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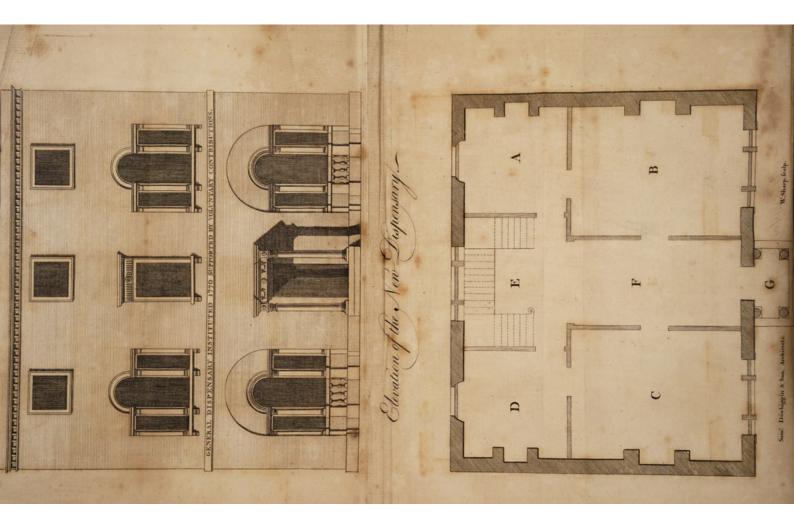
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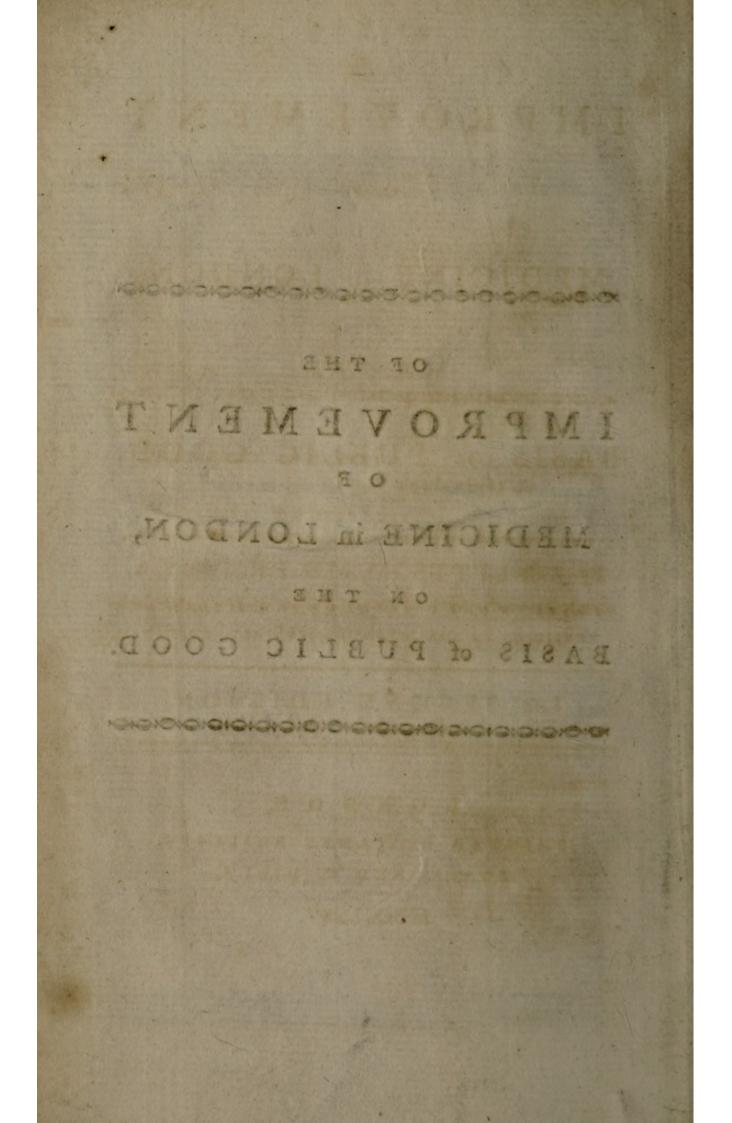


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MEDICINE in LONDON,

ON THE

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BASIS of PUBLIC GOOD. ** And make us lose the good we oft might win, ** By fearing to attempt.**

By J.C. LETTSOM, M.D. F.R.S. and S.A.

MEMBER OF THE COLLEGE OF PHUSICIANS, AND PHYSICIAN TO THE GENERAL DISPENSARY, LONDON.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON,

PRINTED BY JAMES PHILLIPS, FOR E. AND C. DILLY.

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MEDICINE in LONDON.

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THE EARL IN LARIMOUTH

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- "Our doubts are traitors; 10 212A9
 - " And make us lofe the good we oft might win,
 - " By fearing to attempt."

SHARESPEARE.

WORKON TO THE CENERAE DISFERSING THE OF MAINERS

By I.C. LET TSOM, M.D. T.H.S. and S.A.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON,

PRINTED DY JAMES PHILLES,

FOR E. AND C. DILLY.

MDCCLXXV.

THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH, PRESIDENT;

SIR LYONEL LYDE, BART. AND THOMAS NASH, ESQ.

JAMES JOHNSON, ESQ. TREASURER;

AND THE

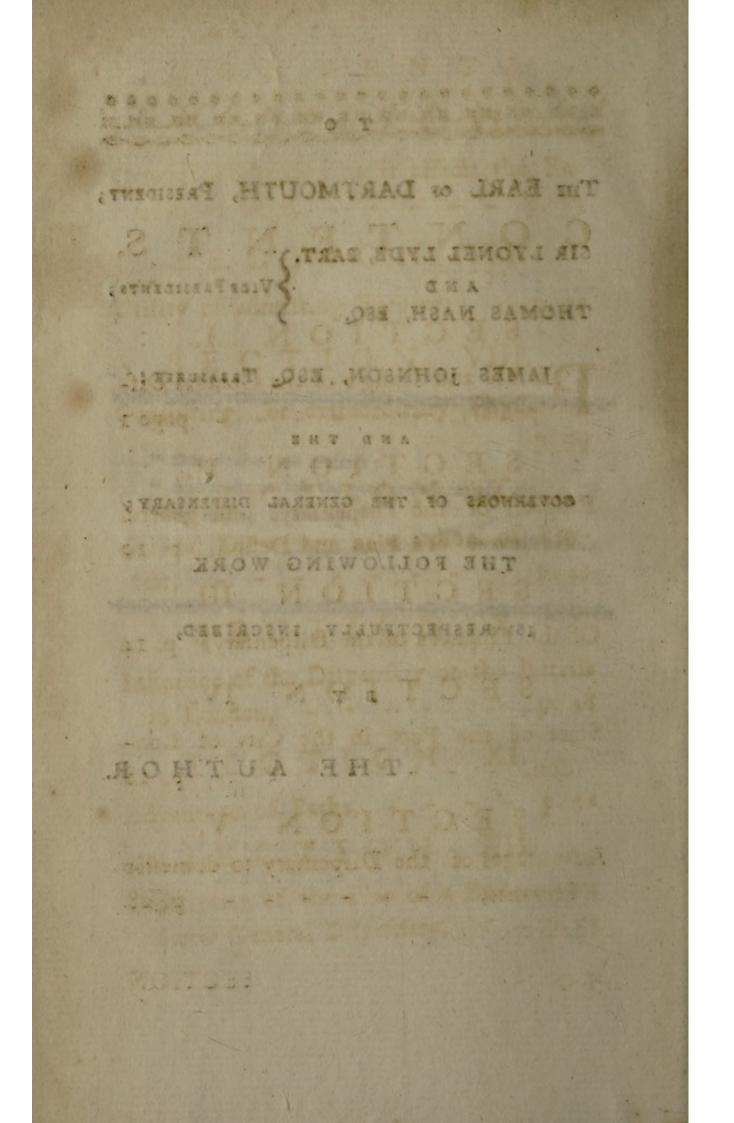
GOVERNORS OF THE GENERAL DISPENSARY;

THE FOLLOWING WORK

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.



General Difficulary as it affects the Fa-

CONTBNTS

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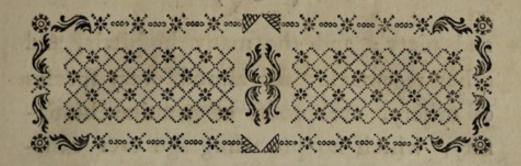
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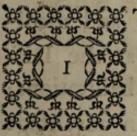
IMPROVEMENT

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MEDICINE.

SECTION I.

Plan and Defign of the General Difpenfary.



T was the fentiment of an ancient Roman, that " no-" thing brings men nearer the " Deity, than giving health to their fellow creatures." The difposition to the relief of distress that prevails in this city, is a pleafing example of the influence of civilization, benevolence, and B

and piety; and the many hofpitals, and other receptacles for almost every species of misery, are proofs of genuine humanity, which no preceding age ever exhibited. But objects of compassion must still prevail, as the human constitution is still liable to pain and difease; and when pain and difease are united with poverty, they form a picture of human woe, that must naturally excite the pity, and engage the protection of those, who have been exempted from such accumulated misery.

Thefe confiderations first gave rife to the GENERAL DISPENSARY, as an auxiliary to the hospitals in this metropolis, in order to administer advice and medicines to the poor, not only at the Difpensary, but also at their own habitations; which latter circumstance is an advantage peculiar to this plan. And, notwithstanding the many excellent charities, already sublishing for relief of the fick in and about this great metropolis; yet, when it is is confidered how many poor, from the nature of their circumstances and diforders, are still necessarily confined to their wretched dwellings, and perish through want of proper affistance, the utility of this institution becomes obvious.

It is prefumed that this Charity will be particularly ferviceable to fuch poor labouring families, when vifited with illnefs, as have not the ability to affift themfelves, and yet are willing to exert their utmost endeavours for fupport in ficknefs as well as in health. What pleafure must it, therefore, afford the benevolent and humane, to step in, at this critical time of distrefs, to their affiftance; and to be, under Providence, the happy instruments of relieving these poor objects from their various afflictions !

This Charity extends alfo to the difeafes of children; as it is too evident, that many of these, under a variety of slight maladies which affect their tender frames,

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are,

are, by neglect or improper treatment, totally loft to the public; or, if they furvive, are rendered ufelefs if not burthenfome members of the community. It is a melancholy truth, that near half the number born in London die under two years of age.

The fubfcription is fixed low, with a view to render the Charity more extensive, and give the industrious poor an easy opportunity of obtaining recommendations from their benevolent neighbours, on the earliest attack of fickness; and thereby of receiving immediate help, before their difeases have acquired that degree of violence, which indigence and delay must necessarily occasion.

Under these peculiar advantages, the poor have a physician at their bedside on the very day they apply for relief; instead of being banished from their habitations, when languishing with sickness, to bear the controul of alien nurses, they are continued tinued under the foftering care of their own relations, by which love and gratitude are mutually excited, and family connexions more firmly eftablished; and while domestic happines is thus cultivated, the morals of so useful and numerous a class of the community are preferved unaffailed and untainted.

As fuch an extensive plan could not be immediately carried into execution in all the adjoining parts of this great metropolis, it was thought expedient to establish the first Dispensary in the city of London, and to settle the limits of visiting the fick at their own habitations, for the present, within the liberties thereof.

The Difpenfary is fituated in Alderfgateftreet, where a phyfician attends at eleven o'clock every day (Sundays excepted) to give advice to fuch out-patients as fhall come recommended, and to vifit the home-patients at the places of their abode, as the cafe may require.—By out-patients are meant meant, fuch as are able to attend the Difpenfary; by home-patients, fuch as are not able to attend.

Though home-patients are, for the prefent, fuch only as live within the city and liberties of London; yet, out-patients are relieved without any reftriction as to place of refidence.

An apothecary conftantly refides at the Difpenfary, to receive letters of recommendation, and compound and deliver out the medicines prefcribed by the phyficians.

Chirurgical*, venereal, and lunatick cafes are not admitted, being the peculiar objects of other charities.

* Since this piece was fent to the prefs, the committee have agreed to refer the admission of furgery to the next general meeting, in confequence of a motion made for that purpose by the author.

But

But as there are medical cafes, wherein chirurgical affiftance is requifite, a furgeon attends on fuch occasions.

No perfons are deemed objects of this charity, but fuch as are really neceffitous.

Each patient is admitted by a printed letter of recommendation, figned by a governor; and, when cured, returns thanks, that fuch governor may be informed of his right to prefent another object.

A general meeting is held on the fecond Wednefday in March, June, September, and December, in every year, at which nine governors conftitute a board.

A committee of fifteen governors (three of whom are a quorum) are chosen at the general meetings in June and December, and meet at the Dispensary on the last Wednesday in every month; which committee is open for any governors who please to attend, and who are intitled to a vote equally equally with the gentlemen appointed thereon.

A medical committee is chosen annually, to inspect the drugs used in the Dispensary.

Perfons fubfcribing one guinea annually to the fupport of this Charity, are governors during the continuance of their fubfcriptions, and intitled to have one patient at a time upon the Difpenfary lift.

Governors fubfcribing two guineas annually are intitled to have two patients upon the lift.

A benefaction of ten guineas conftitutes a governor for life, and admits two patients at a time upon the books.

Nobility, members of parliament, and ladies, fubfcribing as above, may vote at all elections, by any governor appointed proxy in writing for that purpofe.

Annual

Annual fubscribers, defirous of being governors for life, may become fuch, on paying within the year a further fum, to make up not lefs than ten guineas in the whole.

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SECTION II.

Progrefs of the Difpenfary, and General Review of it's Plan and Defign.

T the commencement of the Difpenfary, in the year 1770, it was circumferibed to admit certain objects and difeafes only; but, in it's progrefs, the acceffion of fubfcribers, and the confequent increase of it's income, have rendered many of those restrictions both unneceffary and improper. The governors have hitherto paid a laudable attention to every propofal of improvement; they have lately admitted fmall-pox patients, and domestic fervants, when properly recommended, to receive the benefits of their contributions; they have elected a furgeon to attend medical cafes, wherein chirurgical affistance is requisite; and as they feem thus difposed to receive every representation which tends to the convenience, interefts, and general good of the poor, I am

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am induced to lay before them fuch propofals, as, from an attentive confideration of the finances of the Charity, and the miferies of the poor, appear most calculated to promote the great ends of the institution, Public Good.

The finances of the Difpenfary, as well as the applications of the fick, have gradually increased fince it's first establishment, which has induced the governors to inquire after a more fpacious edifice for the purpose of conducting the business of it; the prefent, therefore, feems the most eligible opportunity for addressing them upon a fubject now under their contemplation, and upon the methods most conducive to it's advantage and improvement; and if it should appear that opening the Difpenfary to furgery in general, and to every difeafed object that may apply for relief, properly recommended by a fubscriber, would form the broad basis of public good, I doubt not but this addrefs will meet with that reception and fupport, which C2

which has hitherto been manifested upon other occasions.

The governors at prefent do not amount to 1000; but as the increafe, though gradual, has been great, there is the faireft reafon to conclude, that the number will foon be doubled. This, however, I shall take for granted, and proceed in my calculations upon such a supposition; but whatever number of subscribers be admitted, the proportional expences will nearly quadrate, and therefore no misconstruction can result from adopting two thousand instead of the present number.

Not two years ago the governors of the Difpenfary found the houfe firft occupied for conducting the bufinefs of it too fmall, they therefore took one more commodious; and this is now as much too little as the former had been two years before: hence it is hoped they will not pay too fcrupulous a regard to economy, when they have found the public encouragement fo much furpafs their moft fanguine expectations. expectations. For this reafon I have offered a plan of a Difpenfary furnished with baths, and proper apartments for every useful contingency, with an estimate of all the expences that are likely to accrue: and as there are many old buildings in Alderfgate-ftreet, and in it's vicinity, the governors may execute whatever plan they are pleased to adopt; and, with such opportunities and advantages, we may hope to see perfonal convenience, simple elegance, and public utility, at once united.



for their fervices during the laft year.

In this city, where opplouse is united

wish benevelence, is was not probable that

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had been of late confiderably augmented

SECTION

SECTION III. Of the Finances of the Difpenfary.

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rions. For this reafon i have of-

TN the year 1774 this Charity was enabled to purchase five hundred pounds in the stocks, from the favings made in that and the preceding years fince it's eftablifhment. At the period abovementioned, the gratuity to the two phyficians was particularly agitated; and many of the governors were then of opinion, that their fubscriptions would barely answer the numerous applications of the fick poor, which had been of late confiderably augmented in proportion to the number of fubfcribers, from the Charity being more generally known among the lower class of people; but, as the labor of the phyficians appeared to have been very great, it was agreed to give each one hundred pounds for their fervices during the last year.

In this city, where opulence is united with benevolence, it was not probable that an an inffitution fo friendly to human nature, would be lefs regarded by the public than it had hitherto been; on the contrary, this genteel emolument given to the faculty, while it animated their application, rendered the poft of phyfician to the Difpenfary more confpicuous, and more worthy the attention of phyficians of character and reputation, and daily increafed the generous contributions of the public: the applications of the fick confequently increafed, in proportion; and this rendered it neceffary to elect a third phyfician the fame year.

following entimate, which includes

The expence which the Charity fuftained by fo juft an attention to the faculty, feemed therefore amply compenfated by the reputation and additional fubfcriptions procured by it; for in 1775 the governors amounted to upwards of eight hundred, and five hundred pounds more were laid out in the funds; fo that the capital amounted to one thous fand pounds, befides upwards of one hundred in the treasurer's hands. From From this fhort view it is evident, that the General Difpenfary will never fail for want of fubfcriptions, while the faculty are treated in fuch a manner as will engage gentlemen of eminence to undertake the laborious offices of phyficians and furgeons to it.

the attention of phylicians of ch

The progreffive acceffion of governors muft foon augment the number as high as two thoufand. The Charity will then require three phyficians and as many furgeons, whofe falaries, with those of the apothecary and affistants, are rated in the following estimate, which includes all other contingent expences.

ATTRACT SUL OF ROBRISHIE HE MILLOU AR	to
Three phyficians and three furgeons	600
One apothecary	80
Two affistants, 401. each	80
Secretary	40
Collector	100
Drugs, &c	500
Houfe-rent	120
Miscellaneous expences, coals, candles, &c	100
nied to one thousand pounds, belide	ioni
ALL ALL AND AND A THE ADDRESS AND ADDRESS AND ADDRESS ADDR	1620
2000 governors, at 1l. 1s. per annum, is 2100	
Interest of 10001, at 3 per cent. per ann. is 30	
	2120

The expences deducted from the income of the Charity will leave an annual furplus of five hundred and ten pounds, which, in a few years, must be fufficient to enable the governors to erect a new building, and to extend the benefits of their institution to more distant limits.

ACTEIOTE.

It may be objected, that fome of the governors are fubfcribers for life, and therefore no future fubfcription can arife from them; but to balance this deficiency, as many gentlemen at leaft fubfcribe two guineas annually. To this we may add donations by will, which will foon augment the capital of this Difpenfary, and preclude every doubt of want of finances to anfwer it's future exigencies.

With the revenue above-mentioned, the General Difpenfary will annually afford relief to about twelve thousand patients, which is nearly double to fome hospitals in London, whose revenues are four times greater.

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SECTION IV.

State of the Poor in the City of London.

THE poor are a large, as well as ufeful part of the community; they fupply both the neceffary and ornamental articles of life; they have, therefore, a just claim to the protection of the rich, whofe interests must direct them to encourage the industrious in their employments, to frame laws for the maintenance of their rights, and to fuccour them in the misfortunes to which they are unavoidably incident.

This inutual obligation between the rich and the poor, neither of whom could long fubfift without the aid of the other, has in all ages formed the moft natural and permanent ground of intercourfe between the different degrees of the people; the artizan always depending upon the affluent for employment, and the fuccefs of the artizan being always neceffary to the eafe and convenience of the affluent. In

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In a country where many individuals are enriched by commerce, and where all people are poffeffed of civil liberty, and the unreftrained exercife of their faculties, the ornamental and neceffary arts muft unavoidably flourifh: but, wherever many perfons are employed, labor muft be cheap; the earnings, therefore, of the artizan, will feldom exceed his expences; and as many of thefe arts depend upon circumftances changeable in their nature, multitudes muft thereby be liable to fuffer a temporary poverty.

However, whilft health continues, the refources which daily open to the induftrious in a trading country, afford alfo a temporary fubfiftance to their families : but a long continuance of health is the lot of few. The poor, from the occafional want of employment and wholefome food, from expofure to all changes of the weather, and from various other caufes, are often vifited with ficknefs, as well as with poverty; one, indeed, is confequent D 2 upon upon the other, and thereby they become the immediate objects of affiftance. It is then peculiarly neceffary that the hand of pity should be extended to soften the pangs of a sick bed, and to restore health and ease to the poor in affliction.

But affecting as the picture of poverty united with difeafe may appear, it ferves to heighten our approbation of the generous and benevolent fpirit, which every quarter of this city nobly exhibits; the numerous hofpitals, and other munificent receptacles for our diftreffed fellow-creatures, are undeniable proofs of the piety, compafion, and liberality of the opulent, which no preceding age ever afforded. Greece had her exquifite flatues, and Rome her public baths and edifices; but Chriftianity hath raifed monuments of compafion and beneficence, unknown both to ancient Greece and Rome.

In a free country, where the manners of the people are thus foftened and humanized, and

TRUTH MARY MICHTE

and amongft whom mutual interefts muft perpetually fubfift, a fpontaneous gratitude will naturally arife in the poor towards their benefactors, to repay by their induftry thofe obligations which their unavoidable ficknefs had incurred; they not only meet their families with pleafure, but they are animated to follow their daily labour with redoubled chearfulnefs and vigor.

I have been too intimately acquainted with the condition and manners of the poor, to want facts in support of what I advance; if I err, it will be in not doing fufficient justice to that industry and gratitude, which they exemplify in their general deportment. Those, who form their judgment from a fuperficial obfervation of a few intoxicated objects, who are found in the most frequented places, are much mistaken with respect to the body of the laborious poor, who humbly feclude themfelves in miferable courts and allies. Vice is barefaced, and boldly exposes itself in the open freets; but modest worth steals from

from the public eye, and frequents the moft folitary avenues: one vicious man, therefore, becomes more confpicuous than a thoufand good men; and our conclufions cannot be just without being formed. from the whole, both with respect to the lower as well as higher stations of life.

When I confider the diffreffes of the indigent, I rather admire that the inftances of their misconduct should be fo rare : when they behold the affluence, eafe, and indulgence of their fuperiors; when, in fpite of their utmost industry, they can with difficulty support their families; and when ficknefs and difappointments fupervene, it is not to be wondered at, if fome expressions of discontent should break forth amongst them. But fuch only can properly judge of these repinings, who have feen a whole family, that once experienced better days, confined to one chamber, and one folitary bed, with fickness, with want, and a total incapacity to raife one penny; let fuch try the experiment without

out murmuring, before they form a 'conclusion to the difadvantage of the fufferers.

During the laft three years, I have attended nearly fix thoufand poor perfons, into many of whofe habitations I have entered, and been converfant with their fufferings, and their refignation under them; in both of which they have exceeded many of their fellow-creatures, whofe lot has caft them in a fuperior ftation, and whofe contentment under temporary miferies, fhould ever be fuftained by this comparative reflexion:

"What myriads wifh to be as bleft as I!" SHENSTONE.

Great cities are like painted fepulchres; their public avenues, and ftately edifices, feem to preclude the very poffibility of diftrefs and poverty: but if we pafs beyond this fuperficial veil, the fcene will be reverfed; the pleafing lights and fhades of the picture will be blended with, and loft in a dark back-ground. A man,

A man, conversant only with the common concerns of life, would infer, upon the least reflexion, that as families in the middle station, with the utmost circumspection, cannot restrain their expences under confiderable fums a year; the laboring poot, and many ingenious artizans, who cannot poffibly acquire more than forty or fifty pounds in the fame time, must be liable to fuffer much diffres either when out of employment, or when vifited with ficknefs. Temperance and labor render them prolific ; and to fupport a numerous family with all the necessaries of life, by their fmall earnings, is an invincible proof of the economy and industry that generally prevail among them.

Sometimes, indeed, by fucceffive attacks of illnefs, they are incapable of procuring the common neceffaries of life; they have literally wanted bread, as well as cloaths; and, inftead of a bed, an old oil-cloth has been fubftituted, and the whole furniture of it has been a worn-out blanket, blanket, infufficient to hide what decency On fuch a couch have been requires. found a husband, a wife, and two or three children, at once chained by difeafe, without any refources to procure a morfel of bread; they have thus continued, till the payment for their wretched dwellings became due, when this difmal confinement has been changed for the horrible restraint of a prifon, loaded with putridity and poifon.

It must be owned, indeed, that fuch examples of extreme diffress do not very often occur; they are, however, much more frequent, than is usually imagined by those, who confider the amazing fum which the poor-rates annually amount to, and the various other provisions calculated to relieve the indigent.

Though I wish not to accuse individuals, yet truth obliges me to fay, that evils exift fomewhere, which require immediate reformation. I have reason to believe, that the fum annually raifed, would fupply all the the neceffities of the national poor, were it timely and properly applied; and this I can deduce from the conduct of a fociety, whofe poor are comfortably fupported, and their children clothed and educated, and fet forward in life, with no great expence to the individuals of the community.

But from whatever caufes the prevailing diftreffes of the poor may originate, prefent mifery requires prefent aid; whereby health, which is fo neceffary to their fubfiftance, will be fooner reftored, famine and a prifon avoided, the nation inriched by induftry, and a hardy race of ufeful members preferved to the community.

The occafions of making ourfelves happy by extending relief to the needy, are numberlefs, and would feem adapted to diffufe happinefs more generally among mankind. If affluence and independence could univerfally prevail, the benevolent would not experience the inexpreffible pleafure pleafure of relieving the diftrefied; neither could there exift that grateful fatisfaction, which modeft indigence ever feels from well-timed fuccour. In this city, however, there is no probability that thefe caufes of mutual pleafure will ever be removed; but, on the other hand, the affluence of fome rifes in proportion to the neceffities of others, whofe wants filently petition for their affiftance.

A little good, properly directed, is often great in it's increafe; the widow's mite was not beftowed in vain : no perfon, therefore, fhould withhold his hand, from the reflection that a little can produce no benefit; but rather be animated to do good, by obferving that great effects have refulted from trifling caufes; that the fmalleft fpring is the fource of a mighty river which waters numerous provinces; that the loftieft oak of the foreft is germinated from an acorn; and that the particle, that feems loft in the ocean, may become a pearl of ineftimable value.

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SECTION V.

Advantages of the Difpenfary to domeftic fervants.

CICKNESS is the lot of humanity; I and this useful as well as numerous part of the community, who interest themfelves in their different departments for the profit and pleafure of their masters, have a natural claim upon them for relief, when rendered incapable of labour by the attacks of ficknefs. The female fex, in particular, conftitute the majority of domeftic fervants in this city; they have been accustomed to the plenty of their master's table ; and frequently receive indulgencies to which the abject poor have not been used : by this, and a continual intercourfe with people of decent manners, they acquire a degree of delicacy of body, as well as fenfibility of mind, that renders them lefs able to undergo difficulties, or exposure to the wide world. Many of them who are born with tender frames, and

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and delicate constitutions, exert themselves fo much in the discharge of their duty, as renders them liable to numerous ailments; and unwilling to complain for fear of incommoding a family, or incurring an expence which they themfelves are unable to fupport, they patiently linger on, till difeafe becomes too deeply fixed to be eradicated. I have, indeed, been witnefs to the most laudable instances of humanity in mafters and mistreffes of families, who, as foon as they have difcovered the fickness of their female fervants, have evinced the tendereft care of them, engaging the advice of the family phyfician or apothecary, and taking upon themfelves every expence that might accrue : and where fervants meet with fuch treatment the aid of the Difpenfary is not requifite. In fome families peculiar circumstances may occur, and fervants may be feized with certain difeases, particularly of the infectious kind, which may render it highly expedient to remove them to lodgings; but the humane interference of masters and mistresses may still be

be conducted with no lefs advantage and fecurity to fervants than if they were at home. There are, however, many heads of families, whofe humanity does not rife to fuch complete efforts of genuine compassion. The tender domeftic, whofe fickness is often occasioned by an anxious defire to pleafe the family, is either left to discharge the expences of it, or turned out of the-house at it's first commencement, for no other reafon, but becaufe fhe is fick, and may poffibly die in the family. If we are made to affift and to do good to each other in the daily and common occurrences of life, how much more should the tenderest emotions of fympathy be excited, and the most effectual relief be administered, in fuch affecting fituations? If we ferve our fellow-creatures fo far only as it creates us no trouble, where is the prevalence of Christianity over felfishness? The removal to ftrange lodgings, the ideas of anxiety thence excited, and the numerous fears which are apt, in fuch a perplexed flate, to crowd in upon the mind of an inexperienced

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perienced girl, who may have laboured for years without faving many shillings, all contribute to augment the first malady, and protract the cure.

Thus abandoned and out-caft, what a fcene of woe do the first returns of health exhibit? Perhaps far from her native home, without one real friend, but furrounded with many false ones of both fexes, how unexpectedly do the misfortunes of a frail conftitution, and the neglect of those who should have fuccoured her in distress, introduce her into a scene of life, to which, however shocking, necessity compels her to submit at first, and habit afterwards reconciles her beyond redemption.

To fervants, thus dangeroufly fituated in families, I know that the Difpenfary has been an ufeful and noble fuccour. It has induced mafters and miftreffes to admit that relief, by which no expence is incurred; and, for the fame reafon, has encouraged fervants to apply early for a cure, before their diforders were too deeply rooted in the conftitution. Thus Thus not only the health but the morals of young people of both fexes have been preferved, and that tie betwixt mafters and fervants which humanity and juftice have formed, has become firmly ftrengthened; and, as I have generally obferved, every kind affiftance that domeftics receive, is amply repaid by their fidelity, economy, and induftry.



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S E C T I O N VI. General Difpenfary as it affects the Faculty at large.

THERE there are numbers of wealthy citizens, there must always exift numbers of poor; the elegance and ease of the former depend upon the ingenuity and labor of the latter; and the opulent have abundantly teftified their fenfe of this connexion, by many coftly edifices for the reception and relief of the difeafed poor. Though this has undoubtedly leffened the general practice of furgeons and apothecaries, it has not leffened their emoluments, as these receptacles are open only to poverty and diffrefs; it is, therefore, the unprofitable business only that must be deducted from the income of the faculty at large : and, indeed, we find gentlemen of the profession fo fensible of this, that many of them have become benefactors to these very institutions. Hence, if hospitals do not operate against the interests of the faculty,

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culty, the Difpenfary cannot injure them; becaufe the fubjects of it's relief are fuch only as are really neceffitous; and from fuch I am fure the faculty are too generous and independent to demand the mite of hard-earned labor.

The beft plans have been abufed, and, probably, individuals in eafy circumftances may have affumed the appearance of neceffity, and thereby partaken of that charity which was defigned only for the indigent; but fuch inftances muft rarely, if ever, occur in the General Difpenfary, becaufe a committee of the governors attend daily, to prevent impofitions of this kind, and to rectify every abufe.

to poverty and diffrences at is, therefore, the unprofitable bufiness only that mult be deducted from the income of the faculty at large : and, inder the faculty at



very inftitutions. Hence, if holpitals do

not operate against the interests of the fa-

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SECTION VII.

siden is a proof of what the eider Chari-

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Utility of admitting Surgery.

General Difpenfary for relieving the L poor at their own habitations, is but a modern institution, different from every other charity established in this kingdom; the governors, therefore, acted with greater circumfpection, refpecting the indifcriminate admiffion of patients, during the infancy of fo novel a plan. Perfection is not the production of a day; it is experience that directs an accurate architect in raifing a stupendous edifice upon a well-laid foundation; and we have now fufficient ground to decide upon the propriety of admitting chirurgical patients as well as medical. The governors of the WeftminsterDifpensary, emboldened by the fuccefs of this prior establishment in the city of London, from the first ventured to administer relief to every malady to which the human frame is liable; and the rapid progrefs of this institution of but the other

day,

day, is a proof of what the elder Charity, with a confiderable capital in the funds, is now able to accomplifh : it fhews that chirurgical cafes are not more expensive than medical ; and, more than this, it evinces, that the worft operations may be conducted at the houses of the patients with ease and with fucces.

We have, indeed, feen this happily afcertained, by the fuccefs which hath attended feveral operations conducted by the furgeon to the General Difpenfary, and fome of them in capital cafes, without one example of fatality.

well-laid foundation; and we have now

dom ; the governore, therefore, a

There are frequent inflances of patients laboring under difeafes, equally demanding the care of the furgeon as well as of the phyfician; and moft chirurgical cafes require, likewife, medical affiftance : a ftrong plea might hence be formed, for admitting fuch complicated cafes; and, confequently, for admitting furgery in general.

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day.

The poor, whofe circumstances often compel them to make use of the first means of aid which specious pretenders offer them, frequently fall victims to ignorance and quackery, and thereby for ever impair their health, to the injury of their families, and and loss of the community. The Difpenfary, however, has proved a noble check to impostures in physic, and nearly extirpated medical quacks out of the precincts of the city; but it's influence has not yet been opposed to pretenders in furgery, by whom hundreds of our unhappy fellow creatures are annually facrificed on Tower-hill and in Moorfields: perfuaded I am, however, from the fupplications of the poor, that these pests of fociety would foon be compelled to quit the city for want of bread, were chirurgical cafes admitted to partake of the benefits of the Difpenfary. Ignorance and impudence would then no longer, in the public walks, impose upon the unthinking multitude the cures of flight fcrophulas for confirmed cancers, and of flight inflammations

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flammations of the eyes for the removal of blindness; the maladies of the poor would then be timely checked, and effectually eradicated, by the joint efforts of medical and chirurgical experience, and the life of many an ufeful member would be redeemed to the community, their relations, and their friends.

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xtimated medical quacks out of the pre-

index of the city; but it's influence has

or yet been apposed to pretenders in fur-

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SECTION VIII. Of confulting, or extraordinary Phyficians.

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A S the Difpenfary requires three times as much attendance as the largeft hofpital in London, though the fmaller hofpitals have double the officers to do the duty of them, it is natural to fuppofe, that the labor of each of the Difpenfary phyficians muft be too great to allow them to officiate one for another; and, at the fame time, their expofure to infection in vifiting the poor at their own habitations, and frequently the prifoners in the compters, muft render their health very precarious; hence much inconvenience muft arife, for want of affiftance during the indifpofition of any of the phyficians.

It appears neceffary, therefore, to appoint confulting phyficians, to attend during fuch exigencies; and likewife to confult with the phyficians in ordinary upon difficult difficult and hazardous cafes. They might be chofen out of thofe phyficians in ordinary, who are difpofed to retire from that laborious flation; and the poft fhould be merely honorary, and have no falary annexed to it. The governors, I dare fay, will not be under the neceffity of waiting long before they will have an opportunity of fhewing their approbation of former fervices, and, without any additional expence to the charity, thus rewarding thofe officers who have faithfully difcharged their duty.

fame time, their expedure to infection in vifiting the poor at their own habitations, and frequently the prifoners in the compters, must render their field th very precarious; hence must in the indified for want of adding the indified

It appears neceffary, therefore, to appoint confulting physicians, to attend during such exigencies; and likewife to confult with the physicians in ordinary, upon difficult

fition of any of the

SECTION IX. General Difpenfary as a School of Phyfic.

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EXT to the fuccour and relief of the poor, the promotion of medical knowledge is of the utmost importance in a medical inftitution. Unfortunately for students of physic and furgery, and for mankind in general, no public plan has been adopted in Europe for conveying inftruction in imitation of private practice; and hence it is, that young gentlemen of genius and application are fo much at a loss at the commencement of their practice. In places wherein a multitude of our species are confined at one time, diseases in general put on a fameness of appearance, and have all more or lefs a putrid tendency; but a plan like that of the General Difpenfary, where patients are visited at their own habitations, affords an opportunity for ftudents of the healing art to observe the varieties in difeases, as they usually arife QUIDD G in

in private practice ; they will fee their progrefs and determination more clearly, and learn to diftinguifh and treat, more judicioufly, the fymptoms they fhall in future have occafion to preferibe for. Were thefe favourable opportunities of information farther improved, by lectures of the phyficians and furgeons, adapted to the reigning difeafes and circumftances of the patients, we need not hefitate to declare, that this inftitution might be rendered of the utmost importance to fudents, to the feience of medicine, and to the public.

genius and application are to much at a

There are many young gentlemen of genius, application, and learning, whofe finances may have been much impaired in acquiring only the rudiments of medicine; and, therefore, as public good fhould ever be the motive of conduct with the faculty, the admiffion to the benefits of the Difpenfary fhould be made as eafy as poffible to the ftudents, who, befides the ufual contingent expences requifite to acquire quire medical knowledge, might not deem ten guineas per ann. too large a gratuity for the privilege not only of attending the practice of the phyficians and furgeons, but likewife of being admitted, during that term, to all the lectures, and of feeing the manner of compounding medicines, and the forms ufed in prefeription.

fublequent ones if it is heade of confequence

The phyficians and furgeons might each give a public lecture, once every week, on the following fubjects :

ridate betweener to the Diffemiary,

The phyfician on Mondays, <	Clinical lectures on fuch cafes as the Difpenfary affords.
The phyfician on Tuefdays,	Theory and practice of me- dicine.
The phyfician on Wednefdays,	Materia medica, botany, and chemistry.
The furgeon on Thursdays,	E Practical lectures on the chirurgical cafes in the Difpenfary.
The furgeon on Fridays, -	System of furgery, including operations in general.
The furgeon on Saturdays,	Anatomy, and chirurgical obfervations in general.

This plan, indeed, may not be fully executed for fome time; but though we can-G 2 not

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not immediately attain perfection, the nearer we approach towards it the better.

the privilege not only of attending the prab-A

By feeing a multitude of cafes in quick fucceffion, without reflecting carefully on each, the attention of the ftudent is often bewildered; and the useful impressions which one cafe affords, may be effaced by fudden fubsequent ones: it is hence of consequence to digeft one cafe before the attention is engroffed by another; and, to this end, the students should be allowed to visit the home-patients belonging to the Difpenfary, on fuch days as the phyficians attendance may be difpenfed with; and should draw up reports of the state of the disease and the prefent fymptoms, as well as the indications of cure, and the remedies proper to be administered : these reports should be prefented to the phyficians under whom the refpective cafes were admitted, who should affign reasons for confirming or rejecting the opinions of their pupils, and then offer their own more mature judgment upon the fubject before them.

Every

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Every perfor of information is aware of the fanguine notions and theories which fudents acquire by a mere college education: it is a rational practice that muft confirm fome of their opinions, and rectify others; that muft let them perceive that many a difeafe, which theory has expelled in a breath, remains obftinate under the care of the ableft phyficians.

cafes, and to communicate their mutual

Were fuch a plan adopted, and that it might eafily be done I know by experience, young gentlemen, at their entrance upon the anxious and arduous tafk of the guardianfhip of life, would not be at a lofs when called to the urgent relief of the fick, nor be tempted to adopt an unfteady precarious method of treatment; but, having carefully combined a fyftem of practical and theoretical knowledge, they would accurately inveftigate fymptoms, and apply those remedies that nature and the difeafe require.

the most ample means of perfecting themfelves is the treatment of human maladies;

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Though I have mentioned medicine in a particular manner in this place, the fame plan might be adopted for furgery, and fimilar good effects would undoubtedly refult.

The faculty belonging to the Difpenfary have long continued to meet together once a week, to confult upon all difficult cafes, and to communicate their mutual affiftance to each other : and fuch confultations, which tend to check the fallies of wild fancy, and bring theory to the teft of experience, muft prove peculiarly inftructive to the pupils, who would hear the united obfervations of perfons experienced in practice, fee the inefficacy of certain remedies in certain difeafes, and learn to apply others better adapted to the urgent fymptoms, or peculiar conftitution of the patient.

apply those remedies that nature and the

In fuch a procefs, fludents would find the most ample means of perfecting themfelves in the treatment of human maladies; and, and, while the healing art advanced to maturity, the public must necessarily reap the benefit, by always meeting with accomplished guardians of health, under whose protection they might fafely repose that dearest of temporal bleffings.

cure of difente, cannot fail to produce forme

diminution in the bills of mortality; and

the General Difpenfary, which, in the

fpace of five years, has extended it's allift-

ance, to about twelve thouland difeated

to the prefervation of health, or the



open the lofty gates of an holpital. Many of their difeafes were alfo too violent in their fymptoms, and too rapid in their progres, to wait the flow return of the weekly day of admiffion 1 or of a tendency improper for reception into one ward, previoufly crowded with numbers of their difeafed fellow-creatures. Influence of the Difpenfary on the Burials in London.

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VERY inftitution which contributes L to the prefervation of health, or the cure of disease, cannot fail to produce some diminution in the bills of mortality; and the General Difpenfary, which, in the fpace of five years, has extended it's affiftance to about twelve thousand difeased perfons, must have had a confiderable share in redeeming victims from the grave, efpecially as many of them were too abject to purchase the relief of medicine, or to procure a friend that had fufficient influence to open the lofty gates of an hofpital. Many of their difeafes were also too violent in their fymptoms, and too rapid in their progrefs, to wait the flow return of the weekly day of admiffion; or of a tendency improper for reception into one ward, previoufly crowded with numbers of their difeafed fellow-creatures. SECTIO

It has been afferted, that " a third part of all who die at Paris, die in hospitals. In the Hotel Dieu, a great hospital fituated in the middle of that city, we .. behold a horrid scene of misery; for the beds being too few for the numbers admitted, it is common to fee four, fix, " or even eight patients in a bed together, " lying four at one end, and four at the " other. Above a fifth of all who are re-" ceived into this hospital, die; the an-" nual number admitted amounting to " near twenty-two thousand." Vid. Police of France, p. 83. " In the two great hof-" pitals of London, St. Thomas's and St. " Bartholomew's, about fix hundred die " annually, or one in thirteen of all ad-" mitted as in-patients." Vid. Price on the Expectation of Lives, p. 216. " In the " Northampton Infirmary, one in nineteen " of the in-patients (communibus annis) " die every year; and in that of Man-" chefter, which is built in an airy fitua-"tion, and tolerably well ventilated, one " in twenty-two." Percival's Letter to Aikin Aikin is now of blilled in London. sidt

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Aikin on hospitals. In the Dispensary, the .deaths do not amount to one in thirty-three; which, confidering the many thousands of fick perfons annually admitted to partake of it's relief, must contribute not a little to the decrease of deaths in this metropolis; and fo indeed it appears to have done by the bills of mortality, as the diminution in the burials has been nearly progreffive every year fince it's eftablishment, except the year 1772, when the fmall-pox almost folely constituted this difference, upwards of two thousand dying that year of this difease more than in the preceding year 1771. And it should be remarked, that fmall-pox patients were then not admitted to the benefits of the Difpenfary*.

It is not merely by the relief which the poor have immediately received from

chefter, which is

* It must be grateful to every benevolent perfon to be informed, that a Difpenfary for inoculating the poor at their own habitations, is now established in London.

this

this institution, that this happy diminution of burials in the bills of mortality has been brought about : the useful infructions which, in every part of London, they have received from the phyficians who have attended them during their illnefs, have greatly contributed to the prefervation of lives, that might have been facrified to ignorance and quackery. In the fpace of a very few years I have observed a total revolution in the conduct of the common people respecting their diseased friends ; they have learned, that most difeases are mitigated by a free admiffion of air, by cleanlinefs, and by promoting, inftead of reftraining, the indulgence and eafe of the fick. Such instruction was new to the poor, though important to their prefervation; and, when we confider how late they have acquired this information, we must lament that fo many centuries have elapfed before an institution, like the General Dispensary, be-

came the object of public attention.

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SECTION

SECTION XI.

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this inflitution, that this happy dimi

ave received from the phylicians who HOUGH obstructed peripiration may not now be confidered as fo prolific and general a source of difease as it was formerly, yet there is reason to conclude, that many difeases either originate from, or are increased by, a diminution of this natural excretion; particularly amongst the poor, whole employments, and want of cleanlines, tend to obstruct the perfpirable veffels, and thereby induce the fuch diforders dependent thereon. cafes a warm bath must prove peculiarly ferviceable, by cleanfing the furface of the body, and reftoring that perfpiration, by the retention of which the difease had either been acquired, or confiderably auglitution, like the General Difpenbannen.

The female poor more efpecially, by confinement in nurfing, mifmanagement in lyings-in, laborious exertions above their

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their ftrength, poor diet, and other circumitances of hardillip, become enfeebled, and acquire complaints wherein the cold bath would prove more speedily beneficial than the continued use of internal remedies.

There are likewife fome fudden and painful difeafes, which require the immediate ufe of a tepid bath, and without which the ufual remedies would prove ineffectual and ufelefs; and it is known, that the grateful warmth of water has foon procured that eafe and relief, which nothing elfe could give.

Amidît the number of benevolent plans in this metropolis, baths, for the use of the poor, have never yet been constructed, except in a few hospitals, where they are open only to their own patients. The Dispensary, therefore, which relieves thoufands, who either cannot get admitted into an hospital, or who do not choose to leave their habitations and families, must remain main imperfect, till it is furnished both with a warm and a cold bath; the expence of which cannot be confidered as burthenfome to a Charity, whole finances are daily augmenting, and whofe primary defign is the good of the poor.

There are lifewife fome fallen and

panaral difestes, which require inc immi-

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Elich the after remedies would prove in-

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the poor, have never yet been confructed, except in a few hofpitals, where they are open only to their own patients. The Difpenfary, therefore, which relieves thoufands, who either cannot get admitted into an hospital, or who do not choose to leave their habitations and families, must reminm) SECTION

SECTION XII. Defcription of the Plan for a new General Difpenfary.

THE ingenious architects who obligingly prefented me with the annexed plan and elevation of a new Difpenfary, have likewife generoufly intimated a difposition to advance money below the usual rate of interest, were it necessary, in order to complete fuch a ftructure. If this, however, should not be accepted, there is the utmost reason to suppose, that the fum requisite for carrying this plan into execution, might foon be raifed by voluntary fubfcriptions among the opulent and generous inhabitants of this city, who have fo often testified their readiness to promote the interests and welfare of the indigent and diftreffed.

I N I . ti

GROUND-

Four bedchambers.

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GROUND-FLOOR, twelve feet h

GROUND-FLOOR, twelve feet high, to

The BASEMENT STORY to contain A kitchen, fcullery, beer and coal cellars. A Hot and COLD BATH.

ONE PAIR STORY, fifteen feet high, to contain

Feet Feet A committee room - - - - 40 by 21 Two rooms behind ditto, each - 13 by 11

Two PAIR STORY, ten feet high, to contain

Four bedchambers.

GROUND

FINIS.