages of the dialogue, among whom was Quintus Mutius Scevola, who must, at that time, have been pretty much advanced in years, and was a most celebrated civilian ; and Marcus Antonius, a great orator, who died four years after, and was grandfather to the famous Mark Anthony the triumvir. So that it is not credible, that if Asclepiades had been then alive, or had lived any time after, Cicero would have committed so superfluous an anachronism he

who was not used to take such liberties, as Plato often did in his dialogues ; as if in his disregard for chronological exactness, he had meant them the more to resemble dramatic compositions.

While Cicero, on the other hand, on more occasions than one, declares himself a scrupulous observer of the laws of probability and propriety, to which he also kept up, in the other parts of the same dialogue. So that to those personages of the dialogue, and not to Cicero himself, should we attribute the personal knowledge or acquaintance with Asclepiades. Cicero himself must have been too young, and yet almost all the moderns, who have mentioned Asclepiades, have failed of making this due distinction.

And as Pompey was by some months younger than Cicero, the expression of Pliny placing Asclepiades in the time of Pompey, cannot otherwise be saved than by understanding it, of the first fifteen years of his life.

But this not appearing to be the natural sense of that phrase, it may be more reasonably suspected, that this is one of the usual chronological inaccuracies of Pliny ; and that perhaps he supposed Asclepiades to have lived in the time of Pompey, because he had seen some of his consultations or medical writings, sent to king Mithridates, whose total overthrow and extinc-

tion had been the most renowned exploit or achievement of that magnanimous Roman.

Even those very writings of Asclepiades, addressed to Mithridates, and those invitations to him from that king, by means of his ambassadors at Rome, which he would not accept, as Pliny himself intimates *, furnish another reason to conclude, that that physician must have been sufficiently advanced in reputation, and well established in Rome, and even famous over the whole world, many years before Pompey's time; since it is not likely that there should have been that intercourse through his ambassadors, unless before the alienation of Mithridates from his friendship with Rome, and before he had declared himself their open and atrocious enemy, which, according to history, must have been about the year of Rome 660. Nor is it credible that the ambassadors of this most powerful prince, whose application Pliny himself says, was slighted by that physician, should have been sent expressly on so frivolous an errand. It is more probable that this private affair was transacted by some of those, who had been dispatched by him to Rome, upon various occurrences, especially within the ten years preceding the rupture. Perhaps too, they were some of those very same, who in the year 652, came to Rome with great sums of money, and were, as Diodorus Siculus tells

* VII. Cap. 37.

us * suspected of having a commission to try at the same time to bribe the leading nobility of the senate.

Another indication of the time in which Asclepiades flourished, is furnished us by Sextus Empiricus †, who quotes a passage from Antiochus Academicus (who was a celebrated professor of philosophy at Athens, and partly a contemporary of the said Asclepiades) taken from his second book of those called or intitled the Canonicals, which must have treated of the rules or art of thinking, of the nature and operations of the human mind or of what is commonly called metaphysics.

In this passage, Antiochus brings in the opinion of Asclepiades, as of a man of the highest reputation, but already dead. Now that book of Antiochus, being, as it appears, and as Sextus also supposes it, written on the principles of the sect of the Academicians, shews it to have been before that philosopher went over to the Stoics, and disputed against the Academicians themselves.

Now observe, that the time of Antiochus's disputation against them, was when he made one

* *Exceptæ legationes*, Tom. II. § 37. p. 631.

† *Adversus logicos*, § 201. p. 412.

of the retinue of Lucius Lucullus, who had been sent from Sylla, when at Athens, and general in chief of the Mithridatic war, to the king of Egypt, Ptolemy the eighth. These philosophic disputes, which were held at Alexandria, and with which Lucullus diverted himself at the hours of vacancy from state-affairs, must have passed in the year of Rome 667, as Cicero makes Lucullus himself relate, in a dialogue that bears his name, and is the fourth book of the academical questions. It seems then to be no forced or unreasonable supposition, to fix the death of Asclepiades at the lowest era that can be made to agree with the forecited testimonial of Crassus in Cicero. And whereas that dialogue is feigned to have passed in the days of the Roman games, it may be pronounced, without danger of any considerable error, that he died that same year 663 ; it appearing also from Pliny that he had arrived at an extreme old age, and that his death was accelerated by an accidental fall. We may then conclude, that he might be about fourscore years of age ; so that reckoning backwards so many years, we may place his birth towards or about the 580th year of Rome, which is the year of the hundred and fifty first Olympiad, 174 years before the Christian era.

Some of the modern men of letters, agree with the most learned Fabricius * in asserting,

* *Bibl. Gr. VI. Cap. V. p. 87. Elench. med. vet.* upon the autho of Longaville Harouët in the history of long-livers, Mem.

ing, that Asclepiades lived an hundred and fifty years: but this does not seem credible to me, not only upon the account of the intrinsic improbability of an event so much out of the common order of things in nature, but of the deep silence of the antients on this point.

Of the places in which Asclepiades passed a part of his long life, there are only four towns or cities named, and one province. First, it appears that he was born at Cium, in the kingdom of Bithinia, situate in that part of northern Asia, opposite to that extremity of Europe, where Constantinople now stands. This is to be gathered only from the intimation given by the author of the introduction to phisic, among the works of Galen, where Asclepiades is called the Bithinian and Cianean, and also the Prussian (from Prusias.) We learn from the antient geographers, that Cium being re-established by the king Prusias, was called Prusias; or Prusa, and that being situate on the western coast, upon the Propontis, it was distinct from another Prusias of the same kingdom of Bithinia, upon the river Hippius, near the northern coast on the Pontus, and also distinct from another Prusias, or Prusa, near the mount Olympus. The Prusias, from which Asclepiades was called the Prussian, never

Mem. of *Trevoux*, 1718, Octob. p. 639. Corsini syllab. *philos.* p. 26. p^refat. a Plutarcho, de *plac. phil.* upon the authority of Fabricius.

intirely

intirely lost the name of Cium, perhaps because being a maritime, commercial, and populous Greek City, it retained in its form of government, some resemblance of a republic. Polibus *, and his follower Livy, inform us, that it was taken under the protection of the Roman senate, and freed from the jurisdiction of the king Prusias, in the famous treaty of peace † between the Romans and Philip king of Macedon, in the year of Rome 558, twenty two years before the supposed birth of Asclepiades. We find also that these Cians, through all the various revolutions that Bithinia underwent, preserved, till towards the middle of the third century of the christian era, some shadow of their antient liberty; there being still to be seen some coins of theirs, struck with the heads of Emperors, and among the last, of Decius and of Gallus.

Asclepiades being born a citizen of this republic, is discovered to have resided some time at Parium, also a Greek and maritime city of the Propontis, though under the protection of the king of Pergamus, sovereign of the circumjacent country. The stay of Asclepiades in this city, as likewise in other neighbouring ones of the Hellespont, appears from certain medical ob-

* Vol. IV. p. 372. where, instead of the word *κίβος* should be read *κίανος* as in the other edition.

† Legatus IX. p. 106.

servations made by him, and related by Aurelian and Oribasius *.

By the same means, we also discover that he resided some time at Athens.

And, finally, it is known, from the relations of almost all the authors who mention him, that he passed the greater part of his life in Rome, and that he there ended his days. And whereas, by the testimony of Pliny †, it appears that, at Rome, he was more known for his learning and eloquence, than for his skill in physic; it may be conjectured, that he went there in his youth, allowing him to have staid in his own country, till about the age of twenty; that he might travel, and pursue his studies, in various places, till he was thirty years of age, and that soon after, he settled at Rome, where he continued to enjoy his high reputation for, probably, upwards of fifty years; thus accomplishing that octagenary career of life which, on the faith of the ancients, we have attributed to him.

Of his parentage, progenitors, or descendants, we have no account, though Reinesius ‡, a most

* In the collection of Nicetas, 155, § XII.

† XXVI. Cap. III.

‡ Inscript. antiq. class. XIV. p. 608.

learned physician and antiquary, of the last century (the xviiith) purely from his own spontaneous conjecture, induced himself to believe, that a certain Caius Calpurnius Asclepiades, a physician, to whose memory there was extant a most honorable antient inscription, in the times of the emperor Adrian, was a countryman of, and, perhaps, a lineal descendant from our Asclepiades.

As to his rank or condition, though there is nothing said of it, by any of the twenty-seven writers, before specified, it may obviously be conjectured that, in his own country, he was of the middle, or common citizen-degree, every people naturally distinguishing itself into three classes, whatever the disposition of its laws may be. By the concurring testimony of all the writers abovementioned, it is known, that Asclepiades was deeply versed in the knowledge of words, and of things; in short, eloquent and learned, and, moreover, the first physician of the age, in the capital city of the world, where, it appears, that he retained, his single name (of Asclepiades) in the Greek manner, without needing, or caring to assume, as many other Greeks had done, for an adjunct, the name of some Roman family, from clientship, or any other dependence. He was contented to be the humble friend of those powerful senators, who

were like so many kings, or rather superior to so many kings, in highness of spirit, or true magnanimity ; from all which circumstances, it may safely be inferred, that in his earliest years, he must have had a very liberal education, and that, consequently, his family could not have been a very mean one, as is asserted by Leonardo de Capua *, through his misunderstanding a passage of Pliny † in which he expresses his astonishment how a single man (the following are his words) of a most trifling nation, *e levissima gente*, setting himself to such an undertaking, could without artful management, and without power, give new laws of health to all human kind.

But here it is plain to be understood, that Pliny means to allude to the Greek nation, to which the Romans, in their haughtiness, gave the name of a vain, frivolous people, on observing them wholly engrossed by the liberal arts and sciences, as poetry, oratory, &c. and by luxury and dissoluteness, to the exclusion, and extinction of all public spirit, and military glory.

And, to say the truth, it was not long that

* Ragionam. V. p. 366.

† Plin. XXVI. Cap. 3. § VIII. p. 445.

there flourished among the Greeks, that high character for which Pericles extolls the Athenians, as may be seen in Thucydides †, for being at once magnanimous, voluptuous, of a fine taste in the arts and sciences, sound reasoners and philosophers, and withal robust, capable of fatigue, discreet and courageous warriors.

It does not, however, appear, that the middle-rank, assigned as the most probable one to Asclepiades, implied, in the least, his not having been originally provided with an easy fortune, or good circumstances; since he could, in his earlier years, apply himself to his studies, travel thro' Greece, make some stay in Athens, to accomplish himself, and add to his own native stock of ability, the knowledge of the various systems of philosophy; and, finally, take a journey to Rome, and settle there; all which could not be done, without a pecuniary competency.

That, after his arrival at Rome, on his being acknowledged the greatest physician of his time, as it is universally allowed that he was acknowledged in that character, he might make a great fortune is highly probable. Experience demonstrates, that nothing is easier than to acquire immense wealth, for one who is esteemed an able physician, in a city where a studied luxury is

* Hist. II. § 38. and foll.

cultivated,

cultivated, and a simplicity of living abhorred ; especially if such a city is extremely populous and opulent, as Rome was in those days, perhaps, to an excess ; and, above all, considering that the riches of the commerce of mankind, centering in that city, were incomparably greater, and more common then than in the more modern ages, or nearer our own times. Besides which, the fees of physicians were then even more exorbitant than they are at present, as may be gathered from the complaints of Pliny, and the testimonies of the antients.

Nor is it impossible, that Asclepiades being beloved and esteemed, as he was, at Rome, by the most considerable personages, might, to free himself from the inconveniences of alienship, have obtained the Roman denization, or, as it was then called, the rights or immunities, of the *Quirites*, as, about an hundred years before, had been granted to Archagathus, who was the first Greek physician that had resorted to Rome. In this supposition, it must be thought, that the Roman name, or adjuncts, he took, are sunk into oblivion. On the other hand again, there is no manner of violence offered to probability, in the other supposition, that since there is no trace to be found of his having used a Roman name, nor nothing of the *toga*, to be seen in his statue, he might retain his quality of alien, without any
dread

dread of inconvenience from it, in the consciousness of the innocence of his temper, and in his superiority to ambition.

As to his personal qualities, we find, in the first place, in Pliny an ample attestation of his continual uninterruptedly good health until extreme old age, he never having had any disease or ailment, and at length dying of an external cause from a contusion by a fall. From thence it may be inferred, that the primitive stamina of his constitution were naturally robust, his internals well organized, and his humors of an excellent temperature. Of this himself being aware, and in the rational hope of preserving his health, by his temperance, and by his skill in the art he professed, he might at sometime, jestingly, and not in earnest, say, or write, what Pliny seriously * reports of him, that he would hazard

* VII. Cap. XXXVII. § XXXVII. p. 59. It should seem that the not understanding this passage rightly, led Boerhave to say, that Asclepiades making use of the natural robustness of his constitution to raise his medical reputation, boasted of having secrets or nostrums to keep off diseases, and to procure longevity. Prælect. Academ. Sect. XIV. Proleg. p. 22.

Here it may be added, that the wager of Asclepiades is so far from being reproachable to him as a vain glorious boast, that it is absolutely no more than what most men, who are born with good stamina, may, on observing the laws of temperance, very reasonably

hazard the forfeit of his whole fortune and fame upon the wager that he would never fall sick, or be visited with any bodily complaint. It seems then no other than purely a reflexion of Pliny's own, that which he adds, saying, that the circumstance of Asclepiades having won the wager by his dying, not of any disease, but of a casualty by his fall, had contributed to that high esteem in which he remained after his death.

As to his outward form, it appears to have been comely and majestic, as may be conjectured from his statue, exhibiting the figure of a man about sixty, clear shaped, with a countenance at once pensive and serene.

As upon health it is, and upon the vigor and regular function of the organs, that the truth of those sensations depends, upon which the operations of the mind are founded, it is not to be wondered at, that the understanding, which is no other than the internal faculty of thinking, should be great in Asclepiades; as may be inferred from the depth of skill he acquired in the study of nature, and in the various branches of erudition; and as it may be

ably, and humanly speaking, that is to say, barring very extraordinary cases, promise to themselves. In this spirit, it was, that one of the ancient philosophers called men fools for praying to the Gods for health, when their bounty had already put it in their own power, by the means of temperance and simplicity of diet.

yet more safely inferred from the truth, which has been at length discovered to reign in the greatest part of his propositions, such as they appear in the minute and dispersed fragments of his works ; although they were both in his own time, and for many ages afterwards held oppugnant to the vulgarly current opinions.

It appears that he had from nature, a sufficient quick faculty of apprehending, and conceiving clearly ideas, of retaining them intire, and of exactly distinguishing them, that is to say, of discerning the very smallest difference ; in which operations the understanding is rather passive. It is also manifest, that he was withall, of active, strong, acute mental powers for the putting together, or combining his conceptions, and in recollecting, or replacing in his memory, the most apt images, as well as in investigating and laying down the most seemingly distant and abstruse conclusions, whose connexions he saw and preserved. In these last operations, the understanding being active, the goodness of it is the more conspicuous, not only for its shewing a man more effective and penetrating than another, but what is yet of more importance, for its implying a certain feeling of the truth, which some men possess in a super-eminent degree of acuteness and delicacy, and also a certain natural desire of discovering that truth, wherever it may be the

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deepest

deepest concealed; such an understanding, in short, implies that magnanimous and universal benevolence, which some few, more than commonly elevated spirits, display in the publishing their scientific observations frankly and liberally even to the vulgar, which for the most part, if it listens at all to them, repays them with ingratitude and malignancy.

That such was the understanding of Asclepiades, lively in the images of families and examples, which gave clearness and brilliancy to his eloquence; that he was at the same time judicious, profound, and a lover of truth, in his reasonings, so far as comported with the discoveries of his times, can never be doubted by whoever will candidly examine the remains of his works, clear of the reflexions of those who quote them.

That he should have applied to his studies from his earliest youth, in his own country, before he passed over from Asia to Europe, is very credible from his having constantly possessed those faculties, which are rarely, if ever observed in those, who betake themselves late to their learning. Such faculties are principally, a stile correct, clear and elegant; a sagacious argumentation, inventive and exact, and a passionate sensibility for the truths of nature; for the acquisition

quisition of which accomplishments, Bithinia, with its neighbouring countries, were at that time eminently opportune, from the number of Greek cities in them of Attic origin. In these the language that was talked, being of the most refined standard, there was established and extended, a taste not for a seditious or meerly bar-oratory, but for a philosophical and tranquil eloquence, which turned upon dissertations on various subjects, for which many Bithinian writers have been mentioned: and some have remained that prove the succession of the most luxuriant and lively eloquence of the Asiatics so far down as the second century of the christian æra, as, for example, Dion the Prusian, and Aristides; and this when the powerful rhetoric of Athens was already extinct. It is very presumable, that in the days of Asclepiades there had remained in the schools of Bithinia, of Hellespont, of Mifia, and of Phrigia, the successors of those famous men mentioned by Strabo, and natives of those parts; grammarians, dialectricians, orators, historians, and what was yet of more importance, he might have known, and been among the hearers of those two celebrated Bithinian mathematicians, Hipparchus and Theodorus. Certain it is, that from the fragments we have of him, it appears that he made use of the Attic dialect, and that the great character of his stile was clearness; and from the exactness of his manner

of deducing the necessary consequences from his premises, in which Galen himself * confesses his excellence, it may be conjectured that he had sufficiently exercised himself in a course of geometry; from the study of which, better than in any other way, the true logic of the art of demonstration may be learnt, as Galileo has very justly observed.

In philosophy, Bithinia was supplied by the schools of Epicurus, who, if he did not absolutely deliver Greece from absurdity, as the poet Menander † compliments him, at least revived a taste for the knowledge of nature, restoring to light some of the opinions of the old naturalists, especially of Anaxagoras and Democritus, and bringing men back to the research of mechanical causes, of the sensible appearance of things, from the consideration of which, they had been in some measure induced to wander by the other three celebrated schools, the Platonic, the Peripatetic, and the Stoic. Asclepiades, who by his profession, had chosen the medical art, could not but be aware, that even so as the dramatic inventions of Plato might have their use in certain occurrences, as the logical subtilities of Aristotle might keep up the edge of scholastic wit, and as the

* Upon the natural faculties.

† Antholog. V. Lib. I.

rigorous severity of Zeno, might be of service in the more important business of legislation, so for an art purely experimental, that philosophy must be supremely the best adapted, which preferred sense to imagination. Now in the schools of Bithinia, in the time of Asclepiades, the opinions of Epicurus must have remained in high credit, who a little more than a year before, had, in the city of Lampfacus, in the flower of his youth, made a successful display of his doctrines, and who, in the four years residence he then made there, had acquired the esteem and affection of that people, to such a point, that as Strabo observes *, he ever after considered that city as another native country; having among those citizens found his worthiest and most illustrious friends and disciples, which engaged him to return thither frequently for his entertainment and social pleasures.

There was another favorable occasion furnished by Bithinia to Asclepiades, for his making the best choice of that sect of physic, to which he from the beginning applied himself. This was that of the Herophilians, so called from Herophilus, a native of Chalcedon in the same province, who lived about four generations before him, and was a great, and perhaps the first anatomist of human bodies; a favorite of the magnificent Ptolemy, the

* XIII. pag. 590.

founder of the Grecian monarchy in Egypt. Of the followers of this Herophilus, there was a celebrated and great school in the neighbourhood of Laodicea in Phrygia, as we learn from Strabo, with which province the city of Cium, that was not far distant * had established a most convenient commerce, as Mela asserts †. With this school then it is credible, that Asclepiades must have had some acquaintance, since Alexander Philalethes, a celebrated physician, who, as Strabo says, was president of that school in the time of Asclepiades, is known from the authorities of two medical writers, Aurelian and Theodorus, to have had Asclepiades himself for his master. Experience again demonstrates that the bare residence of men of merit in a country, sows in it the seeds of many valuable doctrines, which for some generations, as it were by tradition, maintain themselves in it, common and familiar, as it may be observed, that from among ourselves (here in Florence) there have not yet wholly disappeared the impressions from the lessons and discourses of Galileo, of Borelli, of Steno, of Malpighi, of Rhedi, of Bellini, with whom our fore-fathers lived in familiar acquaintance.

Bithinia was besides well adapted for the

* XIII, p. 590.

† I. Cap. XIX.. v. 27.

youthful studies of Asclepiades, from the wonderfully happy situation of those regions of Asia, distinguished for such a variety of seas and lands, and thick of cities Greek and Barbarian, under different forms of government, and most of them populous, rich, sumptuous, favorable to the arts and sciences cultivated in them, with a commerce to the west and north by sea, with all the coasts of the Mediterranean, and of the Pontus, and to the East by land, through the middle of Phrigia, with all the other and most remote parts of delicious Asia, so that it is not to be wondered at, that Cesar and Augustus should have sometime entertained thoughts of placing hereabouts the center of the Roman empire.

Thus Asclepiades might easily, even from his earliest youth, acquire the experience of a great variety of constitutions and manners of men, and that skill of natural history, which shews itself in the fragments of his works, where treating of those very drugs which he rejects. He might there experimentally enter into the true spirit of botany, as Dioscorides * intimates, where he admonishes the followers of Asclepiades to attend more to the description of plants, taken from the truth of nature, than to those virtues for the most part false and imaginary, which are so often groundlessly attributed to them.

* Mat. Med. I. pref. p. 1.

And this is the very error of our times, in which that study has been carried to so high a pitch.

In anatomy it appears, from what may be seen in the prementioned fragments, that he availed himself of the dissection of animals, in defect perhaps of human corpses, which in all the antient governments were considered as religiously inviolable. Herophilus and Erasistratus are the only exceptions we know of. They were the only ones, who among their cotemporaries had the advantage of being allowed to dissect a competent number of the bodies of condemned criminals, by the special concessions of two kings, both of them courageous and learned, both of them formed to magnanimity under their master Alexander the great, and who, after his decease, became themselves the founders of two flourishing kingdoms: the one, Ptolemy of Egypt, who kept near him Herophilus; the other Seleucus of Siria, who with a most ample salary, as Appian * informs us, retained Erasistratus at his court.

Of the human anatomies operated by these two physicians, Asclepiades made his own use, taking their exactness for granted, especially that

* Wars of Siria. Vol. II.

of Herophilus his countryman and his esteemed author.

As to phisic, it is manifest that he studied it from a youth, and studied it in Asia, for that in those very fragments, there are to be found curious and essential practical observations made by himself in Parium and in the Hellespont, of certain particularities which do not offer themselves to the notice of any but the skilful, and for which Antiochus the philosopher, who knew him at Athens, intitles him the Phisician second to none.

So that Pliny's allegation has palpably the air of an invidious detraction, where he says that Asclepiades planting himself at Rome all of a sudden, set up for a practical professor of phisic without having previously learnt the art, and on no foundation but that of a sagacious understanding, and of a persuasive eloquence, the art of which he had taught there.

Now it may very well be, that at the first of his residence in that city so eager after knowledge, and which was then but at the beginning of an acquaintance with the arts of thinking and speaking, he might, by way of introducing himself, teach some branch of the Greek erudition, in which himself was so great a master, to the

young nobility : but it is too gross mis-reasoning to infer from that ability of his, that he should be deficient in the other, which had been the principal object of his studies and travels. It has been judiciously observed by Plato, that eloquence is necessary to the physicians who attend the great, since generally speaking, they do not care to comply with their prescriptions, unless they are previously satisfied with the reason of them, whereas the idiot vulgar may take up with any illiterate pretenders to the art.

And indeed innumerable examples confirm the observation of Sir William Temple, that out of the three liberal professions of the middle rank, the medical art supplies the greatest plenty of materials, and the most pregnant motives for the cultivation of a diversified and polite literature. And after all, it is but just to observe, that Pliny, posterior so much in time, and notoriously susceptible of mistake or error, is rather a malignant than a shrewd interpreter of every thing.

We have no account on which we can depend, of the masters or teachers of Asclepiades ; nor is it to be conjectured ; only Reinesius * calls him the disciple of Apollonius the son of Strato. Perhaps he means of that Apollonius, not the son,

* Syntagin. Inscript. a. CI. XI. § 4. p. 609.

but the pupil of Strato, of whom Galen speaks, but neither of this one, as being the master of Asclepiades, do any of the twenty-seven authors make mention.

Though he was not, as Galen observes *, of any very ductile understanding, where his own reason did not authenticate the suggestion, yet he did not spare to avail himself of the discoveries of others. Thence came it that there are to be found the names of seven antient authors partly followed by him, with improvement of their doctrines in some points, where he thought he saw the truth more clearly. And this is it that drew upon him the reproach from Galen, of a disposition to cavil and dispute. It may however very justly be believed, that he had read and meditated a much greater number of authors than those seven, since in his days, there was already introduced the luxury of numerous libraries, and precisely the three centuries which preceded his time, were the most enlightened, and the most productive of merit, in all kinds of the Grecian literature and knowledge.

Of those seven authors, two were philosophers, Heraclides Ponticus, and Epicurus, who flourished something more than an hundred years

* Sal. contr. Erasistr. Vol. IV. p. 3

before him. The first was of the same country (Bithinia) as himself, and being born to opulent circumstances, had merely for the sake of the delight he found in philosophy applied himself under various masters, as the Pithagoreans, and Plato, Speusippus, and Aristotle. He wrote a number of books on different subjects, and among the rest one upon the nature of things, and another upon the cause of diseases. It was perhaps from one of these, that Asclepiades had taken the term of detached or loose *molecule*, as Sextus * and Dionisius Alexandrinus observe, instead of the atoms of Democritus.

That besides in other things, though not in all, he followed Epicurus, may be gathered from many passages in Galen.

The other five authors were all of them physicians as Hippocrates, of whom he commented some books; Herodicus, who was master to Hippocrates himself, and brother to the famous Gorgias, master of rhetoric at Athens. Of this physician, Plato frequently makes honorable mention: he was the first that instituted the Gymnastic system in a medical intention, separately from the athletic and military. Some of his opinions with regard to the curative indication

* III. c. 4. p. 136, § III. 18. § XXXII. c. X. p. 686.

of diseases were discussed by Asclepiades, as may be gathered from Aurelian * who also acquaints us of our Bithinian physician having been a follower of the doctrines of Theophilus †, and indeed we may see in Galen, that he made great use of his anatomical discoveries. He also made use of the doctrines of Erisstratus, but rather in the way of improving upon or correcting them, constituting as they then did the bottom of the third sect of the physical rationalists, after the Hippocratic and Herophilian, he employed, as we learn from Sextus, the precepts of Cleophantus, another antient physician often quoted by Pliny and by Galen, who might be dead about seventy years before Asclepiades was born; who, it is said, took from his writings the idea of placing one of his most efficacious remedies in the methodical use of wine.

From the good disposition of the body, from the clearness of understanding, from the education and learning of Asclepiades, and even from the philosophical sect to which he adhered, there are reasonable grounds of concluding that there existed in him all the virtues of the mind, with innocence of manners

* Morb. Chron. III. cap. 8. p. 485.

† Acut. Morb. II. c. 39. p. 174.

In the testimonies of the twenty seven authors who have mentioned him, we find no essential reproach made to his actions or morals, on the contrary upon combining and putting together the minute, scattered, though imperfect particularities that are to be found concerning him, there can be no reason for denying him the character of sagacity, of spirit, of temperance, of mildness, and of a lover of truth and justice.

He certainly shewed great advisedness in rejecting, as Pliny relates, † the invitations and promises of the king Mithridates; happily undazzled by the offers of such a fortune, since the private character of that monarch, as is now well known to the world, was that of a man sanguinary and cruel to the persons that were nearest him, of unbounded deceitfulness, and yet of a superstitious and foolish credulity in drugs, the which manner of procedure, and thinking were just the contrary to the natural temper, and to the knowledge of Aclepiades.

It appears also, that he did not want for prudence nor spirit, in his having no ambition for the petty and troublesome magistracies of his coun-

* III. cap. 14. p. 143. v. 36.

† VII. cap. 37. § 37.

try, which, as Polibius observes, being under a popular form of government, used, through the fault of its citizens, to be full of factions and disturbances, so that he rather chose after the example of the greatest part of the wise among the antients, a voluntary and tranquil exile, that in the quality of a foreigner, he might enjoy the greater civil liberty, and a philosophical ease among his books, among the assemblies of the wise and virtuous, and in the midst of his natural and artificial observations. Neither was it but an honor to his discernment, as well as to his spirit, his permanently fixing his residence in the city of Rome, which being by that time become the capital of the most extensive empire of the world, embracing, as it did, almost all Europe, and a great part of Asia and of Africa, with some form of beneficent government, drew to itself, as Aristides * observes, every thing that in the various seasons is produced in every country, as well as all the labors or works of the Greeks and Barbarians, so that whoever was in that city, could observe every curiosity of nature and art, the same, as if he had travelled every region of the habitable earth.

This must therefore have been a great allure-
ment for a philosopher, to say nothing of the

* Oration in praise of Rome. Vol. I. p. 100.

astonishing concourse of all nations to that capital, and of the frequency of those magnificent fights of the triumphs, nor of the introduction which had already taken place, of the Greek arts among that warlike and magnanimous people, no longer uncultivated and ferocious, but by that time became learned and polite.

It was then, in Asclepiades, doubtless a wise and laudable resolution that he took to settle at Rome, at a time so opportune for any design he might have to lead an honorable, pleasant, and philosophic life, without intermeddling in the least with political affairs, or taking part in the public dissentions, content with assisting every one with his advice in those difficulties, which arose from the various occurrences to the human body. His own temperance may justly be inferred from the perfect health and long life which he enjoyed, as well as from the high estimation in which he held it, in a medicinal light, employing it as one of the most efficacious instruments of his art. That he was reserved in the matter of love, considered as a sensual passion; besides there being nothing known to the contrary, it may be concluded from the tenets of Epicurus, who did not, like Plato, take love to be an infuriate instinct or OESTRUM, or a divine influence, but a mere weakness of passion, and
 who

who used to say, that the wise never yield to it, nor seek after illicit pleasures.

In his pursuits of fortune, he shewed himself moderate, having learnt in the same school the expedience of not omitting to take care for futurity, and of declining indigence as a material obstacle to the virtues. There too he learnt, that the civic filth and slovenliness should be avoided by a decent expence, with due advertence at the same time, to keep clear of sordid and despicable avarice. Thus he contented himself with competent circumstances, and though he was at Rome, in the highest esteem of any of his profession, yet was not he so intent upon gain, but that he sometimes preferred the sweet oblivion of a busy life, in a villa or country-seat of his, a little way out of town, as we learn from Apuleius *. And in this too he conformed to the opinion of Epicurus, who used to say, that the wise man according to his heart should delight in the country. And from this his generous disregard for accumulating wealth, it was that he was the more easily enabled to withstand the dangers that tempted him in the promise of Mithridates, which could hardly be less than magnificent ones.

* Florid.

He also fulfilled another Epicurean precept, of seeking, in case of need, opportune aids of fortune from knowledge itself, and from the ingeniousness of his understanding; so that it does not from thence appear fair, to infer matter of blame against him, even though he should merely from a motive of interest, as Pliny would have us believe, have, in Rome, applied himself to the most honorable and laborious exercise of the medical art.

A virtuous ambition or love of glory was also recommended by the doctrine of Epicurus, that is to say, as much of it as should suffice to defend him from contempt, and from those indignities to which men, obscure, although innocent, are but too often exposed in civil society. And if he was rather eager after praise, as we find laid to his charge by Galen *; this eagerness needs not be imputed to him as a vice, since it has ever been in liberal minds rather the productive seed of virtuous and honorable actions.

Neither ought any great stress to be laid on the same Galen's accusing † him of pride, as if

* Upon the Theriacum to Pifo. Vol. II. p. 458.

† *Of the use of the various parts of the body.* Dic. 6. Vol. I.

it had been from vanity that he in some points rejected the anatomies of Herophilus, and had slighted Erasistratus, nor made any great account of Hippocrates. But this charge is overstrained, it being well known to all the conversant in matters of study, that there frequently occur occasions for disapproving some allegation of even the greatest men, and that, without the least prejudice or injury to their just estimation, all mortals being equally subordinate to the sovereign authority of reason.

Aurelian * also seems to have aggravated conclusions against Asclepiades beyond all right, where he says that in his first visits to patients, he annulled or disallowed the prescriptions of others, out of envy: it being more likely that on the account of the difference of his method from the vulgar, and not out of a puerile triumph, he sought to satisfy the duties of his art, and of candor, by delivering the patients who trusted him from those medicaments he judged useless or pernicious.

We meet moreover with many passages from which to infer that he was, from his natural inclination a passionate lover of truth, it appear-

* Auctor. I. Cap. 15. Num. 135, p. 52.

ing from the testimonies of authors, and from the fragments of his own works, that he was never afraid of not concurring in opinion with others, wherever his own observation or reason had persuaded him of a contrary one. From this spirit of veracity it seems probable that that preference arose which he gave to the corpuscular and mechanical physiology, excluding the poetical making of nature a God combating diseases: from that spirit too he did not scruple to change the system of the atoms, in that it did not appear to him to correspond with experience. Of this practical veracity there is the strongest inference, from his having, as Celsus * and Pliny † assert, changed in a great measure the practice of physic, recalling every thing to reason, without regarding the authority of antient errors.

It is also credible that this his natural sensibility and affection for truth, engaged him to manifest it likewise in the most common actions of his life, as indeed is the custom of most of the philosophers of his stamp, so that he would not so much as in jest allow himself to utter a falsity,

* Præf. p. 3. v. 34.

† XXVI. cap. 3. Lect. 7, 8.

nor would he, for any views of interest, employ any double dealing or deceit. We have at least of this a negative argument in there not appearing against him the least indication of such objections: and by the uniform stile of his fragments, we may see that he always preferred the clearest and neatest expressions to the danger of insinuating truth under the cover of falsehood.

Some of the wisest men have reduced almost all the other virtues to the single one of veracity, or love of truth, justly perhaps believing it the principle and fountain-head of all the moral obligations. Indubitable it is that this sensibility for truth prompts man to exact justice by a certain occult violence, and infuses into the mind that generous spirit of probity by which he abstains from any fraud and from any invasion of another's right, and rather delights in a sincere obedience to the laws of the society in which he lives, and to which a contrary procedure constitutes the necessity of a continual exercise of falsity and dissimulation. Thus Asclepiades having lived a resolute friend to truth, it is reasonable to believe that he was also punctually just in all his actions, there existing no intimation to the contrary; and especially considering his presumable adherence to those solemn tenets of his sect *

* *Diog. Laert. X. Sect. 140. Diod. Sic. Eclog XXV. 1.*

that

that there is no living with pleasure without virtue, and that with virtue there can be no unpleasing life; that a life of honesty is also a life of tranquility, for that from injustice there spring innumerable and endless disturbances.

Homer * tells us that the just are also mild; this will hardly make against our believing that Asclepiades must have been far from offering any affronts or injuries to others, the rules of his sect † also engaging him to the observance of mildness, charity, and beneficence. And if we may employ a negative reason, his moderation of temper may be inferred from there not being to be found among the titles of such a number as he had wrote of books, one answer, apology or defence against the innumerable libels, which, as Pliny § tells, used to come out, on the publication of any of his works; libels which it is the most probable he did not so much as read, but nobly despised envy's want of power to bite, while himself happy in his own sphere, and content with his share of deserved reputation, was above hating his malignant adversaries, or complaining of their foolish adherents.

* See *Plato. Dial. Gorgias*, Vol. I.

† *Diog. Laert. Epic. X. S. 118.*

§ XXIII. Cap. I. Sect. 19.

But perhaps nothing demonstrates more the goodness of his heart, than the manner in which he understood the faculty of the medical art, upon his chusing it for his profession. This art he did not view in the light, in which the vulgar views it, of preserving health for ever unhurt, and of absolutely restoring it when lost, but only of proposing the best and most practical advice in every occurrence, so as to operate rationally in the endeavours to keep off the dreaded disorders, to alleviate those already incurred, to cure the curable, and at least to foresee the issue of the desperate ones. In material things, of which the living human body is one, Asclepiades, according to the relation of Aurelian *, was of opinion, that nothing happened without a cause, and that the causes of these events were always mechanical, that is to say dependent upon matter and motion, and that the relieving and injuring, though effects so different and important with respect to us, were operations intirely indifferent with respect to nature, whose task it seemed equally to be, the destroying and preserving the human fabric.

In this persuasion it was, that he judged it a

* *Acutorum. I. cap. 14.*

point of humanity to give a compassionate assistance to the afflicted with disorders, and physic appeared to him, in that intention at least, an art entirely beneficent and reconcilable to the most perfect innocence. And though from the clearness of his understanding, from his sagacity and powers of eloquence, from his extensive erudition, and other his rare endowments acknowledged in him even by his detractors, and especially by Galen *, he might very well think himself capable of aspiring to considerable employments, he chose to content himself with the less striking honors of philosopher and physician.

It has been already well demonstrated by Plato in his agreeable dialogue intituled *Gorgias*, that philosophers are naturally from the tenor of their profession more innocent, and more the lovers of justice than tyrants, and orators; and by Hippocrates † it was shrewdly observed, that all the perfections of a philosopher, both as to mind and manners, were more competent to a good physician, and even the possession of them more easily acquirable by him than by any other set of men; to which he adds with an Homerial

* Vol. I. p. 435. Vol. II. p. 458. Vol. III. p. 418. Vol. V. p. 341. *et passim*.

† *On the decorum of Physicians.* Sect. I. p. 23. V. 33. *ἵπποκράτης γὰρ φιλόσοφος ἰατροῦ*

phrase, as was frequently his custom, that the true combination of these two faculties of philosopher and physician lifted a man above the rank of humanity.

With this idea, and with a view to live not indigent, nor contemptible, nor burthensome, but rather to be usefull to his acquaintance, and for the general good of humankind, he applied himself to the universal and constant practice of physic. It was then great good sense in him to settle in the greatest and the most populous city then in the known world, which might therefore furnish him with a variety of subjects adequate to his wonderfull skill and abilities. And as the old practice of physic, with its torturous remedies, and with the rigor of its prohibitions appeared to him rather inhuman, and as he used not unpleasantly to call it, a novitiate or preparation for death, he resolved to reduce it to a milder method, freeing it from useless and noisome medicaments, and substituting to this a discreet regulation of diet, with proper and commodious changes of the organical exercises.

In the course of perhaps more than fifty years in Rome, his principal daily occupations were of three kinds : The *first*, that of visiting and taking care of the sick, and of giving verbally,

or in writing his advice even to the absent, the *second*, that of generously teaching others, the *third*, that of writing and publishing many most usefull books. Galen admits that he happily accomplished a number of cures, and one case particularly showed his clinical skill or discernment, according to the relations of Celsus, Plinius and Apulcius. This was, when he discovered a man, whose funeral was actually prepared, to be alive; upon which he brought him to himself, and afterwards, by his advice, enabled him to continue the enjoyment of life and health. Celsus briefly hints this fact, and Pliny, who generally speaking spoils his narratives, with an admixture of the marvellous, relates it as the effect of an extraordinary power in him, but Apuleius in his *Florida*, which are abstracts of the remarkable things he met with in the course of his reading, has preserved to us the circumstances of that event, which render it not only credible, but of a common nature, intirely agreeable to what has happened more than once among ourselves. He says that Asclepiades, by chance, meeting with a corpse, as was imagined, of a man, did not, from far, nor by the sight only, discover signs of life in him, but on drawing near, and touching him where the beat of the pulse is the most sensible, and on attentively observing the least motions of the lips and nostrils

nostrils, after that sweet-smelling ointment had been put into the mouth of the seemingly deceased, and his body had been all strowed with aromatics, the which observations are exactly adapted to the method lately proposed by a learned French physician * for discovering any remains of life suppressed and concealed, after long and the profoundest fits.

This narrative may also serve to correct a small error incurred by those two most learned men Conringius † and Boerhaave §, who to render the thing the more credible, thought proper to change the man into a woman in a histeric fit, without authority, and without necessity.

The books written by Asclepiades are so scantily and confusedly mentioned by the antients, that we can scarce find above twenty titles of his works, all in the medical way.

* Bruhier Memoire sur les enterremens, et dissertation sur les signes de la mort. Paris, 1745. 12°.

† Intro. in Med. P. 54. Edit. 1654.

§ *Præleç. Acadim. in Proleg. Sect 14. Asclepiades fæminam se a morte vitæ restituisse gloriatus est quæ videtur passione hystericæ laborasse.* Haller also has taken notice of this mistake. See his notes on that passage.

Some of them were calculated to illustrate what is called phisiology, or the knowledge of the natural causes of the actions of the human body living in a state of health.

And as Asclepiades, perhaps above all others, considered man as subject, in his corporeal operations, to the laws of nature, and introduced into the art, the philosophical theory * he thought it necessary to investigate primordially the minutest of his component particles, as near, as humanly speaking, he could, upon which he wrote a book *of the elements*, mentioned by Galen †, and another also quoted by him § upon respiration, and the pulse; these two actions being the foundation of understanding the essence of life, of which all the rest are either modes or effects. In this book, as may be gathered from Plutarch ‡, Asclepiades made use of the hypothesis, and of the very term itself, of the *gravity of the air*, which in the last cen-

* Haller add. to Boerhaave. De Stud. med. Vol. II. p. 303. *Asclepiades theoriæ praxin aut primus superstruxit aut certo evidentius.*

† Gal. de Elem. Lib. II. Vol. I. p. 56. v. 36. 55.

§ On the difference of the pulse, Disc. 4. Vol. 3. p. 51. v. 16.

‡ De Plac. Philosoph. IV. cap. 22.

jury did so much honor to the philosophical school of this city.

From the frequent quotations from Asclepiades about or concerning the soul, which are to be met with in many of the twenty-seven authors who have given testimony of him, it seems conjecturable that he also wrote upon the nature of the soul, so far as that concerns phisic; that is to say considering only its faculties and uses, and especially the exercise of the senses: it appears also that he had thereby thrown a light into the subject of the animal functions. Perhaps it was in this book that he set forth that doctrine of his, of which there are to be found such clear traces in his fragments, according to which he deduced the origin of the human ideas solely from sensation, rejecting the hypothesis of innate ideas, which hypothesis has been since exploded for ever by the sovereign master of the modern metaphysicians*.

He treated also of the faculties which are called natural, that is to say, of nutrition and generation, in another work, divided into several volumes, which he called preparatory. He wrote also considerations upon the doctrine of Era-

* Lock.

sistratus which were then the most currently received.

From these books, of which there are to be found many small fragments in Aurelian and Galen, it may be seen that Asclepiades had amply explained all that contributes to compose the institutes of physic, and that he renders the first and scientific part of it compleat. But moreover, he in those works, laid the foundations of the second part or branch, more profound, more abstruse, and more interesting, which consists in the knowing intimately the nature and essence of the diseases. Upon this subject he was more extensive, having written a book of definitions; a commentary upon some of the short and obscure works of Hippocrates; a treatise on periodical fevers, and three on febrile disorders, either inflammatory or quick, commonly called acute. He also wrote some books mentioned by Aurelian * upon the plague, comprehending under that name not only dangerous and mortal distempers, but slighter ones produced by some extraordinary occasion, but common to the inhabitants of any particular place.

He treated besides of some slow or chronical disorders, such as the gout, and the dropsy; he

* Acutor. II. Cap. 39. p. 136. Num. 231.

also wrote upon hemorrhages, and on the alopecia, that disorder in which the hair comes off through the universally bad state of the humors. Galen quotes a long and valuable fragment from him upon this distemper. It is to be observed that Plutarch on the authority of the philosopher Athenodorus assures us that it was in the time of Asclepiades that the hidrophobia, and the elephantiasis which is no other than the scurvy of the moderns in its highest degree, made their first appearance in the world. Now from the specification of his name, on this occasion, it may be conjectured, that he was the first or so remarkably the best of all who had considered them, as for his name to give the epoch of those two dreadful and imagined to be new disorders; and that he was perhaps the first who penetrated the true and till then vulgarly unknown causes of them, which, in the case of the hidrophobia, is the venom from the bite of a mad beast, and in that of the elephantiasis or scorbutic leprosy, the corruption of the blood by the long use of improper aliments. There is also to be found in Cassius and Galen the quotation of a book of his upon ulcers, which perhaps was a commentary upon the one of Hippocrates under that title.

The third part of phisic is the curative; the
which

which has for its object of attention, the motives resulting from the knowledge of the diseases, and which indicate the changes that should be made in the body of the diseased, in order to extirpate them. Thence results what is termed the method of cure. The most part of authors have considered jointly the knowledge and the cure, according to the classification of the diseases; though some great masters of the art, and among these Aretæus, have entirely separated the two doctrines, but Asclepiades followed the commonest way of treating of them.

The fourth part of physic treats of the medicines, or as the antients better expressed themselves, of the aids, that is to say, of all those external or adventitious means, which with the concurrence of the intrinsic vital powers, may produce those changes in the human body, conducive to the restoration, or to the preservation of health.

These aids consist in chirurgical and mechanical operations, in topics, in the motions and actions, in the aliments, in abstinence, and finally in the introduction into the course of the blood certain medical matters, designed for aids, though often in their nature over-efficacious or rather noxious, which are called

called *pharmaca* or poisons, a name according to the primitive signification of the word *pharmaca*, which, in truth they frequently deserve, by doing more harm than good, unless where duly weakened, corrected or guarded by the skill of an able physician, justly tender of his patient's welfare.

Upon this part of the medical art there was a book of Asclepiades held in high esteem, to which he had given the title of *Common Aids*, meaning these changes which a man may easily make in his own body, so as to diminish or carry off various infirmities, regulating chiefly, by medical reasoning, five things, as Pliny * informs us, *to wit*, abstinence from food, the use of wine, frictions, walking, gestation.

Pliny † himself, Sextus §, Aurelian ‡, and Apuleius ||, seem to have agreed in referring to

* Cap. III. Sect. 7. p. 444.

† XIV. Cap. Sect. 9. and XXIII. Cap. Sect. 22.

§ VII. p. 308. adv. logicos. N^o 91.

‡ *Acutorum*, Lib. I. c. 15. p. 58. and Lib. II. c. 29. p. 144.

|| *Florida*, p. 362. v. 13.

a famous treatise of his on the method of giving wine in distempers, and Aurelian * quotes one upon glisters †, from which, one would think that Celsus had taken all that he says on that head, and which is conformable enough to what is at this day esteemed the most rational practice.

The fifth part of the medical art turns upon the means of preserving health and of prolonging life, upon which there is mentioned by Celsus §, by Aurelian ‡, and by Galen ||, a celebrated work of his addressed to Geminius; in which he condemned the purgative and emetic medicines, and the too complex and artificial exercises of the gymnastic schools, maintaining that the best remedy for plenitude or a plethora was abstinence, while he commended a discreet freedom and variety in life. Thence it is that one would imagine Celsus took his most judicious and fine first chapter on phisic, and Plutarch his discourse against drugs, which abounds in

* Chronic. II. and XIII. p. 415. N°. 184.

† II. c. 12. S. De alvi ductore. p. 85.

§ I. c. 3. Sect. De his. quæ exten. corp. p. 29.

‡ *Acutorum*. I. c. 15. p. 44. and *Chronic*. II. cap. 8. p. 386.

|| Upon Health, Disc. I. and III. Vol. IV. p. 225. 246. 247.
salutary

salutary precepts. Upon this subject it is probable that those books were written which he sent to the king Mithridates, and which Pliny * mentions to have been in current reading in his time. It is also not unlikely that he wrote other books of which the titles have not been mentioned, as we meet often with propositions of his, especially quoted by Aurelian and Galen, upon which it is not easy to determine whether they belong to some of the prementioned books, or to others written by him.

Thus it is not improbable that some of the most approvable doctrines of Celsus, who professes himself his follower, should be derived from him, though his name is suppressed. Among the antients exact quotations were not overmuch in use: whence we have but too frequent occasion of complaining of their negligence, especially as it gave some of them room to indulge too far the spirit of literary pilferage.

We are also left almost entirely in the dark as to the connexions of Asclepiades with his contemporaries. We have already observed that Cicero represents him as in great esteem with the most respectable persons in Rome for dignity

* XXV. Cap. II. Sect. 3. p. 375.

and merit, the friendship of whom, it is but credible, would naturally connect him with others of the like characters valuable for learning, virtue, and politeness. Among his friends may also be reckoned that Geminius, to whom he dedicated his book upon health, and who seems to have been a man of rank, as there are to be found some of the same family, in history and in inscriptions, who about that time enjoyed both civil and military honors.

It should likewise seem that that Caius Sergius Orata was a particular friend and consulter of his, who lived in his days, and was, as Cicero * attests, the friend of the abovementioned Lucius Crassus. This is the Orata who is so famous in history for the magnificence of his country-seats, and of his fish-ponds, and who was the first that made use of penfile baths, as we find in Pliny †, in Valerius Maximus §, and in Macrobius ‡. But Pliny himself informs us that it was the recommendation of Asclepiades that introduced

* *De Orat.* I. Sect. 39. N°. 178. and *De Offic.* III. S. 16. N. 67.

† IX. cap. 54. Sect. 79. p. 359.

§ IX. Cap. I.

‡ *Saturnal.* II. 11.

the use of them. It seems then credible that that ingenious physician invented that manner of procuring a pleasing indulation or motion of the water, even in domestic baths, and that Orata being of an executive genius, made to himself a preferable point of carrying that idea into execution, whence it may be conjectured that he was his acquaintance at least, if not his friend.

There may be also discerned some traces of his acquaintance with the most celebrated civilians of his times, in that opinion which, according to Galen he introduced into phisic, that the human body suffers a continual alteration by the particles that perspire from it, so that it can never be pronounced absolutely the same two instants together. This opinion, which can hardly be said to be a common one, being to be found in one of the fragments of Alphenus, preserved to us in the pandects of Justinian, it may be presumed that Alphenus took from his masters, at the second or third hand only traditionally from Quintus Mutius Scevola Pontifex, who was the clearest and most authentic interpreter of the Roman laws, as well as a great friend and often a Collegue to the prementioned Lucius Crassus, who, as we find by Cicero valued himself on the friendship of Asclepiades, so that it may be naturally concluded that Scevola

also

also esteemed him, and might very well have taken from him that philosophical idea of the perpetual immutation of the human body.

Pliny besides tells us that he enjoyed the universal favor of every one in a miraculous manner. His expression seems even too strong and exaggerated when he asserts that Asclepiades could not win over to him all humankind more effectually, if he had been commissioned from Heaven.

The fact must have been, that the phisical doctrines of Asclepiades were more rational than the then vulgarly received ones, and that he himself was, according to the precepts of Epicurus, humane and benificent to all men, and believed that the evils sustained from some through their hatred, envy, or oppressiveness, were compensated by the good produced by society itself; that therefore such evils ought not to deject a man of sense, or give him a turn to misanthropy; while it is for such alone to preserve an equal regard for friends absent and present, not, as is the vulgar practice to injure, deride or detract from the absent. He had also learnt from the same author that friendships are usefull, and that they are therefore to be sought by voluntary advances of civility, as seed are sown in hopes of a fair harvest, but that for any thing farther, a man
of

of sense will never reckon his friends among his permanent possessions, or depend upon their stability : friendship being indeed a most valuable good, but, in the nature of things, rather too frail, precarious, and temporary.

With these maxims Asclepiades might live, as he is represented to us to have done, universally beloved ; and withall tranquil in the case of any of his friends deserting him, or becoming his enemies through levity, though we have no account of any considerable enemy that he ever had.

His disciples and followers must probably have been many, since the most celebrated physicians who flourished in the three or four generations after him are known to have been all of his school.

Thus, that Alexander Philalethes who, as Strabo * says, was, in his time, at the head of a celebrated school of Herophileans, in Asia, and is quoted by Galen and Aurelian as an author in high esteem, we find by Theodorus Priscian † to have been a disciple of Asclepiades.

* XII. 580.

† IV. 315 B. Edit. Ald.

Philonides, a physician of Durazzo quoted by Scribonius, by Dioscorides and Galen, we find commended by Herennius Philo and Stephanus, as an author of forty five books, and as a scholar of Asclepiades, much esteemed in that city, which was then very populous and free, bordering near upon Italy where Cicero passed the greatest part of the time of his short exile, being kindly received there.

The same Philo mentions in the same place two other scholars of Asclepiades, of whom one was Titus Aufidius, who is also quoted as such by Aurelian, and the other more illustrious was Nicon the Agrigentine quoted by Celsus * and praised by Cicero in one of his letters to Trebatius † for the gentleness of his medical method, of whom he mentions with pleasure to have read a book of his on Veracity, which he had not but just before seen.

It is likely that that Asclepiadic physician had treated of that infirmity of the stomach which

* Pag. 257. v. 14. M. S. but in print through Error, *Miconis*.

† *Epist. fam.* 20. written the year of Rome 709.

produces an exorbitant ravening after food, (as we also know from Aurelian * that Asclepiades himself had written upon it,) and that he had proposed the cure of it, not by purgatives or emetics, but by quiet, by temperance, and by a choice of the best adapted sustenance; for the gentleness of which method it is probable that Cicero praises him, and not for his having proposed voracity itself for the cure of voracity, as Rutgerfius † and other very learned critics have been pleased to explain that passage.

In that same letter of Cicero there is also mention made of Bassus as a friend and physician to himself as well as to Trebatius. Now it should seem that this was the Tullius Bassus who, Dioscorides § says, was of the school of Asclepiades and had wrote upon plants. Pliny intimates that he wrote in Greek || and Aurelian quotes a book of his on the Hidrophobia, and calls him withal a friend of Niger ‡.

* *Chronic.* III. Cap. 2. P. 436.

† *Venusin: lect.* Cap. 21. P. 361.

§ *Diosc.* Pref.

|| *Lib. I. Authors in the Book.* XX.

‡ III. cap. 16. p. 233.

He means without doubt of Sextus Niger mentioned among the Asclepiadics by the same Dioscorides, and it may very possibly be that Sextus Fadius that scholar of Nicon of whom Cicero had that book, might have the surname of Niger, since from what he says of him it appears that he was a friend of Bassus. The others whom Dioscorides calls the followers of Asclepiades, who flourished in Rome, and who understood Botany were Petronius, Diodotus, and Niceratus; and even Aræus himself to whom Dioscorides dedicates his work, is called Asclepiadic by Galen *, whence it may be conjectured that Dioscorides himself was of that sect, and, in fact, some external medicaments to be met with in the fragments of Asclepiades † may be seen repeated in almost the same words in that good compiler of medical matter, who having wrote in the time of Nero, still saw the credit of the Asclepiadic school subsist.

Certain it is that Scribonius Largus who wrote at the same time, gives great encomiums

* De compos. med. loc. Lib. III. Vol. II. p. 217.

† Galen, Lib. I. Vol. II. p. 158.

to our Bithinian physician, and in another place * calls him his Asclepiades; and Celsus, who died, it seems, in the time of Tiberius values himself upon following him: and the truth is, that he followed him more than he himself confesses. And that Cassius whom Celsus calls the most ingenious physician of his Age, shows himself manifestly an Asclepiadic in the medicinal problems which still remain to us of his, as has been also observed by the most learned Mercurialis † besides the proof of it in that simplicity of practice by which he happily cured, as Celsus § tells us, a burning fever with nothing but cold water.

But that disciple of Asclepiades who obtained the greatest celebrity was Themison of Laodicea in Syria, of whom we have accounts in Celsus, Seneca, Pliny, Aurelian, and Galen. They say that after the death of his master he changed his system, and instituted a new sect, abandoning the research of the more abstruse or hidden causes, and confining himself to observe, in the

* Compos. Medic. 75. p. 49.

† Var. lect. Cap. XIII. p. 114.

§ Pref. p. 18. v. 22.

evident circumstances of distempers, the particularities common to many; so that he reduced them to certain few and summary kinds giving to this his manner of examining and noting the manifest and essential resemblances, the name of method, from whence those who followed him were called methodists.

And such was the credit and facility of his doctrine, that, as Seneca * observes, he became the third archimandrite or head of a phisical sect, after Hippocrates and Asclepiades, inheriting the great reputation of his master, in Rome, where he probably might live just to see the beginning of the new government of it under the Cefars.

Certain it is that Augustus, had, very early, for his phisician another follower of Asclepiades. This was Marcus Artorius, who had also the surname of Asclepiades.

And as we know that the Greek surnames of those, who assumed the names of Roman families, were for the most part, their own primitive and original names, it would be no absurd sup-

* Epist. 95. p. 599.

position to imagine that this Artorius Asclepiades might be descended from ours.

However that may be, there was now little less than fourscore years ago, discovered at Smirna, an antient cenotaph of this Artorius, of marble with a basso-relievo and inscription, which was brought to Italy, and explained by that learned physician and antiquary Charles Patin *, in which inscription made in honor of him by the Smirneans he is called a heroe, physician to Divus Augustus, and famous for his extensive erudition. Now, by the chronicle of Eusebius we find that this physician was drowned at sea, after the victory of Augustus at Actium, which was one and thirty years before the Christian Era.

That Artorius was of the school of Asclepiades, Aurelian affirms, who relates some judicious remarks of his on the Hidrophobia, upon which, it appears that he had written a treatise.

But he is rendered still much more famous by the testimonials of the historians Velleius

* Patav. 1689. 4.

Paterculus, Valerius Maximus, and Plutarch, who attribute to him the merit of having given to Augustus himself, when he was engaged with Anthony in the battle of Philippi against Brutus and Cassius, a nobly salutary advice, not to remain within the incampment, though he was somewhat indisposed, but rather to hasten, in person like a brave general to the place of action, upon which resolution, his own safety and the victory of that day signally depended. And although the historians tell us that this physician employed towards inducing him, the argument of a dream; such a particularity has too much the air of a fiction to be believed. Much less just are those refinements of conjecture, with which some Divines have attempted to explain it; it never having been the custom of the followers of Asclepiades to ground their opinions on such superstitious follies. It is the most probable that Artorius being a learned and eloquent old man, and living, as those authors say, upon a footing of familiarity and friendship with the young Augustus, needed no other force of persuasion, than that of the plain and powerful truth of the then present circumstances.

Upon an obscure passage of Pliny the learned have also founded a conjecture that Antonius
Musa,

Musa, another famous body-phifician or Archiater to Augustus, was of the same Asclepiadic school. This Musa it was who received great and signal public honors for a cure of that prince happily atchieved by him, of a slow and dangerous disorder, about the fortieth year of his age, as we are told by Suetonius and Dion. That Musa was an Asclepiadic seems also inferable from the simplicity of his method of practice, with cold water and with lettices, as well as from his elegant and various erudition for which he was praised by Virgil who was his friend, as also by Horace who attests himself satisfied with his prescriptions.

And as the Methodists had, as Galen * observes, taken their principal tenets from the doctrine of Asclepiades, it is no wonder that the Asclepiadics should all of them appear followers of Themison ; such as Eudemus inventor of the cisters of pure water mentioned by Aurelian † and by Tacitus, from whom we know that he was a phifician at the court of Drusus, son of Tiberius. And such was Theffalus himself, who, in the reign of Nero, enjoyed

* Vol. IV. p. 77.

† *Acutor.* II. cap. 38. p. 171.

at Rome, as Pliny * tells us the highest applause, and according to the judgment of Galen † gave perfection to the sect of methodists, adopting however the theory of Asclepiades. Aurelian, mentions among the followers of Asclepiades a Chrisippus who wrote on the worms in the human body §, and one Clodius who sagaciously discovered that the ascarides a particular species of worms that infest us, are often the material cause of a disorder that vitiates and corrupts even the mind and manners ‡, of which disorder Aurelian himself is perhaps the only one of all the physicians whose works are extant, that has said any thing. Galen mentions among the Asclepiadics Gallus, Metrodorus, Moschion, and some others, and, in general, says that in his time, the sect still remained in some degree of reputation ||.

But even this became extinguished some little time after Galen, perhaps because it was too

* XXIX. Cap. 1. Sect. 5.

† Vol. IV. p. 77. and 373. and Vol. I. p. 27.

§ *Chronic.* IV. cap. 8. p. 537.

‡ *Chronic.* cap. 9. p. 545.

|| Vol. I. p. 94.

rational for mankind, because insisting as it did upon excluding every thing that was not connected with strictly philosophical truth, it must have always had for adversaries two kinds of people of notoriously great power in phisic, the *credulous* and the *impostors*, with the prevalence of whom there conspired that universal disaster, through which, on the dreadfull vicissitudes which prevailed for so many ages in the great concerns of Europe, those three execrable sisters Slavery, Poverty and Ignorance exterminated the Grecian arts, and especially that of reasoning in Phisic.

But whatever was the fate of his writings and of his doctrines, it is plain that great praise has been given him by the greatest part of those who have mentioned him.

No-one denies him the honor of being one of the few principal institutors of the medical part: and on that supposition, and in that light, he is spoke of even by those who show themselves the least favorable, such as Aurelian and Galen *.

* Cels. pref. p. 4. and elsewhere. Senec. epist. 95. Pliny XXVI. c. 3. and frequently elsewhere. Sextus Empiricus. p. 412 and 493. Galen. Vol. IV, p. 372. Vol. V. p. 397. Aurelian, every where.

But some more distinctly and expressly, as Apuleius *, for example, have called him the prince or head of all other physicians, Hippocrates only excepted; and by Antiochus the philosopher he was said to be second to no-one in physic, and deep-skilled in philosophy †. By Celsus he was held to be an author good to be followed in many things §. By Scribonius he was reckoned an excellent author ||: by Marcellus ‡ a most able physician, and memorable for his doctrines by Strabo ** extremely learned by Cassiodorus †† eloquent by Cicero §§, sagacious and wonderfully persuasive by Pliny ††,

* *Florid.* p. 362.

† *Sext. Empiric. Lib. VII.* p. 412.

§ *IV. cap. 4. De faucium exuleratione.*

|| *Epist. 3.*

‡ *Cap. IV.*

** *Lib. XII.* p. 566.

†† *V. II.* p. 509.

§§ *De Orat. I.* 62.

†† *XXVI. c. 3. Sect. 7.*

and

and an exact, polite and powerfull reasoner by Galen*.

From the extinction of the antient litterature which took place about the sixth and seventh century of the Christian era, when the greatest Part of the Greek and Latin books were lost, it was untill the sixteenth Century that the fame of Asclepiades lay dormant in the obscurity of silence.

The first moderns who then revived the Greek phisic, among whom not the least nor lowest praise belongs to our predeceffors in the Tuscan school, were followers, to an excess, of the opinions of Galen. Whence it came that, as he was not, as we have observed exempt from somewhat of asperity and injustice towards Asclepiades, it is no wonder, if they suffered themselves to be prepossessed against him, and if they also, without farther examination, gave credit to the accusations of Pliny and Aurelian, insomuch that Eustathius, who is very learned in other respects, allowed himself to be improperly carried away by prejudice, where he calls him unworthy of the name of

* Vol. I. p. 435. II. p. 458. V. p. 345, &c.

philosopher and physician for his opinions not having been the same as those of Galen *.

Some however began at length to conceive some respect for his notions; Mercurialis and Alpinus, and Saxonia especially goes so far as to stile him the most humane spirited of all the physicians that ever were in the world †.

But in the last century, that is to say, the seventeenth, which seems to be of all the preceding ones of which we have any account, the most scientific, reason began to become more powerfull than authority, and there were not only many most important new discoveries made, but many opinions of the wise antients, whose writings had been lost, and which had been represented as absurd by intermediate authors, were found to be plausible and true. Thus were revived and promulged the Philolaic Astronomy and the Democritan principles of natural philosophy, which became the first steps of ascension to afterwards a greater height.

* Libellus de multitudine. Cap. 16. After his notes upon Erotian: *Ven.* 1566. p. 136.

† De Phænigmis. Patav. 1593. p. 5.

As to the curative method of treating disorders, the Asclepiadic simplicity and discretion resumed vigor, and thence took birth the most pure and excellent modern Tuscan practice of physic, principally through the industry of the immortal Rhedi, who in the choice of his uncompound, plain, mild and safe remedies, confesses to have been from his earliest youth guided by the example of Asclepiades, to which he was directed by reading the works of Celsus*.

About the same time, those two shining luminaries of the Neapolitan school Tommaso Cornelio, and Leonardo di Capua, became sensible of the goodness of the doctrines of the Asclepiadics. Cornelio highly approved the correction which Asclepiades made of the old method too complex, too inconvenient, and too dangerous. And Leonardo di Capua merited the praise of having been the first to revive the authority of Asclepiades his opinions, clearly setting forth, and more amply than others, the agreement of them with sound reason.

In this present current century, the eighteenth, some men of learning have spoke of Asclepiades,

* Letter 13. Vol. IV. p. 42.

Ammanus especially, in his notes on Aurelian, confesses that the greatest part of the reasonings of Asclepiades are the same with those of the modern philosophers *. Daniel Le Clerc in his history of phisic has wrote largely about him : so has Barchusen in his dissertations upon the origin and progress of phisic, as also the Signior Garofalo in his explanation of the antique busto of him ; and lastly Albert Haller in his additions to Boerhaave's method of studying Phisic. But without any breach of the respect due to men of so profound learning, it may be, in general observed, that these and other illustrious moderns have either merely repeted the words of some of the prementioned twenty seven antients, or, speaking of Asclepiades, they have, taken for granted without examination, the envious censures of two or three of them, or they have neglected or omitted the most important particulars, or from an erroneous interpretation of some obscure passages or for some other reason, they have, without authority attributed to him sentiments which he never had, and even absurd and contrary to his own sistem *.

As
 some men of learning have spoke of Asclepiades

* Acutor. c. I. 14. p. 44.

† See for example Boerhaave who in the XIVth section
 of

As for my own part, it has been purely my aim, in the foregoing, to give as clear and authentic account, as I could procure, relating to the person and character of Asclepiades.

of his prelections speaking of Asclepiades, made no less than three mistakes.

The *first*, by making him posterior to Aretæus. The *second*, where he says that he boasted of certain nostrums for procuring longevity. And the *third*, where Boerhaave believes that he gloried in raising from the dead a woman in an histeric fit. And even Haller himself in his additions to Boerhaave. *De stud. med.* Vol. I. p. 304, says, that Asclepiades commended the magical cures received in Rome, and likewise superstitious medicines.

F I N I S.

As for my own part, it has been purely my
aim, in the foregoing, to give as clear and ac-
curate an account as I could procure, relating to
the origin and character of Alchymy.

Of his pretensions speaking of Alchymy, made no less
than three mistakes. The first, by making him refer to Aristotle. The
second, when he says that he heard of certain notions for
preparing longevity. And the third, when Boerhaave
believes that he found in raising from the dead a woman in
an historic fact. And even Haller himself in his additions to
Boerhaave, *De Arte Medica* Vol. I. p. 304. says that Al-
chymy commended the magical arts received in Egypt and
I know of no such medicines.

