

M0008694: Portrait of Giorgio Baglivi (1668-1707), with a quote from his work De Praxia, 1696

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FROM DE PRAXI MEDICA 1696
BOOK II CHAP. XI SEC. 9.

A PHTHISICK ARISING FROM AN ULCER IN THE LUNGS, IS COMMONLY BRANDED AS INCURABLE, UPON THE PLEA THAT THE ULCER IS INTERNAL AND OCCULT; AND CANNOT BE CLEANSED LIKE OTHER EXTERNAL ULCERS. BUT WHY DO THEY NOT MAKE IT THEIR BUSINESS TO FIND OUT THE TRUE SITUATION OF THE ULCER, AND MAKE AN INCISION ACCORDINGLY BETWEEN THE RIBS, TO THE END THAT PROPER REMEDIES MAY BE CONVEYED TO IT? FOR MY PART, I KNOW NO REASON WHY THAT SHOULD LIE NEGLECTED. ABOUT SEVEN YEARS AGO, WHEN I WAS AT PADUA, A MAN RECEIVED A WOUND IN THE RIGHT SIDE OF HIS BREAST THAT REACHED TO THE LUNG; AND EMPLOYING AN ABLE SURGEON, HAD AN INCISION MADE BETWEEN THE RIBS TO THE LENGTH OF SIX FINGERS BREADTH, IN ORDER TO DISCOVER THE SITUATION OF THE WOUND IN THE LUNG; WHICH WAS PERFECTLY CURED IN TWO MONTHS TIME WITH VULNERARIES APPLIED WITH TENTS AND WITH SYRINGING. NOW PRACTITIONERS OUGHT TO USE THE SAME PIECE OF DILIGENCE IN CURING A PHTHISICAL ULCER IN THE LUNGS, LEST THE SCROLL OF INCURABLE DISEASES SHOULD GROW TOO LONG TO THE INFINITE DISGRACE OF THE PROFESSION. BELIEVE ME, GENTLEMEN, ASSIDUOUS THOUGHT AND USE IMPROVES AND WHETS THE MIND; BUT SLOTH AND DESPAIR BREAKS ITS EDGE."