# THE DOCTOR

*IN HISTORY, LITERATURE, FOLK-LORE, ETC.*

*WILLIAM ANDREWS F.R.H.S.*

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HENRY VIII. RECEIVING THE BARBER-SURGEONS.

# THE DOCTOR

IN

# HISTORY, LITERATURE, FOLK-LORE,

ETC.

EDITED BY

# WILLIAM ANDREWS, F.R.H.S.,

AUTHOR OF "BYGONE ENGLAND,"
"OLD CHURCH LORE," ETC.

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# Preface.

IN the following pages I have attempted to bring together from the pens of several authors who have written expressly for this book, the more interesting phases of the history, literature, folk-lore, etc., of the medical profession.

If the same welcome be given to this work as was accorded to those I have previously produced, my labours will not have been in vain.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

THE HULL PRESS,
HULL, *November 11th, 1895*.

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# Contents.

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# THE DOCTOR

## IN HISTORY, LITERATURE, AND FOLK-LORE.

# Barber-Surgeons.

By William Andrews, f.r.h.s.

THE calling of the barber is of great antiquity. We find in the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel (v. 1) allusions to the Jewish custom of the barber shaving the head as a sign of mourning.

In the remote past the art of surgery and the trade of barber were combined. It is clear that in all parts of the civilized world, in bygone times, the barber acted as a kind of surgeon, or to state his position more precisely, he practised phlebotomy.

Barbers appear to have gained their experience from the monks whom they assisted in surgical operations. The clergy up to about the twelfth century had the care of men's bodies as well as of their souls, and practised surgery and medicine. The operations of surgery involved the shedding of blood, and it was felt that this was incompatible with the functions of the clergy. After much consideration and discussion, in 1163 the council of Tours, under Pope Alexander III., forbade the clergy to act as surgeons, but they were permitted to dispense medicine.

The edict of Tours must have given satisfaction to the barbers, and they were not slow to avail themselves of the opportunities the change afforded them. In London, and we presume in other places, the barbers advertised their blood-letting in a most objectionable manner. It was customary to put blood in their windows to attract the attention of the public. An ordinance was passed in 1307, directing the barbers to have the blood "privily carried into the Thames under pain of paying two shillings to the use of the Sheriffs."

At an early period in London the barbers were banded together, and a gild was formed. In the first instance it seems that the chief object was the bringing together of the members at religious observances. They attended

the funerals and obits of deceased members and their wives. Eventually it was transformed into a semi-social and religious gild, and subsequently became a trade gild.

In 1308, Richard le Barber, the first master of the Barbers' Company, was sworn at the Guildhall, London. As time progressed, the London Company of Barbers increased in importance.

In the first year of the reign of Edward IV. (1462) the barbers were incorporated by a royal charter, and it was confirmed by succeeding monarchs.

A change of title occurred in 1540, and it was then named the Company of Barber-Surgeons. Holbein painted a picture of Henry VIII. and the Barber-Surgeons. The painting is still preserved, and may be seen at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall, Monkwell Street, London. We give a carefully executed wood engraving of the celebrated picture. Pepys calls this "not a pleasant though a good picture." It is the largest and last painting of Holbein. In the *Leisure Hour* for September 1895, are some interesting details respecting it, that are well worth reproducing. "It is painted," we are told, "on vertical oak boards, being 5ft. 11in. high by 10ft. 2in. long. It seems to have been begun about 1541, and finished after Holbein's death in 1543, and it has evidently been altered since its first delivery. The tablet, for instance, was not always in the background, for the old engraving in the College of Surgeons has a window in its place, showing the old tower of St. Bride's, and thus indicating Bridewell as the site of the ceremony. The outermost figure to the left, too, is omitted, and, according to some critics, the back row of heads are all post-Holbeinic. The names over the heads appear to have been added in Charles I.'s time, and it is significant that only two portraits in the back row are so distinguished." The king is represented wearing his robes, and is seated on a chair of state, holding erect his sword of state, and about him are the leading members of the fraternity. "The men whose portraits appear in the picture," says the *Leisure Hour*, "are not nonentities. The first figure to the king's right, with his hands in his gown, is Dr. John Chambre, king's physician, Fellow and Warden of Merton, and happy in his multitudinous appointments, both clerical and lay. Behind him is the Doctor Butts of Shakespeare's 'Henry VIII.'—the Sir William Butts who was the king's and Princess Mary's physician, and whose wife is

known by Holbein's splendid portrait of her. Behind Butts is Alsop, the king's apothecary. To the king's left the first figure is Thomas Vicary, surgeon to Bartholomew's Hospital, serjeant-surgeon to the king, and author of 'The Anatomie of the Bodie of Man.' Next to him is Sir John Ayleff, an exceptionally good portrait. Then come in the undernamed: Nicholas Simpson, Edmund Harman (one of the witnesses to the king's will), James Monforde (who gave the company the silver hammer still used by the Master in presiding at the courts), John Pen (another fine portrait), Nicholas Alcocke, and Richard Ferris (also serjeant-surgeon to the king). In the back row the only names given are those of Christopher Salmond and William Tilley."

In the reign of Henry VIII. an enactment as follows was in force:—"No person using any shaving or barbery in London shall occupy any surgery, letting of blood, or other matter, except of drawing teeth." Laws were made, but they could not be, or at all events were not, enforced. Disputes were frequent. The barbers acted often as surgeons, and the surgeons increased their income by the use of the razor and shears. At this period vigorous attempts were made to confine each to their legitimate work.

The barber's pole, it is said, owes its origin to the barber-surgeons. Much has been written on this topic, but we believe that the following are the facts of the matter. We know that in the days of old bleeding was a frequent occurrence, and during the operation the patient used to grasp a staff, stick, or pole which the barber-surgeon kept ready for use, and round it was bound a supply of bandages for tying the arm of the patient. The pole, when not in use, was hung at the door as a sign. In course of time a painted pole was displayed instead of that used in the operation.

Lord Thurlow addressing the House of Lords, July 17th, 1797, stated, "by a statute, still in force, barbers and surgeons were each to use a pole [as a sign]. The barbers were to have theirs blue and white, striped, with no other appendage; but the surgeons', which was to be the same in other respects, was likewise to have a gully-pot and a red rag, to denote the particular nature of their vocations."

The Rev. J. L. Saywell has a note on bleeding in his "History and Annals of Northallerton" (1885):—"Towards the early part of this century," observes

Mr. Saywell, “a singular custom prevailed in the town and neighbourhood of Northallerton (Yorkshire). In the spring of the year nearly all the robust male adults, and occasionally females, repaired to a surgeon to be bled, a process which they considered essentially conduced to vigorous health.” The charge for the operation was one shilling.

Parliament was petitioned, in 1542, praying that surgeons might be exempt from bearing arms and serving on juries, and thus be enabled without hindrance to attend to their professional duties. The request was granted, and to the present time medical men enjoy the privileges granted so long ago.

In 1745, the surgeons and the barbers separated by Act of Parliament. The barber-surgeons lingered for a long time, the last in London, named Middleditch, of Great Suffolk Street, in the Borough, only dying in 1821. Mr. John Timbs, the popular writer, left on record that he had a vivid recollection of Middleditch’s dentistry.

# Touching for the King's Evil.

By William Andrews, f.r.h.s.

THE practice of touching for the cure of scrofula—a disease more generally known as king's evil—prevailed for a long period in England. Edward the Confessor who reigned from 1042 to 1066, appears to be the first monarch in this country who employed this singular mode of treatment.

About a century after the death of Edward the Confessor, William of Malmesbury compiled his "Chronicle of the Kings of England," and in this work is the earliest allusion to the subject. Holinshed has placed on record some interesting details respecting Edward the Confessor. "As it has been thought," says Holinshed, in writing of the king, "he was inspired with the gift of prophecy, and also to have the gift of healing infirmities and disease commonly called the king's evil, and left that virtue, as it were, a portion of inheritance to his successors, the kings of this realm." The first edition of the "Chronicle" was published in 1577, and from it Shakespeare drew much material for his historical dramas. There is an allusion to this singular superstition in *Macbeth*, which it will be interesting to reproduce.

Malcolm and Macduff are in England, "in a room in the King's palace" (the palace of King Edward the Confessor):—

"*Malcolm.* Comes the King forth I pray you?

Aye, sir! There are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure: their malady convinces
*Doctor.* The great assay of art; but at his touch—
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand—
They presently amend.

*Malcolm.* I thank you, Doctor.

*Macduff.* What's the disease he means?

*Malcolm.*

’Tis called the evil:
A most miraculous work in this good King;
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I’ve seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows: but strangely visited people
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures,
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: and ’tis spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And sundry blessings hang about his throne
That speak him full of grace.”

History does not furnish any facts respecting touching by the four kings of the House of Normandy. It is generally believed that the Norman monarchs did not practise the rite.

Henry II., the first of the Plantagenet line, emulated the Confessor. We know this fact from a record made by Peter of Blois, the royal chaplain, in which it is clearly stated that the king performed certain cures by touch. John of Gaddesden, in the days of Edward II., wrote a treatise in which he gave instructions for several modes of treatment for the disease, and if they failed, recommended the sufferers to seek cure by royal touch. Bradwardine, Archbishop of Canterbury, lived in the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II., and from his statements we learn that both kings kept up the observance.

Henry IV., the first king of the House of Lancaster, touched for the evil. This we learn from a “Defence to the title of House of Lancaster,” written by Sir John Fortesque, Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King’s Bench. He speaks of the practice as “belonging to the kings of England from time immemorial.” This pamphlet is preserved among the Cottonian manuscripts in the British Museum.

The earliest king of the House of Tudor, Henry VII., was the first to give a small gold piece, known as a touch-piece, to those undergoing the

ceremony.

During the reign of the next monarch, Henry VIII., little attention appears to have been given to the subject. It was at this period largely practised in France. Cardinal Wolsey, when at the Court of Francis I., in 1527, witnessed the king touch two hundred people. On Easter Sunday, 1686, Louis XIV. is recorded to have touched 1,600. He used these words:—"*Le Roy te touche, Dieu te guéisse.*" ("The King touches thee. May God cure thee!")

Coming back to the history of our own country, and dealing with the more interesting passages bearing on this theme, we find that in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, William Clowes, the Court Surgeon, believed firmly in the efficacy of the royal touch. "The king's queen's evil," he says, "is a disease repugnant to nature, which grievous malady is known to be miraculously cured and healed by the sacred hands of the Queen's most Royal Majesty, even by Divine inspiration and wonderful work and power of God, above man's will, act, and expectation." In this reign, under the title of "*Charisma; sive Donum Sanationis*," a book was published by William Fookes bearing testimony to the cures effected by royal touch on all sorts and conditions of people from various parts of the country.

The Stuarts paid particular attention to the practice. No fewer than eleven proclamations published during the reign of Charles I. are preserved at the State Paper Office, and chiefly relate to the times the afflicted might attend the court to receive the royal touch. In course of time the king's pecuniary means became limited, and he was unable to present gold touch-pieces, so silver was substituted, and many received the rite of touch only.

During the Commonwealth we have not any trace of Cromwell touching for the malady. During the rising in the West of England, the Duke of Monmouth, who claimed to be the rightful heir to the throne, touched several persons for the evil, and, said a newspaper of the time, with success. One of the charges made against him on his trial at Edinburgh for high treason, was, that he had "touched children of the King's Evil." Two witnesses proved the charge, having witnessed the ceremony at Taunton.

No sooner had another Stuart obtained the English crown than the ceremony was again performed. During the first year of the reign of Charles II., six thousand seven hundred and twenty-five persons were brought to

His Majesty to be healed. The ceremony was often performed on a Sunday. Evelyn and Pepys were witnesses of these proceedings, and in their Diaries have recorded interesting particulars. Under date of 6th July, 1660, "His Majesty," writes Evelyn, "began first to touch for ye evil, according to custome thus: Sitting under his state in the Banqueting House, the chirurgeons cause the sick to be brought or led up to the throne, where, they kneeling, ye king strokes their faces and cheeks with both his hands at once, at which instant a chaplaine in his fermalities says:—'He put his hands upon them and healed them.' This he said to every one in particular. When they have been all totched, they come up again in the same order; and the other chaplaine kneeling, and having an angel of gold strung on white ribbon on his arme, delivers them one by one to His Majestie, who puts them about the necks of the touched as they passe, while the first chaplaine repeats 'That is ye true light which came into ye world.' Then follows an epistle (as at first a gospel) with the liturgy, prayers for the sick, with some alteration, and then the Lord Chamberlain and the Comptroller of the Household bring a basin, ewer, and towel, for his Majesty to wash."

Samuel Pepys witnessed the ceremony on April 13th, 1661, and refers to it in his Diary. "Went to the Banquet House, and there saw the King heal, the first time I ever saw him do it, which he did with great gravity, and it seemed to me to be an ugly office and a simple one."

In Evelyn's Diary on March 28th, 1684, there is a record of a serious accident, "There was," he writes, "so great a concourse of people with their children to be touched for the evil, that six or seven were crushed to death by pressing at the chirurgeon's door for tickets."

According to Macaulay, Charles II. during his reign touched nearly a hundred thousand persons. In the year 1682 he performed the rite eight thousand five hundred times.

No person was allowed to enter the King's presence for the purpose of receiving the rite without first obtaining a certificate from the minister of his parish from whence he came, nor unless he had not previously been touched. A proclamation of Charles II., dated January 9th, 1683, ordered a register of the certificates to be made. Here is a record drawn from the Old Town's Book of Birmingham:—

"March 14th, 1683, Elizabeth, daughter of John and Anne Dickens, of Birmingham, in the county of Warwick, was certified for in order to obtayne his Majesty's touch for her cure.

HENRY GROVE, Minister.
JOHN BIRCH,
HENRY PATER, } Churchwardens."

We cull from the churchwardens' accounts of Terling, Essex, the following item:—

"1683 Dec[r]. Pd. for his Majestie's order for touching 00.00.06."

A page in the register book of Bisley, Surrey, is headed thus, "Certificates for the Evill commonly called the kings Evill." Two entries occur as follow: —

"Elizabeth Collier and Thomas Collier the children of Thomas Collier, Senior, had a certificate from the minister and churchwardens of Bisley, August 7th 1686."

"Sarah Massey, the daughter of Richard Massey, had a certificate from the minister and churchwardens of Bisley, 1st April 1688."

Old parish accounts often contain entries similar to the following, from Ecclesfield, Yorkshire:—

"1641. Given to John Parkin wife towards her
trauell to London to get cure of his Matie.
for the disease called Euill which her
soone Thom is visited withall 0. 6. 8."

"The following extracts," says a contributor to *The Reliquary* of January, 1894, "from the Minute Books of the Corporation of the city of York, show that general belief in the virtue of the touching by the King was unshaken at the end of the seventeenth century. It must be borne in mind that these Minutes do not record the acts of individuals, but were those of the Corporation of what was at that time one of the most important cities in the

country, and that it was in administering Poor Law Relief that the grants were made.

In Vol. 38 of the Corporation Records, fo. 74b, under the date of February 28th, 1671, is the following:—

> "Ordered that Elizabeth Trevis haue x$^{s}$ given her for charges in carrying her daughter to London to be touched for the Evill."

A few years later, on March 12th, 1678 (fo. 156b), occurs the following:—

> "Anne Thornton to haue x$^{s}$ for goeing to London to be touched for the euill."

And again on March 3, 1687 (fo. 249b), ten shillings was granted for "carrying of Judith Gibbons & her Child & one Dorothy Browne to London to be touched by his Majestie in order to be healed of the Kings Evil."

The Records of the Corporation of Preston, Lancashire, contain at least two references to this matter. In the year 1682 the bailiffs were instructed to "pay unto James Harrison, bricklayer, 10s. towards carrying his son to London, in order to the procuring of His Majesty's touch."

Five years later, when James II. was at Chester, the council passed a vote that "the Bailiff pay unto the persons undermentioned each of them 5s. towards their charge in going to Chester to get his Majesty's touch:—Anne, daughter of Abel Mope; —— daughter Richard Letmore."

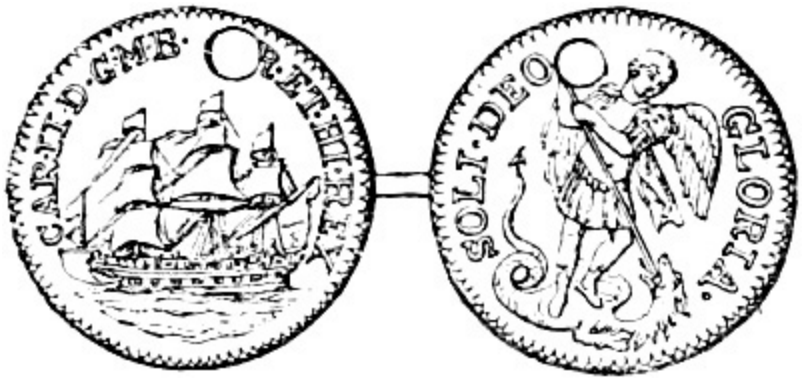
It is recorded that James II. touched eight hundred persons in the choir of the Cathedral of Chester.

The ceremony cost, we learn from Macaulay, about £10,000 a year, and the amount would have been much greater but for the vigilance of the royal surgeons, whose business it was to examine the applicants, and to distinguish those who came for the cure, and those who came for the gold.

William III. declined to have anything to do with a ceremony he regarded as an imposture. "It is a silly superstition," he said, when he heard that at the close of Lent his palace was besieged by a crowd of sick. "Give the poor creatures some money, and send them away." On one occasion only was he

induced to lay his hand on a sufferer. “God give you better health,” he said, “and more sense.”

The next to wear the crown was Queen Anne, and she revived the rite. In the *London Gazette* of March 12th, 1712, appeared an official announcement that the queen intended to touch for the evil. In Lent of that year, Dr. Johnson, then a child, went up to London with his mother in the stage coach that he might have the benefit of the royal touch. He was then between two and three years of age. “His mother,” writes Boswell, “yielding to the superstitious notion which, it is wonderful to think, prevailed so long in this country as to the virtue of regal touch (a notion to which a man of such inquiry and such judgment as Carte, the historian, could give credit), carried him to London, where he was actually touched by Queen Anne. Mrs. Johnson, indeed, as Mr. Hector informed me, acted by the advice of the celebrated Sir John Floyer, then a physician in Lichfield. Johnson used to talk of this very frankly, and Mrs. Piozzi has preserved his very picturesque description of the scene as it remained upon his fancy. Being asked if he could remember Queen Anne, ‘He had,’ he said, ‘a confused but somehow a sort of solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds and a long black hood.’ This touch, however, was without any effect.” The malady remained with Dr. Johnson to his death.




TOUCH-PIECE OF CHARLES II. (GOLD).

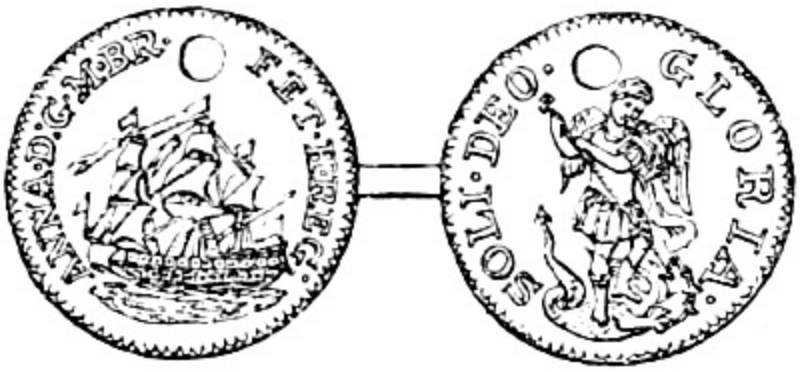
After the death of Queen Anne, no other English sovereign kept up the custom, although the service remained in the “Book of Common Prayer” as

late as 1719.

The latest instance we have found of the ceremony being performed was in October, 1745, when Charles Edward, at Holyrood House, touched a child.

(GOLD). TOUCH-PIECES OF JAMES II. (SILVER).

In the preceding pages we have referred to “touch pieces,” and it will not be without interest to direct attention to some of the more notable examples. A small sum of money was given by Edward I., and it has been suggested that it was probably presented in the form of alms. Henry VII. gave a small gold coin known as the angel noble. It was of about six shillings and eight pence in value, and was a current coin of the period, and the smallest gold coin issued. On one side of the coin was a figure of the angel Michael overcoming the dragon, and on the other a ship on the waves. During the residence of Charles II. on the continent, those who visited him to receive the royal rite had to give him gold, but after the Restoration, “touch-pieces” were made expressly for presentation at the healings. They were small gold medals resembling angels, but they were not equal in value to the angels previously given. However they met a want when gold was in great demand. James II. had two kinds of touch pieces, one of gold and the other of silver, but they were not half the size of those given by Charles II. Queen Anne gave a touch-piece a little larger than that of James II. The touch-piece presented by this Queen to Dr. Johnson may, with other specimens, be seen in the British Museum.




TOUCH-PIECE OF ANNE (GOLD).

In a carefully-compiled article in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. x., p. 187-211, will be found some interesting particulars of touch-pieces, and to it we are indebted for the few details we have given bearing on this part of our subject.

# Visiting Patients.

THE doctor made his daily rounds, before the reign of Charles II., on horseback, sitting sideways on foot-clothes. He must have cut an undignified figure as he rode through the streets of London and our chief towns.

A change came after the Restoration, and we meet with the physicians making their visits in a carriage and pair. It seems that increased fees were expected with the introduction of the carriage. A curious note appears on this subject in *Lex Talionis*. “For there must now be a little coach and two horses,” says the author, “and, being thus attended, half-a-piece their usual fee is but ill taken, and popped into their left pocket, and possibly may cause the patient to send for his worship twice before he will come again in the hazard of another angel.” The carriage was popular, and physicians vied with each other in making the greatest display.

In the days of Queen Anne, a doctor would even drive half-a-dozen horses attached to his chariot, and not fewer than four was the general rule.

In our own time the doctor’s carriage and pair is to be seen in all directions. It is now driven for use and not for display as in the days of Queen Anne.

We have seen the bicycle used by doctors of good standing, and we predict the time is not far distant when it will be more generally ridden by members of the medical profession.

# Assaying Meat and Drink.

By William Andrews, f.r.h.s.

FROM the time of our earliest Norman king down to the days of James I., the chief people of the land partook of their food in fear. Treachery was a not infrequent occurrence, and poison was much used as a means of taking life. As a precaution against murder, assayers of food, drink, etc., were appointed. Doctors usually filled the office, and by their unremitting attention to their duties crime was to a great extent prevented. In a royal household the physician acted as assayer.

Let us imagine ourselves in an old English home, the palace of a king, or the stronghold of a leading nobleman. The cloth is laid by subordinate servants, but not without considerable ceremony. Next a chief officer of the household sees that every article on the table is free from poison. The bread about to be consumed is cut, and, in the presence of the "taker of assay," is tasted, and the salt is also tested. The knives, spoons, and table linen are kissed by a responsible person, so that assurance might be given that they were free from poison. Then the salt dish is covered with a lid, and the bread is wrapped in a napkin, and afterwards the whole table is covered with a fair white cloth. The coverlet remains until the head of the household comes to take his repast, and then his chief servant removes the covering of the table. If any person attempted to touch the covered bread or the covered salt after the spreading of the coverlet, they ran the risk of a severe flogging, and sometimes even death at the hands of a hangman.

The time of bringing up the meats having arrived, the assayer proceeds to the kitchen, and tests the loyalty of the steward and cook by compelling them to partake of small quantities of the food prepared before it is taken to the table. Pieces of bread were cut and dipped into every mess, and were afterwards eaten by cook and steward. The crusts of closed pies were raised, and the contents tasted; small pieces of the more substantial viands were tasted, and not a single article of food was suffered to leave the kitchen

without being assayed. After the ceremony had been completed, each dish was covered, no matter if hot or cold, and these were taken by servitors to the banqueting hall, a marshal with wand of office preceding the procession. The bearers on no account were permitted to linger on the way, no matter if their hands were burnt they must bear the pain, far better to suffer that than be suspected of tampering with the food. On no pretext were the covers to be removed until the proper time, and by the servants appointed for that purpose. If very hot, the bearers might perhaps protect their hands with bread, which was to be kept out of sight.

We produce from the Rev. Charles Bullock's interesting volume entitled "How they Lived in the Olden Time," a picture of bringing in the dinner. It will be observed that the steward, bearing his staff of office, heads the procession.

Each dish as it was brought to the table was again tasted in the presence of the personage who purposed partaking of it. This entailed considerable ceremony, and took up much time. To render the delay as little unpleasant as possible to the guests, music was usually performed.

In the stately homes of old England, as a mark of respect to the distinguished visitor, it was customary to assign to him an assayer. History furnishes a notable instance of an omission of the official. When Richard II. was at Pontefract Castle, we gather from *Hall's Chronicle*, edition 1548, folio 14, that Sir Piers Exton intended poisoning the King, and, to use the chronicler's words, forbade the "esquire whiche was accustumed to serve and take the assaye beefore Kyng Richarde, to again use that manner of service." According to Hall, the King "sat downe to dyner, and was served withoute curtesie or assaye; he much mervaylyng at the sodayne mutacion of the thynge, demanded of the esquire why he did not do his duty." He replied that Sir Piers had forbidden him performing the duties pertaining to his position. The King immediately picked up a carving-knife, struck upon the head of the assayer, and exclaimed, "The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee together."

Paul Hentzner, a German tutor, visited England in 1598, and wrote a graphic account of his travels in the country, which were translated into English by Horace Walpole. The work contains a curious account of the ceremonies of laying the cloth, etc., for Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich Palace. The notice is rather long, but is so entertaining and informing that it well merits reproduction. "A gentleman," it is stated, "entered the room bearing a rod, and along with him another who had a table-cloth, which, after they had both kneeled three times, with the utmost veneration, he spread upon the table, and after kneeling again, they both retired. Then came two others, one with the rod again, and the other with a salt-cellar and a plate of bread: when they had kneeled, as the others had done, and placed what was brought upon the table, they, too, retired with the same ceremonies performed by the first. At last came an unmarried lady (we were told she was a Countess), and along with her a married one, bearing a tasting-knife; the former was dressed in white silk, who when she prostrated herself three times in the most graceful manner, approached the table, and rubbed the plates with bread and salt with as much care as if the Queen had been present; when they had waited there a little time, the Yeomen of the Guard entered bareheaded, clothed in scarlet, with a golden rose upon their

backs, bringing in at each turn a course of twenty-four dishes, served in plate, most of it gilt; these dishes were received by a gentleman in the same order they were brought, and placed upon the table, while the lady-taster gave to each guard a mouthful to eat, for fear of poison. During the time that this guard, which consists of the tallest and stoutest men that can be found in all England, being carefully selected for this service, were bringing dinner, twelve trumpets and two kettle-drums made the hall ring for half-an-hour together. At the end of the ceremonial, a number of unmarried ladies appeared, who, with particular solemnity, lifted the meat off the table and conveyed it into the Queen's inner and more private chamber, where, after she had chosen for herself, the rest goes to the ladies of the Court."

ASSAYING WINE.

Drink as well as food had to be assayed twice, once in the buttery and again in the hall. The butler drank of the wine in the buttery, and then handed it to the cup-bearer in a covered vessel. When he arrived at the hall, he removed the lid of the cup, and poured into the inverted cover a little of the wine, and

drank it under the eye of his master. We give an illustration, reproduced from an ancient manuscript, of an assayer tasting wine. The middle of the twelfth century is most probably the period represented.

In the ancient assay cup, it is related on reliable authority, a charm was attached to a chain of gold, or embedded in the bottom of the vessel. This was generally a valuable carbuncle or a piece of tusk of a narwhal, usually regarded as the horn of the unicorn, and which was believed to have the power of neutralising or even detecting the presence of poison.

Edward IV. presented to the ambassadors of Charles of Burgundy a costly assay cup of gold, ornamented with pearls and a great sapphire, and, to use the words of an old writer, “in the myddes of the cuppe ys a grete pece of a Vnicornes horne.”

The water used for washing the hands of the great had to be tasted by the yeoman who placed it on the table, to prove that no poison was contained in the fluid. This ceremony had to be performed in the presence of an assayer.

# The Gold-headed Cane.

By Tom Robinson, m.d.

THE stick takes many forms. It is the sceptre of kings, the club of a police constable, the baton of a field marshal. The mace is but a stick of office, being ornamental and merely symbolical.

In history we may go back to the pilgrim's staff, which was four feet long, and hollow at the top to carry away relics from the Holy Land. It was also used to carry contraband goods, such as seeds, or silk-worms' eggs, which the Chinese, Turks, or Greeks forbade to be exported. It is occasionally used for eluding the customs now. Some people smuggle diamonds into the United States in that way.

Prometheus' reed, or marthex, in which he conveyed fire to "wretched mortals," as Aeschylus tells us, is a well-known fable.

An enormous amount of interest centres around the walking stick, and there are few families in which we do not find an old stick handed down generation after generation. Such an inheritance was at one time a common possession of those who belonged to the medical profession.

DR. RADCLIFFE'S CANE.

The College of Physicians possesses at the present time the gold cane which Radcliffe, Mead, Askew, Pitcairn, and Baillie successively carried about with them, and which Mrs. Baillie presented to that learned body. The drawing here given is a representation of this cane, and it will be seen that it has not a gold knob, but consists of an engraved handle or crook. It is, I think, quite clear that the custom which the doctors of the last century always followed in carrying their stick about with them, even to the bed-side, was due entirely to the fact that the handle of the cane could be, and was, filled with strong smelling disinfectants, such as rosemary and camphor. The doctor held this against his nose obviously for two reasons. One, to destroy any poison which might be floating about in the air but chiefly to prevent him smelling unpleasant odours. This stick was as long as a footman's, smooth and varnished.

A belief in the protective power of camphor and other pleasant-smelling herbs is still in existence, and we know quite a number of individuals who

carry about with them bags of camphor during the prevalence of an epidemic.

Before Howard exposed the deadly sanitary state of the prisons of this country, it was the custom to sprinkle aromatic herbs before the prisoners, so powerful was the noxious effluvium which exhaled from their filthy bodies. The bouquet which the chaplain always carried when accompanying a prisoner to Tyburn, was used for the same defensive purpose.

The stick of the physician's cane was probably a relic of the legerdemain of the healer, who in superstitious times worked upon the ignorance of the credulous. The modern conjuror always uses a wand in his entertainment. These baubles die hard, because there is a strong conservative instinct in the race which clings with tremendous tenacity to anything which has the sanction of antiquity.

The barber's pole is still seen even in London, and is striped blue and white, emblems of the phlebotomist, and symbolical of the blue venous blood, which was so ungrudgingly given by the sufferers from almost all maladies. The white stripe represented the bandage used to bind up the wound on the arm.

The practice of the bleeders continued in fashion in England until the beginning of this century. John Coutsley Lettsom, who possessed high literary attainments, and who was President of the Philosophical Society of London, and who entertained at his house at Grove Hill, Camberwell, many of the most distinguished men of his time, including Boswell and Dr. Johnson, and whose writings shew he was an enlightened physician, was bold in his treatment of disease, and a heroic bleeder. He used to say of himself:—

"When patients sick to me apply,
I physics, bleeds, and sweats 'em
Then if they choose to die,
What's that to me—I lets 'em."

The wig also constituted an essential part of the dress of the older physicians. It was a three tailed one, and this with silk stockings, clothes well trimmed, velvet coat with stiff skirts, large cuffs and buckled shoes,

made quite an imposing show, and when they rode in their gilt carriages with two running footmen, as was the custom, no one would be better recognised. It is interesting to contrast the dress and mode of practice of the modern physician with those who built up the honourable calling of medicine. It is so easy to laugh at those who practised the art of medicine before modern scientific investigation had laid naked so many of the secrets of physiology, pathology, and vital chemistry. Slowly but surely as the true nature and progress of disease has become known, so have all the adventitious and unnecessary surroundings of dress disappeared, and now we may meet the most eminent of our doctors, clad in the same garments as a man on Change. All this was inevitable, but running through the whole history of medicine is a magnificent desire on the part of those who have made a mark, and of all its humbler followers to "go about doing good." The difficulties are enormous, the labour is colossal, but there could be no convictions were there no perplexities. Credulity is the disease of a feeble intellect. Accepting all things and understanding nothing, kills a man's intellect and checks all scientific investigation. The physician has to knock at the temple of the human frame, and patiently pick up the knowledge which nature always gives to those who love her best. But the investigator must approach his subject with humility, and with the recognition that there is a limit to the human intellect, and that behind and above this big round world is a supreme being, that around the intellect is the atmosphere of spiritual convictions from which our highest and best impulses spring, that the universe not only embraces material phenomena, but it also includes the sublime and the moral attributes, which no man has, or ever will, weigh in the physical balance or distil from a retort.

The union of Intellect and Piety will grow stronger as the world grows older. When men began to think, they began to doubt, but when men have thought more deeply they will cease to doubt.

An idea is in the air that the study of science has a tendency to make men sceptical. This is an error. For surely the study of Nature in any of its manifold aspects has a direct tendency to lead us into the inscrutable. Amongst those who demonstrate the ennobling influence of science let us only name Boyle, Bacon, Kepler, and Newton. If we would select a few names from the number of medical celebrities of the past who have felt this elevating influence, the following will readily occur to us, Linacre,

Sydenham, Brodie, Astley Cooper, Graves Watson, and Abernethy. The latter, who is chiefly remembered as a coiner of quaint sayings and personal originality, had, notwithstanding his biting wit, a deep sense of the nobility and the sacredness of his calling, as the following extract from a lecture which he delivered at the Royal College of Surgeons will prove. He says:—"When we examine our bodies we see an assemblance of organs formed of what we call matter, but when we examine our minds, we feel that there is something sensitive and intelligible which inhabits our bodies. We naturally believe in the existence of a first cause. We feel our own free agency. We distinguish right and wrong. We feel as if we were responsible for our conduct, and the belief in a future state seems indigenous to the mind of man."

The noiseless tread of time will cause many doctors whose names are now household words to be forgotten, but we may rest assured that the wreath of memory will cluster round the brows of these grand, noble workers in the field of medicine who have shown by their daily life that they never flinched from the arduous duties, aye and the dangers of their profession, but steadfastly plodded on. Originality, integrity, and honesty are attributes which grace the life of any man, and although the history of medicine claims no monopoly of these virtues, for they serve all men alike, yet they are the handmaids of greatness; without them no human being will ever win that true success which enables us to look back upon such lives and say, "Here are examples which show us the possibilities of the race." Doctors ought to be great burden lifters. Their mission is to carry into the chamber of disease—and even of death itself—that calm courage, that buoyant hope, which has around it a halo of sympathy and of encouragement.

The public are loyal to the profession of medicine, and seldom do we hear of any members of that calling who abuse their high privileges. Their work is an absorbing work; it says to a man:—"You have placed in your hands the lives of the human race. You are the true soldier whose business it is to give life and health and happiness to those with whom you come in contact. You must not lean upon the baubles of your calling, so as to inspire confidence, but you must night and day let the one abiding thought be concentrated upon the good of humanity," and there is no field of professional experience which has given us so many men who have as nobly done their duty as the doctors of the past and of the present day. We

seem to be on the threshold of a new era in the treatment of disease, and already do we find an increase in the average lives of the race. No one need despair of the future in that direction; indiscretion and ignorance kill more human beings than plague, pestilence, or famine. The public must help to tear away the veil which hides the *Truth*, by not worshipping at the foot of Quackery, Chicanery, or Superstition.

The medical profession has so far escaped the pernicious tendency of modern thought, which tendency is to hamper every institution. This is a noteworthy fact; our hospitals, medical schools, College of Physicians, and College of Surgeons are not cramped and hindered by legislative interference; but unostentatiously, silently, and with a never-failing sense of their responsibilities, do they educate and pass through their gates the doctors of the future—and no man dare point his finger at any one of these, and say he does not do his duty.

# Magic and Medicine.

By Cuming Walters.

COLERIDGE once said that in the treatment of nervous cases "he is the best physician who is the most ingenious inspirer of hope." The great "faith cures" are worked by such physicians, and the dealers in magic at all times and in all parts achieved their successes by inspiring hope in their patients. The more credulous the invalid the more easy the cure, no matter what remedy is applied. Is it surprising, then, to find that among the more childlike races, or that among the infant civilizations, magic often supersedes medicine, or is combined with it? Ceremonies which impress the mind and act upon the imagination considerably aid the physician in his treatment of susceptible persons. Paracelsus himself combined astrology with alchemy and medicine, and his host of followers often went further than their master, and relied more upon magic than upon specific remedies. It was the crowd of charlatans, astrologers, wonder-workers, and their sort who substituted magic for medicine, and who had so great an influence in England three centuries ago, that Ben Jonson scourged with the lash of his satire in "The Alchemist," the impostor described as

> "A rare physician,
> An excellent Paracelsian, and has done
> Strange cures with mineral physic. He deals all
> With spirits, he; he will not hear a word
> Of Galen, or his tedious recipes."

There has generally been sufficient superstition in all races to make amulets the popular means of averting calamity and preserving from sickness. The Greeks, the Romans, the Jews, the Turks, and the Arabs, to say nothing of less civilized races, have thoroughly believed that disease can be charmed away by the simple expedient of wearing a token, or carrying a talisman. The magical formula of Abracadabra, written in the form of a triangle, sufficed to cure agues and fevers; the Abraxas stones warded off epidemics;

the coins of St. Helena served as talismans, and cured epilepsy. So strong was the belief in these magical protectors in the fourth century that the clergy were forbidden, under heavy penalties to make or to sell the charms, and in the eighth century the Christian Church forbade amulets to be longer worn. In this connection it may be mentioned that the custom of placing the wedding-ring upon the fourth finger of the left hand owes its origin to the ancients who resorted to magic for the cure of their ailments. The Greeks and the Romans believed that the finger in question contained a vein communicating directly with the heart, and that nothing could come in contact with it without giving instant warning to the seat of life. For this reason they were accustomed to stir up mixtures and potions with this "medicated finger," as it was called, and when the ring became the symbol of marriage that finger was chosen of all others for the wearing of it. Thus do we unknowingly keep alive the superstitions of other times.

The Hindoos, whose books on the healing art date back to 1500 B.C., regarded sickness as the result of the operation of malevolent deities who were either to be propitiated by prayers, offerings, charms, and sacrifices, or to be overcome with the aid of friendly gods. The early Greeks when suffering from disease were cured, not by means of medicine, but by religious observances, and particularly by the "temple-sleep," in which they dreamt dreams which the priests interpreted, and in which were found the suggestions for remedy. It was Hippocrates, in 460 B.C., who first proclaimed that disease was not of supernatural origin, and that it could not be combated or cured by magic. But for many centuries later in Europe the Black Art had greater sway than rational treatment. In Sweden it is even now common for the lower classes to ascribe sickness to the visitation of spirits (Nisse), who must be mollified by pouring liquor into a goblet and mixing with it the filings of a bride-ring, or filings of silver, or of any metal that has been inherited. The mixture is taken to the place where the man is supposed to have caught his illness, and is poured over the left shoulder, not a syllable being uttered the while. After the performance of this ceremony the invalid may hope to recover.

Consecrated grave-mould is supposed by many primitive races to have particular properties as a medicine. The Shetlander who has a "stitch in his side," cures himself by applying to the affected part, some dry mould brought from a grave, and heated, care being taken to remove the mould

and to return it before the setting of the sun. In the neighbouring isles of Orkney, magic is also resorted to as a remedy for disease. Perhaps the least harmful of the rites is the washing of a cat in the water which had previously served for an invalid's ablutions, the confident belief being that the disease would by this means be transferred to the animal. This custom of "substitution" is found in many races, and is one of the most interesting subjects introduced to the student of folk-lore.

In Tibet, for example, when all ordinary remedies have failed, the Lamas make a dummy to represent the sick person, and they adorn the image with trinkets. By ceremonies and prayers the sickness of the patient is laid upon the dummy, after which it is taken out and burned, the Lamas appropriating the ornaments as a reward. Sir Walter Scott tells of a similar case which occurred in Scotland. Lady Katharine Fowlis made a model in clay of a person whom she wished to afflict, and shot at the image in the hope that the wound would be transferred to the real person. We have only to turn to Scott's "Demonology and Witchcraft" to find hundreds of instances of the unshaken belief of the Highlanders in mystic potions, pills, drugs, and drops; and not even wholesale burnings of the dealers in white magic could induce the people to forsake their superstitions. Bessie Dunlop told the Court, before which she was arraigned, of the magic elixirs given to her by Thome Reid, who had been killed in battle centuries before, but had appeared to her as an apparition, and begged her to fly with him to Elf-land. By means of his medicines she cured the most stubborn diseases, obtained the reputation of a wise woman, and grew so rich that the eye of the law was drawn upon her, and, after her confession was made, she was ordered to be burnt. As Scott said, in one of his chapters, the Scottish law did not acquit those who accomplished even praiseworthy actions, and "the proprietor of a patent medicine who should in those days have attested his having wrought such miracles as we see sometimes advertised might have forfeited his life."

The idea of sacrificing something, or someone, to appease the anger of the powers who bring affliction upon mankind, is extremely common, and by no means confined to savage nations or to very ancient times. At the time of the Black Plague in the fourteenth century the fanaticism of the French led them to sacrifice 12,000 Jews by torture and burning, these Israelites being deemed the cause of the affliction. In the "Ingoldsby Legends" may be read

a ghastly account of a similar sacrifice in Spain, in order to secure the good-will of the over-ruling powers on behalf of the Queen. Even in comparatively modern times the practice of sacrificing in order to cure or avert disease has not been unknown, and this in civilized lands, too. The sacrifices in these cases have, of course, been of animals only, but the germ of the old and worse ritual is found in the custom. In 1767, the people of Mull, in consequence of a disease among the cattle, agreed to perform an incantation. They carried to the top of Carnmoor a wheel and nine spindles of oakwood. Every fire in the houses was extinguished; and the wheel was then turned from east to west over the nine spindles long enough to produce fire by friction. They then sacrificed a heifer, which they cut in pieces and burnt while yet alive. Finally they lighted their own hearths from the pile, while an old man repeated the words of incantation. This custom is prevalent in Ireland, in various parts of Scotland, and even in England and Wales it has been practised with variations and some modification. In Cornwall, in 1800, a calf was burnt alive to arrest the murrain. Mr. Laurence Gomme has traced the custom back to the sacrifice of animals for human sickness, for in 1678 four men were actually prosecuted for "sacrificing a bull in a heathenish manner for the recovery of the health of Custane Mackenzie." In Ireland a cure for small-pox consisted in sacrificing a sheep to a wooden image, wrapping the skin about the sick person, and then eating the sheep.

In Scotland strange and weird customs linger, and Sir H. G. Reid in his entertaining volume, "'Tween Gloamin' and the Mirk," has related how he himself, during infancy, underwent a mysterious cure for the "falling sickness." He was carried secretly away to a lonely hut on the distant moor, and the party were admitted to a long, low-roofed apartment, dimly lighted from two small windows. In one corner sat an old woman, wrinkled and silent, busily knitting; a huge peat-fire blazed on the open hearth, shooting heavy sparks up through the hole in the roof, and filling the apartment with smoke. No word was spoken, and the scene must have been as eerie as the lover of mystery or the believer in witchcraft could have desired. "I was placed on a three-legged stool in the middle of the floor" (the writer continues); "the old woman rose, and with the aid of immense tongs, took deliberately from the fire seven large smooth round stones, they were planted one by one in an irregular circle about me; with her dull dark eyes

closed, and open white palms outstretched, the enchantress muttered some mystic words; it was over—the tremulous patient was taken up as 'cured!'" In Scotland the belief in witches who have power both to cure and to cause maladies is so deeply founded that it would be rash to deny its continued existence. These creatures are credited with opening graves for the purpose of taking out joints of the fingers and toes of dead bodies, with some of the winding-sheet, in order to prepare powders. In Kirkwall a small portion of the human skull was taken from the graveyard and grated to a powder in order to be used in a mixture for the cure of fits; while in Caithness the patient was made to drink from a suicide's skull, and the beverage so taken was regarded as a sovereign specific for epilepsy. In 1643 one John Drugh was indicted for this despoiling of corpses for some such purpose. The Australian aborigines had a belief not altogether dissimilar to this. They rubbed weak persons with the fat of a corpse, and thought that the strength, courage, and valour of the dead man was communicated to the body subjected to the treatment. Analogies may be found among savage tribes all over the world, and the culmination is found in the devouring of enemies, not out of revenge, but because the widespread primitive idea prevails that by eating the flesh and by drinking the blood of the slain, a man absorbs the nature or the life of the deceased into his own body. In other words, cannibalism has a medical origin which the most depraved superstition suggested and fortified.

The Lhoosai, a savage hill-tribe in India, teach their young warriors to eat a piece of the liver of the first man they kill in order to strengthen their hearts, and here we see the development of the magic power of the medicines which is not only efficacious for the body, but for the spirit.

When Coleridge was a little boy at the Blue Coat School, he relates in his Table Talk, there was a "charm for one's foot when asleep," which he believed had been in the school since its foundation in the time of King Edward VI. Its potency lay in the words—

> "Crosses three we make to ease us,
> Two for the thieves, and one for Christ Jesus."

The same charm served for cramp in the leg, and Coleridge quaintly adds: "Really, upon getting out of bed, where the cramp most frequently

occurred, pressing the sole of the foot on the cold floor, and then repeating this charm, I can safely affirm that I do not remember an instance in which the cramp did not go away in a few seconds." Charms like this, by which a simple method of cure is invested with marvel, are common enough among primitive races, and not infrequently provide the key to the solution of the mystery of the magician's triumph. The cunning leaders, priests, or medicine-men of ignorant nations maintain their ascendency by ascribing to miracle the simplest feats they perform.

The superstitious red man is completely at the mercy of the medicine-man who claims to possess supernatural powers, and who assumes the ability to work marvellous cures by magic. Each North American Indian carries with him a medicine bag obtained under very curious circumstances. When he is approaching manhood he sets forth in search of the patent drug which is to shield him from all danger, and act as an all-powerful talisman. He lies down alone in the woods upon a litter of twigs, eats and drinks nothing for several days, and at last falls asleep from sheer exhaustion. Then he dreams —or should do so—and whatever bird, or beast, or reptile, forms the subject of his dream, he must seek as his medicine. He goes forth upon the quest directly his strength has returned, and when he has discovered the animal of his vision, he turns its skin into a pouch, and wears it ever afterwards round his neck. In peace or war he will never part with this talisman; it is the treasure of his life, a sacred possession, a charm against all maladies, and a protection from foes. It is scarcely necessary to add, after this, that the medicine-man of the tribe is held in highest honour, and regarded as a worker of veritable miracles. All things are possible to him. By his prayers, his rites, and his incantations he causes the sun to shine, the rain to descend, the rivers to deepen, the plants to thrive. A traveller tells us that a drought had withered the maize fields, and the medicine-man was sent for to compel the rain to fall. On the first day one Wah-ku, or the Shield, came to the front, but failed; so did Om-pah, or the Elk. On succeeding days another was tried, but without success; but at last recourse was made to Wak-a-dah-ha-Ku, or the White Buffalo Hair, who possessed a shield coloured with red lightnings, and carried an arrow in his hand. Much was expected of him, and the people were not disappointed. "Taking his station by the medicine-lodge," we are told, "he harangued the people, protesting that for the good of his tribe he was willing to sacrifice himself, and that if he did not bring

the much desired rain he was content to live for the rest of his life with the old women and the dogs. He asserted that the first medicine-man had failed because his shield warded off the rain clouds; the second, who wore a head-dress made of a raven's skin, because the raven was a bird that soared above the storm, and cared not whether the rain came or stayed; and the third who wore a beaver skin, because the beaver was always wet and required no rain. But as for him, the red lightnings on his shield would attract the rain-clouds, and his arrow would pierce them, and pour the water over the thirsty fields. It chanced that as he ended his oration, a steamer fired a salute from a twelve pounder gun. To the Indians the roar of the cannon was like the voice of thunder, and their joy knew no bounds. The successful medicine-man was loaded with valuable gifts; mothers hastened to offer their daughters to him in marriage; and the elder medicine-men hastened from the lodge to enrol him in their order.... Just before sunset his quick eyes discovered a black cloud which, unobserved by the noisy multitude, swiftly came up from the horizon. At once he assumed his station on the roof of the lodge, strung his bow, and made ready his arrow; arrested the attention of his fellows by his loud and exultant speech; and as the cloud impended over the village, shot his arrow into the sky. Lo, the rain descended in torrents, wetting the rain-maker to the skin, but establishing in everybody's mind a firm and deep conviction of his power."

The influence of the medicine-man in time of sickness is illustrated in the narrative of Mr. Kane, who wrote "The Wanderings of an Artist." He heard a great noise in one of the villages, and found that a handsome Indian girl was extremely ill. The medicine-man sat in the middle of the room, crossed-legged and naked; a wooden dish filled with water was before him, and he had guaranteed to rid the girl of her disease which afflicted her side. He commenced by singing and gesticulating in a violent manner, the others who surrounded him beating drums with sticks. This lasted half-an-hour. Then the medicine-man determined on a radical cure of the patient, for he darted suddenly upon the girl, dug his teeth into her side (for she was undressed), and shook her for several minutes. This increased her agony, but the medicine-man declared he had "got it," and held his hands to his mouth. After this he plunged his hands into a bowl of water, leaving the spectators to believe that he had torn out the disease with his teeth, and was now destroying it by drowning. Eventually he withdrew his hand from the

bowl, and it was found that he held a piece of cartilage between the finger and thumb. This was cut in two, and half cast into the fire, half into the water. So ended the operation, and Mr. Kane records that though the doctor was perfectly satisfied, the patient seemed, if anything, to be worse for the treatment.

The belief in magic was ingrained in the Egyptians, who, notwithstanding that the art of medicine was far advanced with them, preferred to trust in the workers of miracles and enchantments. In his recent collection of Egyptian Tales, Mr. Flinders-Petrie is able to supply a striking instance of this credulity. A man named Dedi was said to have such powers over life and death that he could restore the head that had been smitten from the body. He was brought before the King, who desired to put this marvellous power to the test, and the story thus proceeds:—"His Majesty said, 'Let one bring me a prisoner who is in prison that his punishment may be fulfilled.' And Dedi said, 'Let it not be a man, O King, my lord; behold we do not even thus to our cattle.' And a duck was brought unto him, and its head was cut off. And the duck was laid on the west side of the hall, and its head on the east side of the hall. And Dedi spake his magic speech. And the duck fluttered along the ground, and its head came likewise; and when it had come part to part the duck stood and quacked. And they brought likewise a goose before him, and he did even so unto it. His Majesty caused an ox to be brought, and its head cast on the ground. And Dedi spake his magic speech. And the ox stood upright behind him, and followed him with his halter trailing on the ground." This story prepares us in every way for the information that the Egyptians, despite their great knowledge of the curative powers of herbs and drugs, preferred to rely upon enchanters, soothsayers, and magicians in their time of illness and peril.

Professor Douglas, in his "Society in China," devotes a very interesting and entertaining chapter to medicine as regarded and practised by the Celestials. From this we learn that while there are plenty of doctors in the land, they are one and all the merest empirics, who prey on the folly, the ignorance, and the dread of the uneducated people. The failure to cure any disease brings no odium upon the quack, though when the late Emperor "ascended on a dragon to be a guest on high," or, in other words, died of small-pox, his physicians who could not save him from that distinction were deprived of honours and rewards. The Chinese are centuries behind other nations in

medicine, and they have not yet learnt that the blood circulates in the body, or that a limb may be removed with beneficial effects in case of some diseases or accidents. They believe that arteries and veins are one and the same, and that the pulses communicate with the various organs of the body. The object of the physician is to "strengthen the breath, stimulate the gate of life, restore harmony." "The heart is the husband, and the hinges are the wife," and they must be brought into agreement, or evil arises. Good results may be obtained, it is believed, by such tonics as dog-flesh, dried red-spotted lizard-skins, tortoise-shell, fresh tops of stag-horns, bones and teeth of dragons (when obtainable), shavings of rhinoceros-horns, and such like. For dyspepsia the doctor has no nostrum, but he thrusts a needle into the patient's liver and expects him to be immediately cured. When cholera or any other pestilence sweeps over the land, the Chinese feel the helplessness of their physicians, so they resort to charms, and to the offering of gifts to the gods by way of staying the plague. Hydrophobia is common among the half-starved curs which infest the streets, and the cure for it—quite unknown to Pasteur—is the curd of the black pea dried and pulverised, mixed with hemp oil, and formed into a large ball; this is to be rolled over the wound, then broken open, and kept on rolling until it has lost its hair-like appearance. To complete the cure the patient must abstain from eating "anything in a state of decomposition." He might just as well be told not to poison himself. If, by the way, the prescription does not work, but hydrophobia continues, the patient is strongly commended to try the effect of "the skull, teeth, and toes of a tiger ground up, and given in wine in doses of one-fifth of an ounce." While the tiger is being caught, however, a fatal result may occur, but of course the Chinese doctor is not to be blamed for that. He has done his best, and the fault is obviously the tiger's. The Chinese believe in astrology, the philosopher's stone, and the elixir of life. A plant known as ginseng is said to greatly prolong and sweeten existence, and sometimes as much as a thousand taels of silver are given for a pound's weight of the precious root. It will be seen, therefore, from such facts as these that a Galen in China would have a vast revolution to undertake, and that a thousand Galens at least would be required to overcome the prejudices and uproot the superstitions of the race. The great value which the Chinese attach to the bones, horns, tusks, and eyes of animals may be judged from various tonics and remedies which are in great request among all classes. A dose of tigers' bones inspires courage; an elephant's eye burnt

to powder and mixed with human milk is a sovereign remedy for inflammation of the eye; pulverised elephants' bones cure indigestion; a preparation of elephants' ivory is the recognised cure for diabetes; and the same animal's teeth may be used for epilepsy. But if the patient cannot eat rice his case is abandoned as hopeless, and not even the physician who deals most extensively in magic pills, ointments, and decoctions will attempt to save the obstinate person's life.

The medicine-men of the Eskimos were called angekoks, and enjoyed the unlimited confidence of the people. They were said to have equal power over heaven and earth, this world and the next. This made them useful as friends and dangerous as enemies. The Eskimo, therefore, set out upon no enterprise without consulting the angekoks, who granted blessings, exorcised demons, and gave charms against disease. These medicine-men have a profound belief in themselves, and though they resort to jugglery and ventriloquism to deceive their visitors, they appear to have no idea that they are perpetrating an imposture. Their particular powers, they think, are derived from more than human sources. Dr. Nansen, in his "Eskimo Life," points out that it has always been to the interests of the medicine-men and the priests to sustain and mature superstitions or religious ideas. "They must therefore themselves appear to believe in them; they may even discover new precepts of divinity to their own advantage, and thereby increase both their power and their revenues." The Greenlanders believe that the angekoks work with the help of ministering spirits, called *tôrnat*, who are often none other than the souls of dead persons, especially of grandfathers; but not infrequently the *tôrnat* are supposed to be the souls of departed animals, or of fairies. The angekok is assumed to have several of these councillors always at hand. They render help in the time of danger, and may even act as avengers or destroyers. In the latter case they show themselves as ghosts, and so frighten to death the persons against whom vengeance is directed. Therefore, as Dr. Nansen reports, the angekoks are the wisest and also the craftiest of all Eskimos. They assert that they have the power of conversing with spirits, of travelling in the under-world, of conjuring up powerful spirits, and of obtaining revelations. "They influence and work upon their countrymen principally through their mystic exorcisms and *seances*, which occur as a rule in the winter, when they are living in houses. The lamps are extinguished, and skins hung before the windows. The

angekok himself sits upon the floor. By dint of making a horrible noise so that the whole house shakes, changing his voice, bellowing and shrieking, ventriloquising, groaning, moaning, and whining, beating on drums, bursting forth into diabolical shrieks of laughter and all sorts of other tricks, he persuades his companions that he is visited by the various spirits he personates, and that it is they who make the disturbance." They cure diseases by reciting charms, and "give men a new soul." He demands large fees, not for himself, he explains, but for the spirits whose agent he is. Apparently these spirits have similar ideas to the London consulting physician.

Mr. Theodore Bent, in his "Ruined Cities of Mashonaland," gives a specimen of the credulity excited by the medicine-men. The explorer desired to interview a chief, Mtoko by name, but permission was refused. The reason, he afterwards ascertained, was that the chief's father had died shortly after another white man's visit, and the common belief was that he had been bewitched. The chief thought that the "white lady" who ruled over the nation to which Mr. Bent belonged had sent him purposely to cast a glamour over him. It may be remembered that the ill-fated Lobengula refused to have his portrait taken because he believed that by means of the image of himself he could be magically infected with a dread disease. This idea of substitution, which has already been referred to, is akin to that of the belief in witchcraft during the middle ages—namely, that the witches could, by sticking pins into the wax image of a person, bring upon that person agonising maladies. The dreadful results of such beliefs among savage tribes is told by the two hospital nurses who a year or so ago produced a lively book, "Adventures in Mashonaland." One morning a native entered their camp, bringing a tale of horror. A chief called Maronka, whose kraal was about forty miles away, had boiled his family alive. He had been convinced by the native doctors that after death the souls of the chiefs passed into the bodies of lions. His medicine-men had "smelt out" his own family as witches, and boiling alive was the requisite punishment. Mr. Rider Haggard has told many such stories as this in his books on South Africa. The Zulu doctors were in the habit, not only of "smelling out" witches and evil spirits, but of sprinkling the soldiers with medicine, in order to "put a great heart into them," and ensure their victory in battle.

Customs like these gave Charles Dickens his opportunity of writing two of his most scathing satires "The Noble Savage" and "The Medicine Man of Civilisation." He refused to subscribe to the popular and amiable sentiment that the African barbarian was an interesting survival, or that the Ojibbeway Indian was picturesque. After a severe indictment of them, Dickens instanced their customs in medicine as a proof of their irremediable depravity. "When the noble savage finds himself a little unwell," he wrote, "and mentions the circumstance to his friends, it is immediately perceived that he is under the influence of witchcraft. A learned personage, called an Imyanger, or Witch Doctor, is sent for to Nooker the Umtargartie, or smell out the witch. The male inhabitants of the kraal being seated on the ground, the learned doctor, got up like a grizzly bear, appears and administers a dance of the most terrific nature, during the exhibition of which remedy he incessantly gnashes his teeth, and howls,—'I am the original physician to Nooker the Umtargartie. Yow, yow, yow! No connection with any other establishment. Till, till, till! All other Umtargarties are feigned Umtargarties, Boroo, Boroo! but I perceive here a genuine and real Umtargartie, Hoosh, Hoosh, Hoosh! in whose blood, I, the original Imyanger and Nookerer, will wash these bear's claws of mine!' All this time the learned physician is looking out among the attentive faces for some unfortunate man who owes him a cow, or who has given him any small offence, or against whom, without offence, he has conceived a spite. Him he never fails to Nooker as the Umtargartie, and he is instantly killed." This is no burlesque, and I have given the record in Dickens's inimitable language because it most vividly sets before us the custom of the medicine-men of barbarous races. But the medicine-men of Longfellow's description, the men who came to appease and console Hiawatha, who

> "Walked in silent, grave procession,
> Bearing each a pouch of healing,
> Skin of beaver, lynx, or otter,
> Filled with magic roots and simples,
> Filled with very potent medicines,"

—these may be accepted as the milder type of magicians who, among a primitive people, claimed not only to be able to heal the living, but to restore the dead.

Mr. Austine Waddell, in his exhaustive work on the Buddhism of Tibet, tells us that a very popular form of Buddha is as “the supreme physician” or Buddhist *Æ*sculapius, the idea of whom is derived from an ancient legend of the “medicine-king” who dispensed spiritual medicine. The images of this Buddha are worshipped as fetishes, and they cure by sympathetic magic. The supplicant, after bowing and praying, rubs his finger over the eye, knee, or particular part of the image corresponding to the affected part on his own body, and then applies the finger carrying this hallowed touch to the afflicted spot. Mr. Waddell says that this constant friction is rather detrimental to the features of the god; whether it is beneficial to the man’s body is of course largely a matter of faith and circumstances. As might be expected, talismans to ward off evils from malignant planets and demons, whence come all diseases, are in great request. The eating of the paper on which a charm has been written is considered by the Tibetan to be the easiest and most certain method of curing a malady, and the spells which the Lamas use in this way are called “za-yig,” or edible letters. A still more mystical way of applying these remedies, according to Mr. Waddell, is by the washings of the reflection of the writing in a mirror, a habit common in other quarters of the globe. In Gambia, for instance, this treatment is relied upon by the natives. A doctor is called in, he examines the patient, and then sits down at the bedside and writes in Arabic characters on a slate some sentences from the Koran. The slate is then washed, and the dirty infusion is drunk by the patient. In Tibet, Chinese ink is smeared on wood, and every twenty-nine days the inscription reflected in a mirror. The face of the mirror during the reflection is washed with beer, and the drainings are collected in a cup for the patient’s use. This is a special cure for the evil eye. The medicine-men of Tibet can also supply charms against bullets and weapons, charms for the clawing of animals, charms to ward off cholera, and even charms to prevent domestic broils. This is surely evidence of high civilisation.

It would be hopeless to endeavour to exhaust this subject. Only a few selected instances can be given to illustrate how large a part magic has played, and still plays, in the healing art. Medicine is by no means freed of its superstitions yet, and the success of quack advertisements of the day abundantly proves that the civilised public is still prone to believe that universal remedies are obtainable, and that miracles can be wrought.

Modern medical science, as one of its great exponents has pointed out, plays a waiting game when miracles are spoken of, and when magic is claimed to supersede specific remedies. “When it is asked to believe in the violent and erratic violation of laws of matter and force, science stands on an impregnable rock, fenced round by bulwarks of logical fact, and flanked by the bastions of knowledge of nature and her constitution.” And as exact knowledge spreads, Prospero will have no alternative but to break his staff, and bury it fathoms deep.

# Chaucer's Doctor of Physic.

By W. H. Thompson.

IN the "Canterbury Tales" we have an inimitable gallery of fourteenth century portraits, drawn from life, with all a great master's delicacy of finish and touch. And in none of these pictures does Chaucer excel himself more than in that of his "Doctor of Physic." We may take it for granted that the portrait is no mere fanciful one, with its pre-Raphaelite minuteness of detail, sketched with the poet's own peculiar skill. With what mischievous and yet altogether playful and good-natured humour is the man of medicine presented to us!

> "With us there was a doctour of phisike
> In all this world ne was there none like him
> To speak of phisike and of surgerie."

What manner of man was this paragon of medical knowledge? In personal appearance he was somewhat of an exquisite. "Clothes are unspeakably significant" saith the immortal Teufelsdrockh, and every practitioner who has his *clientele* largely yet to make knows the importance of being well dressed. Chaucer's grave graduate was apparelled in a purple surcoat, and a blue and white furred hood.

> "In sanguine and in perse he clad was all
> Lined with taffata and with sendall,"

and yet no luxurious sybarite by any means was he,

> "Of his diet measureable was he,
> For it was no superfluity,
> But of great nourishing and digestable."

A man of simple habits, even perhaps given to holding his purse strings somewhat tightly.

"He was but easy of expense,
He kept that he won in pestilence."

For, as the poet adds with his characteristic merry sly humour,

"Gold in physic is a cordial,
Therefore he loved gold in special."

The science of medicine since Chaucer's day has made extraordinary advances, and it is only fair to judge his doctor by contemporary standards. To-day, we fear, he would be largely regarded as little better than a charlatan and a quack. It is true, he was acquainted with all the authorities, ancient and modern, from Æsculapius and Galen down to Gaddesden, the author of the "Rosa Anglica," the great English book of fourteenth century medicine. But this last named luminary of physic would aid him very little on the road to true knowledge. This medical "Rose," which Leland calls a "large and learned work," only serves to illustrate the impotence of the professors of the healing arts at that period. This is the recipe of Gaddesden for the small-pox. "After this (the appearance of the eruption) cause the whole body of your patient to be wrapped in red scarlet cloth, and command everything about the bed to be made red. This is an excellent cure. It was in this manner I treated the son of the noble king of England when he had the small-pox, and I cured him without leaving any marks." To cure epilepsy, he orders the patient "and his parents" to fast three days, and then go to church. "The patient must first confess, and he must have mass on Friday and Saturday, and then on Sunday the priest must read over the patient's head the gospel for September, in the time of vintage after the feast of the Holy Cross. After this the priest shall write out this portion of the gospel reverently, and bind it about the patient's neck, and he shall be cured." If epilepsy was to be exorcised by such a remedy as this, we venture to assert that it must have been largely a case of faith-healing.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

(*From Harleian M.S.—4866 fol. 91.*)

Seeing then that such was the condition of the science of medicine in Chaucer's days, we must take with a good deal of reservation his statement that his doctor

> "Knew the cause of every malady
> Were it of cold, or hot, or moist, or dry,
> And where engendered, and of what humour."

Anyhow, some of the remedies prescribed for the "sick man," and the "drugs," which his friends the apothecaries were so ready to supply, would have seemed extraordinary enough to us.

The poet tells us the doctor's study was but "little in the Bible," and that though a "perfect practitioner," the ground of his scientific knowledge was

astronomy, *i.e.*, astrology; the "better part of medicine," as Roger Bacon calls it. In dealing with his patients he was guided by "natural magic."

To this practice Chaucer alludes in another of his poems, the "House of Fame."

> "And clerks eke, which con well,
> All this magic naturell,
> That craftily do her intents,
> To make in certain ascendents,
> Images—lo through which magic,
> To make a man be whole or sick."

So that in spite of what appears to us the charlatanry in his make up, the doctor was supposed to be a person of importance in the eyes of his fellow pilgrims, with quite the standing of an accredited medical man of to-day, is evidenced by the manner in which mine host Bailly addresses him. Master Bailly was no particular respecter of persons, indeed, on the contrary, he was somewhat of a Philistine; yet he was all respect to this man of medicine. It is as "Sir" Doctor of Physic, the host addresses him; also declaring him to be a "proper man," and like a prelate. After the story of chicanery related by the Canon's Yeoman, it is to the physician he looks to tell a tale of "honest matter." Such is his bearing towards him throughout.

The doctor's contribution to the "Canterbury Tales," too, is of a serious, sober kind, in keeping with his character; and concludes with some sound moral advice. Therefore, whatever foibles he may have, the "doctor of physic" is presented to us as a sterling gentleman, no unworthy predecessor of those who to-day, on more modern lines, still follow in his footsteps.

# The Doctors Shakespeare Knew.

By A. H. Wall.

"O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
In herbs, plants, shrubs, and their true qualities.
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live
But to the earth some special good doth give;
Nor ought so good, but, strained from that fair use
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse."
—*Romeo and Juliet.*

"By medicine life may be prolong'd."—*Cymbeline V. 5.*

IN Walckenaer's "Memoirs of Madame de Sévigné," and in the amusing, interesting volume which Gaston Boissier devoted to her works and letters, we have glimpses of the medical profession in France, which show us it was in her time and country, just what it was in England in the same century when it was known to Shakespeare. For one more or less genuine physician there were thousands of charlatans and quacks, and the contempt which our great dramatic poet frequently expresses in his works for medical practitioners must, in fairness, be regarded as applicable to the latter, not to the former. In 1884, an American writer on this subject (Dr. Rush Field, in his "Medical Thoughts of Shakespeare") strove to show that our great philosophic poet and playwright's opinion of all the medical practitioners was a low one. "He uses them frequently," he says, "as a tool by which deaths are produced through the means of poison, and generally treats them with contempt." That he might fairly do this, and that in doing it he rather displayed respect and regard for the genuine, more or less scientific professors of the healing art, can be very readily demonstrated by anyone at all familiar with his plays. But to return to Madame de Sévigné. At a time when she was growing old, when her letters speak so sadly of the dying

condition of Cardinal de Retz at Commercy, of Madame de la Fayette's being consumed by slow fever, and La Roche confined to his armchair by gout, of Corbinelle's threatened insanity, and of his taking "potable gold" as a remedy for headache, she writes also of small-pox and other fevers having permanently settled at Versailles and Saint-Germain, where the King and Queen were attacked, and ladies and gentlemen of the Court were decimated, and cases of apoplexy and rheumatism were rapidly increasing in every direction. "Fashionable folk, used up with pleasure-making, sick through disappointed ambition, fidgetting without motive, agitating without aim, tainted with morbid fancies and suspicion," found themselves in the doctor's hands, and were far more ready to select practitioners who promised magically swift and easy cures, than those who spoke of slow and gradual recovery by means which were neither painless nor pleasurable. "Everybody," says Boissur, "women included, battled with one another to possess marvellous secrets whereby obstinate complaints should be immediately cured. Madame Fouquet applied a plaster to the dying Queen, which cured her, to the great scandal of the Faculty unable to save her; and the Princess de Tarente served out drugs to all her people at Vitre.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

(*The Stratford Portrait.*)

Madame Sévigné wrote of her as “the best doctor in the upper classes; she has rare and valuable compounds of which she gives us three pinches with prodigious effect.” When writing to her daughter, she begs her not to neglect taking such medicines as “cherry water,” “extract of periwinkles,” “viper-broth,” “uric acid,” and “powdered crab’s-eyes.” She says the extract of periwinkles “endowed Madame de Grignam with a second youth.” Writing to her daughter, “If you use it, when you re-appear so fair people will cry, ‘O’er what blessed flower can she have walked,’ then I will answer ‘On the periwinkle.’” She tells, too, how the Capuchins, who still retained their ancient medical reputation, treated the rheumatism in her leg “with plants bruised and applied twice a day; taken off while wet twice a day, and buried in the earth, so that as they rotted away her pains might in like way decrease.” “It’s a pity you ran and told the surgeons this,” she says to her daughter, “for they roar with laughter at it, but I do not care a fig for them.”

In like way Madame de Scudery tells Bassy, “There is an abbé here who is making a great bother by curing by sympathy. For fever of all kinds, so they say, he takes the patient’s spittle and mingles it with an egg, and gives it to a dog; the dog dies and the patient recovers.... They say he has cured a quantity of people.”

Turning from these illustrations of medical practice in France to see how identical it is with that adopted in England when Shakespeare lived, we recall the advice of that eminent gentleman, Andrew Rourde, who recommends people to wash their faces once a week only, using a scarlet cloth to wipe them dry upon, as a sure remedy in certain cases. In other instances we find that certain pills made from the skulls of murderers taken down from gibbets, and ground to powder for that purpose, were popular as medicine, that a draught of water drunk from a murdered man’s skull had wonderful medicinal properties, and that the blood of a dragon was absolutely miraculous in the cures it effected. The touch of a dead man’s hand was another ghastly remedy in common use, and the powder of mummy was a wonderful cure for certain grave complaints. Love-philtres were also regarded from a medicinal point of view, and the strange doings of quack *accoucheurs* are not less absurdly terrible. That the seventeenth century physician himself was not always proof against these products of ancient ignorance and superstition, is abundantly apparent. Van Helmont, the son of a nobleman, born in Brussels, and very carefully educated for his profession, practised both medicine and magic medicinally. He rejected Galen, inclined to that illiterate pretender Paracelsus, and determined that the only way by which he could defy disease, and utterly destroy it, was through what he called *Archæus*. Speaking of digestion, for instance, he denied that it was either chemical or mechanical in its nature, but the result of this *Archæus*, a spiritual activity, working in a very mysteriously complicated way, for both evil and good. It has been said that he was one of Lord Bacon’s disciples, but for that assertion there certainly is no sufficient foundation, for Bacon, if a mystic by inclination, was logical in reasoning. In England Van Helmont had an English follower in the person of another physician, Dr. Fludd, a disciple of the famous inventor of the camera obscura, and conjecturally the first photographer. His grand quack remedy was “the powder of sympathy,” which was the “sword-salve” of Paracelsus (composed of moss taken from the skull of a gibbetted murderer, of warm

human blood, human suet, linseed oil, turpentine, etc.). This was applied, not to the wound, but to the sword that inflicted it, kept “in a cool place!” Certain plants pulled up with the left hand were regarded as a sure remedy in fever cases, but the gatherer, while gathering, was not to look behind, for that deprived the plants of their medicinal value.

Amongst other physicians of Shakespeare’s century was Mr. Valentine Greatrake, who came to London from Ireland, where his supposed magical cures had been awakening a great sensation. He hired a large house in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, to which vast crowds of patients of all kinds and conditions crowded daily, all clamouring to be cured. He received them in their order, says an eye-witness, with “a grave and simple countenence.” For, as Shakespeare wrote, “Thus credulous fools are caught.” (“Comedy of Errors,” 1, 2.) Greatrake (afterwards executed for high treason) asserted that every diseased person was possessed by a devil, and that by his prayers and laying on of hands the devil could be cast out. Lord Conway sent for him to cure an incurable disease from which his wife was suffering, and even some of the most learned and eminent people of the time were amongst his patrons. St. Evremond wrote, “You can hardly imagine what a reputation he gained in a short time. Catholics and Protestants visited him from every part, all believing that power from heaven was in his hands.”

In an Act of Parliament which was passed in the year 1511, we read, in its preamble, that “the science and cunning of Physic and Surgery” was exercised by “a great multitude of ignorant persons, of whom the greater part have no manner of insight in the same, nor in any other kind of learning—some also can read no letters in the book—so far forth that common artificers, as smiths, weavers, and women, boldly and accostumably took upon them great cures, and things of great difficulty, in which they partly used sorceries and witchcraft, and partly supplied such medicines unto the diseased as are very noisome, and nothing meet therefore; to the high displeasure of God,” etc.

A large number of the pretended remedies thus used in medical practice are clearly traceable back to the ancient Magi, who were professors of medicine, as well as priests and astrologers.

With these facts before you, turn to your Shakespeare, and see how he regarded the popular delusions thus created and fostered, with their

> "Distinguished cheaters, prating mountebanks,
> And many such libertines of sin."
>
> —*Comedy of Errors.*

Do you remember the other lines from this source, in which the poet speaks of "This pernicious slave," who "forsooth took on him as a conjurer, and, gazing in mine eyes, feeling my pulse, and with no face, as't were, outfacing me, cried out I was possessed." This is not the stern, grave doctor in "Macbeth," who did not pretend to "raze out the written troubles of the brain," but said, "Therein the patient must minister unto himself." There is no depreciation of the healing art in Shakespeare's painting of Lear's physician, as there is of the "caitiff wretch" of an apothecary, who sold poison to Romeo in a very different way to that in which the physician in Cymbeline supplied a deadly drug to the Queen. "I beseech your grace," says he, speaking in solemn earnestness, "without offence (my conscience bids me ask) wherefore you have commanded of me these most poisonous compounds." In "All's well that Ends Well," you will recognize the foregoing descriptions of medicinal delusions in the interview between Helena and the King, who says, we "may not be so credulous of cure, when our most learned doctors leave us, and the congregated college have concluded that labouring art can never ransom Nature from her maid estate, I say we must not so stain our judgment, or corrupt our hope, to prostitute our past-cure malady to empirics." In this play both "Galen and Paracelsus" are mentioned, and their names then represented rival schools of medicine.

How smartly and merrily Shakespeare wrote of such cures as Greatrake professed to effect, we see in Henry VI., where Simpcox, supposed to be miraculously cured of blindness, is asked to and does describe what he sees, "If thou *hadst* been born blind, thou might'st as well have known all our names as thus to name the several colours we do wear."

In the "Merry Wives of Windsor" we have "Master Caius that calls himself doctor of physic," and is called by Dame Quickly a "fool and physician." The two were in Shakespeare's time very commonly combined, and often, as we have shown, very strangely. Dr. Caius was a real name borne by a

learned gentleman who was physician to Queen Elizabeth. In Cymbeline the name of the physician is Cornelius. This again was the name of a real physician, who, in the sixteenth century, gained great reputation in Europe chiefly by restoring Charles V. to health after a tediously long illness. We may presume that Shakespeare was familiar with the fact.

Amongst the doctors of our poet's time it was a common custom to throw up cases when they believed them hopeless. Shakespeare's Sempronius says, "His friends, like physicians, thrice gave him o'er," and Lord Bacon in his work on "The Advancement of Learning," says of Physicians, "In the enquiry of diseases, they do abandon the cures of many, some as in their nature incurable, and others as past the period of cure, so that Sylla triumvirs never prescribed so many men to die as they do by their ignorant edicts." We have spoken of the sword-salve cure for wounds. Of dealers in poison who visited fairs and market-places, and attracted crowds by the aid of a stage fool, we get a glimpse in "Hamlet," where Laertes says:—

> "I bought an unction of a mountebank,
> So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
> Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare
> Collected from all simples that have virtue,
> Under the moon can save the thing from death."

There is a hit at doctors who gave others remedies they had not enough faith in to adopt for themselves:—

> "Thou speak'st like a physician, Helicarnus:
> Who minister'st a potion unto me
> That thou would'st tremble to receive thyself."
>
> —*Pericles.*

In the same play the true physician receives full appreciation. Cerimon says of himself:—

> "'Tis known, I ever
> Have studied physic, through which secret art,
> By turning o'er authorities, I have
> Together with my practice, made familiar
> To me, and to my aid, the blest infusions

That dwell in vegitives, in metals, stones.
And I can speake of the disturbances
That nature works, and of her cures; which doth give me
A more content in course of true delight
Than to be thirsty after tottering honour,
Or tie my treasure up in silken bags,
To please the fool, and death."

And one of the two listening gentlemen adds:—

"Your honour has through Ephesus pour'd forth
Your charity, and hundreds call themselves
Your creatures, who by you have been restored."

And Pericles, with his supposed dead wife in his arms, turning to Cerimon, who has saved her from the grave, says:—

"Reverend Sir,
The gods can have no mortal officer
More like a god than you."

And Gower, speaking the concluding lines of the play, adds:—

"In reverend Cerimon there well appears
The worth that learned charity aye wears."

"*Cerimon*: I hold it ever
Virtue and cunning (wisdom) were endowment greater
Than nobleness and riches...."

There was, perhaps, when Shakespeare wrote the above lines, some thought of the Elizabethan nobleman, Edmund, Earl of Derby, who "was famous for chirurgerie, bone-setting, and hospitalite," as Ward says in his Diary; of the Marquis of Dorchester, who in his time was a Fellow of the College of Surgeons; or of the poet's son-in-law, Dr. Hall, a gentleman who resided in Stratford-on-Avon, in a fine old half timber house still standing, and known as Hall's Croft. To his wife, the poet's elder daughter, Shakespeare bequeathed his house and grounds, which Dr. Hall occupied when he died. His grave is near that of his glorious father-in-law, and on it is the following inscription:—

“Here Lyeth Y^E^ Body of John Hall,
Gent: He Marr: svsanna Y^E^ daughter
and co heire of Will. Shakespeare,
Gent. Hee Deceased Nove^R^ 25 a^O^ 1635
aged 60.

Hallius hic situs est medica celeberrimus arte
Expectans regni gaudia læta Dei
Dignus erat meritis qui Nestora vinceret annis,
In terris omnes, sed rapit aequa dies;
Ne tumulo, quid desit adest fidissima conjux
Et vitæ Comitem nunc quoque mortis habet.”

# Dickens' Doctors.

By Thomas Frost.

DICKENS, it must be admitted by even the greatest admirers of his inimitable genius, among whom the writer of this paper must be counted, was not successful in his delineations of the medical profession. Though his most humorous as well as his most pathetic pictures of human life are drawn from the humbler walks in the pilgrimage of humanity, he has given us some good touches of his skill in his presentments of other professions, and notably of lawyers and lawyers' clerks. Nothing in fiction can excel his legal characters in, for instance, "Bleak House,"—his Mr. Tulkinghorn, Mr. Guppy, the clerk, and Mr. Snagsby, the law stationer. But a life-like doctor cannot be found in his works, and the nearest approaches to such a description are the merest sketches.

The most strongly marked of these are Dr. Parker Peps and Mr. Pilkins, the two members of the faculty who officiate at the closing scene in the life of Mrs. Dombey, in which a sense of humour, with difficulty suppressed by the author, mingles with the touching sadness of the death. Dr. Parker Peps, "one of the Court physicians, and a man of immense reputation for assisting at the increase of great families," is introduced "walking up and down the drawing-room with his hands behind him, to the unspeakable admiration of the family surgeon, who had regularly puffed the case for the last six weeks among all his friends and acquaintances as one to which he was in hourly expectation, day and night, of being summoned in conjunction with Dr. Parker Peps." But in this little interlude, the two actors in which do not appear again, the obsequiousness of Mr. Pilkins to the Court physician, and the manner in which the latter, with assumed obliviousness, substitutes "her grace, the duchess" or "her ladyship" for Mrs. Dombey, verge on caricature, a tendency Dickens seems to have had at all times some difficulty in resisting.

Of Dr. Slammer also we have only a sketch, and that of the slightest character. Though he is described as “one of the most popular personages in his own circle,” we gather from the incidents in which he appears only that he was very irascible. As we read of his furious jealousy of Jingle, and the interrupted duel with Winkle, who had received his challenge to the former by mistake, we wonder at the circle in which this “little fat man, with a ring of upright black hair round his head, and an extensive bald plain on the top of it,” was one of the most popular personages. Harold Skimpole, we are told, had been educated for the medical profession; but his training seems to have left no traces of it upon his character or his conversation. He prefers to dabble in literature and music for his own amusement, and look to his friends for the means of living, too prosaic an occupation for himself.

One of the best, but not quite the best, of the medical characters in Dickens’ novels, is Allan Woodcourt, who “had gone out a poor ship’s surgeon, and had come home nothing better,”—the young man hastily called in when the death of Nemo is discovered, in conjunction with “a testy medical man, brought from his dinner, with a broad snuffy upper lip, and a broad Scotch tongue.” Allan Woodcourt has the kindness of heart which characterises the profession, and exemplifies it very pleasingly in the scene with the brickmaker’s wife, and with poor Jo, the forlorn waif who is kept continually moving on by the police. How tenderly, too, he deals with Richard Carstone, the weak-minded victim of the long-drawn Chancery suit. And his head is as sound as his heart is soft. “You,” says Richard to him, “can pursue your art for its own sake, and can put your hand to the plough and never turn; and can strike a purpose out of anything.” What a world of difference we see in this briefly sketched trait to the want of earnestness of purpose and steadfastness of pursuit in the character of young Carstone!

Even stronger testimony to the good qualities of Allan Woodcourt is borne by Mr. Jarndyce. Allan, says that gentleman, is “a man whose hopes and aims may sometimes lie (as most men’s sometimes do, I dare say) above the ordinary level, but to whom the ordinary level will be high enough after all, if it should prove to be a way of usefulness and good service leading to no other. All generous spirits are ambitious, I suppose; but the ambition that calmly trusts itself to such a road, instead of spasmodically trying to fly over it, is the kind I care for. It is Woodcourt’s kind.” The love passages of

this estimable young man with the equally estimable Esther Summerson, one of Dickens' most charming presentments of English maidenhood, are very pleasing, and none of them more so than one which occurs towards the close of the story.

There is another medical character in one of the Christmas stories which, good as it is, might have been made better but for the extent to which the exigencies of space limited the author in the development of character in that class of stories. I mean Dr. Jeddler, the genial but mistaken father of Grace and Marion, in "The Battle of Life." The doctor is "a great philosopher, and the heart and mystery of his philosophy was to look upon the world as a gigantic practical joke; as something too absurd to be considered seriously by any practical man. His system of belief had been in the beginning part and parcel of the battle ground on which he lived." He is not of the cynical school, but a modern Democritus, whose inclination to laugh at everything on the surface of the ocean of life was irresistible, while there was nothing in the conditions of his existence to suggest anything that was beneath. When he hears his daughters conversing about their lovers, "his reflections as he looked after them, and heard the purport of their discourse, were limited at first to certain merry meditations on the folly of all loves and likings, and the idle imposition practised on themselves by young people who believe for a moment that there could be anything serious in such bubbles, and were always deceived—always."

Dr. Jeddler is a widower; we are not told what his experiences of married life had been. Had they been unhappy, one would suppose that he would have been more disposed to be cynical and pessimistic than to regard life's incidents as provocative of merriment, yet, if they had been happy, why should he have regarded the engagement of Grace as an idle folly, a bubble on life's surface, soon to burst? Dickens' explanation is, from this point of view, scarcely satisfactory. "He was sorry," says the novelist, "for her sake —sorry for them both—that life should be such a very ridiculous business as it was. The doctor never dreamed of inquiring whether his children, or either of them, helped in any way to make the scheme a serious one. But then he was a philosopher. A kind and generous man by nature, he had stumbled by chance over that common philosopher's stone (much more easily discovered than the object of the alchemist's researches) which

sometimes trips up kind and generous men, and has the fatal property of turning gold to dross, and every precious thing to poor account."

But when sorrow had humbled the doctor's heart, he felt that the world in which some love, deep-anchored, is the portion of every human creature, was more serious than he had thought it, and understood "how such a trifle as the absence of a little unit in the great absurd account had stricken him to the ground." Then, when he and his daughters are again together in the old home, and his arms are about them both, we find him acknowledging that "It's a world full of hearts, and a serious world with all its folly,—even with mine, which was enough to swamp the whole world."

It is to be observed, however, that while we find all the traits and incidents of professional life in the lawyers of Dickens' creation, there is little or nothing of the kind in his doctors. Such traits are abundant in his presentments of Tulkinghorn, and Kenge, and Vholes in Wickfield, and many others that might be named; but they are so completely absent from his portrayals of Allan Woodcourt and Dr. Jeddler, that the two men might as well have been of any other profession, without any loss to the stories in which they appear. If we compare them with his lawyers, or with the clergymen of Mrs. Oliphant, we are struck at once with the difference.

CHARLES DICKENS.

This is not the case, however, when from the full-blown medical practitioner, adding to his name the initials M.D. or M.R.C.S., we descend to the "sawbones in training," as the facetious Sam Weller designates the young men qualifying themselves for the exercise of the profession by "walking the hospitals." The medical students of the novelist's early days were—it would perhaps be fairer to say that a large proportion of them were —a turbulent and disorderly element in the social life of the metropolis. The newspapers of the day record their frequent appearances at the Bow Street and Marlborough Street police-courts on charges of rowdyism in the streets at or after midnight, when they came out from their favourite places of amusement, the Coal Hole, in the Strand, the Cider Cellars, in Maiden Lane, and the Judge and Jury Club, in Leicester Square, the latter presided over by Renton Nicholson, who edited a vile publication called *The Town*. Their after-amusements were found in strolling through the streets in threes and fours, singing at the top of their voices comic songs, that often outraged propriety, ringing door bells, and chaffing the police. Dickens must often in

his reporting days have witnessed the next morning appearances of these young men at Bow Street police-court.

The first appearance of two specimens of this variety of the immature medico in the humorous pages of the "Pickwick Papers" is described as follows in the low cockney vernacular of Sam Weller. "One on 'em," he tells Mr. Pickwick, "has got his legs on the table, and is a-drinkin' brandy neat, vile the tother one—him in the barnacles—has got a barrel of oysters atween his knees, vich he's a-openin' like steam, and as fast as he eats 'em he takes a aim with the shells at young Dropsy, who's a-sittin' down fast asleep in the chimbley corner." The latter gentleman is Mr. Benjamin Allen, who is described by the novelist as "a coarse, stout, thick-set young man, with black hair cut rather short, and a white face cut rather long. He was embellished with spectacles, and wore a white neckerchief. Below his single-breasted black surtout, which was buttoned up to his chin, appeared the usual number of pepper-and-salt coloured legs, terminating in a pair of imperfectly polished boots. Although his coat was short in the sleeves, it disclosed no vestige of a linen wristband, and although there was quite enough of his face to admit of the encroachment of a shirt-collar, it was not graced by the smallest approach to that appendage. He presented altogether rather a mildewy appearance, and emitted a fragrant odour of full-flavoured Cubas."

This gentleman's companion is Mr. Bob Sawyer, "who was habited in a coarse blue coat which, without being either a great-coat or a surtout, partook of the nature and qualities of both," and "had about him that sort of slovenly smartness and swaggering gait which is peculiar to young gentlemen who smoke in the streets by day, shout and scream in the same by night, call waiters by their Christian names, and do various other acts and deeds of an equally facetious description. He wore a pair of plaid trousers and a large rough double-breasted waistcoat: out of doors he carried a thick stick with a big top. He eschewed gloves, and looked, upon the whole, something like a dissipated Robinson Crusoe." The conversation of these budding surgeons is perfectly in harmony with their outward aspect. Their discourse, when it assumes a serious character, is of the "cases" at the hospital and the "subjects" at the time being on the dissecting tables of the anatomical lecture-rooms. When relieved from attendance at the hospitals, they lounge at tavern bars, and flirt with barmaids and

waitresses, to whom their attentions are not unfrequently of an objectionable character, and less agreeable than they imagine them to be.

The contrast between the graphic power displayed by Dickens in his delineation of the characters of Bob Sawyer and Ben Allen, and the indistinctiveness, as to profession, of his presentments of Allan Woodcourt and Dr. Jeddler, may help us to understand the causes which render his doctors so much less effective than his lawyers. The legal profession presents more variety than the medical, and comes before us more prominently in conjunction with incidents of a striking character, as may be seen every day in the newspaper records of the courts of law and of police. The physician and the surgeon stand as much apart, in these respects, from the busy barrister or solicitor as the clergy do. Dickens has not given us a clerical portrait, and probably for a similar reason. Mrs. Oliphant, on the other hand, excels in her delineations of every grade of the Anglican hierarchy; but her genius as a writer of fiction runs in a groove essentially different from that of Dickens.

# Famous Literary Doctors.

By Cuming Walters.

MEDICAL men have not so commonly made literature an extra pursuit, or adopted it as a serious calling, as have the members of the other liberal professions. It is quite expected that a clergyman should write poems, philosophical essays, and perhaps even a novel with a purpose; and it is usual to recruit the ranks of critics extensively from the law, and to trust to briefless barristers for a continuous supply of romances. No detail is more frequently discovered in the biographies of eminent authors than that they were called to the Bar, and either never practised or forsook practising in order to engage in literary labours. Indeed, it might almost seem that failure in law was the most important step towards success in authorship. No such rule applies, however, to medical men, and no such comment would be justified in their case. Not only do we find the writing of books—otherwise than text-books and technical treatises—rarer with them, but it curiously happens that in most instances it has been the successful practitioner, not the man walking the hospitals or waiting for calls, who has turned author. And we shall find that these medico-literati (if I may coin the phrase) have often been among the most hard-working in their profession, and the wonder is that they were able to enter upon a second pursuit and to follow it with so much zeal. For, in most of the examples I shall advance, literature was more than a pastime with these men who indulged in it. It was chosen by some for its lucrativeness, and by the majority for its capacity to enhance their reputation or to bring them enduring fame. This much may be safely said, that the names of many excellent doctors would have faded from public remembrance ere this, and would have passed away with the generation to which they belonged, had not literature given them lasting luminance. In not a few instances the fact is already forgotten or wholly ignored that certain successful writers once wrote “M.D.” after their names. Who cares that the author of that classic “Religio Medici” took his degrees at Leyden and at Oxford, and dispensed medicine to the end of his life?

Who cares that the author of “The Borough,” “Tales in Verse,” and “The Parish Register,” was apprenticed to a surgeon? Who cares that the writer of such dramas as “Virginius,” “William Tell,” and “The Hunchback,” was trained for a physician? Who cares that the author of “Roderick Random,” “Peregrine Pickle,” and “The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker” was a surgeon’s assistant and acted as surgeon’s mate in the unfortunate Carthagena expedition, before trying (unsuccessfully) to obtain a practice in London? And, above all, who cares that the author of “The Deserted Village” and “The Vicar of Wakefield” studied physic in Edinburgh and on the Continent, and, as Boswell was informed, “was enabled to pursue his travels on foot, partly by demanding at Universities to enter the lists as a disputant, by which, according to the custom of many of them, he was entitled to the premium of a crown, when luckily for him his challenge was not accepted?” Such are a few of the examples which immediately occur to the mind when the whole subject is contemplated.

It would be impossible in the compass of a short article to deal systematically and comprehensively with doctors who became authors, or to make out a complete list of their names with an account of the works which entitled them to the designation. Any facts now adduced must be considered arbitrary and capricious, so far as the choice of them is concerned; and sequence is so little attempted that the reader will pardon, I trust, a possible leap from Galen to Goldsmith, from Sir Thomas Browne to Tobias Smollett, and from Sir John Blackmore to Conan Doyle. I put aside those members of the profession who have simply written on professional subjects. Their name is legion, but in the great majority of cases such work as this would not strictly justify their inclusion among the literati. And, on the other hand, we cannot find a place in the category for such men as Gœthe or Sainte-Beuve, for though both studied medicine, it seems to have been purely with a view to the extension of their knowledge and not with any more practical or material object. Sainte-Beuve, it is true, for a short time in his youth entertained some thought of adopting the profession; but Gœthe only dipped into the subject with the same spirit that he dipped into experimental chemistry and astrology.

Let us, then, refer to a few types certain of instant recognition. The most notable of modern instances is Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, a specialist in his profession, a hard-working physician, and the author of valuable

treatises on medical art, who nevertheless occupied the position of being among the four chief poets whom America has produced, and one of the most versatile of the littérateurs of the century. He went to the Paris Medical Schools shortly after he had graduated at Harvard; he practised as a physician at Boston; and for nearly forty years he was Professor of Physiology. Yet he had time to write the most delightful and original of philosophical essays, to publish novels of which at least one—"Elsie Venner: A Romance of Destiny"—will rank as a classic; to deliver orations and after-dinner speeches in sparkling verse, and to write exquisite poems in rich and felicitous language on a wonderful variety of themes, the complete collection of which makes a very substantial volume. In all his work Dr. Holmes showed himself to be the profound student of nature and of humanity with many varying interests; yet we can often trace the hand of the physician in the work of the essayist and poet. His novels were special studies which only the ardent physiologist and metaphysician would have cared to discuss, or, at all events, would have discussed so well. Both "Elsie Venner" and "The Guardian Angel" deal with the occult problems of heredity, and those problems are treated with the power of the specialist in certain branches of science. Still more strongly is the character of the medical man displayed in a number of the poems, some by reason of their subject, and some by the figures and imagery they contain. The well-known "Stethoscope Song" will immediately suggest itself in illustration. But, for purposes of quotation, I prefer a less popular poem of rare beauty, which more strikingly manifests the writer's power of transmuting the hard dry facts of science into light and gleaming poetry. I refer to what he called at first "The Anatomist's Hymn," but afterwards "The Living Temple." It is one of the interpolated poems in the "Autocrat" series of papers, and to my thinking invests the human body and its physical functions with unimagined charms.

Take, for instance, this poetic exposition of our respiration, the scientific correctness and exactness of which need no explanation to readers of this volume:—

> "The smooth, soft air with pulse-like waves
> Flows murmuring through its hidden caves,
> Whose streams of brightening purple rush
> Fired with a new and livelier blush,

While all their burden of decay
The ebbing current steals away,
And red with Nature's flame they start
From the warm fountains of the heart.

No rest that throbbing slave may ask,
For ever quivering o'er his task,
While far and wide a crimson jet
Leaps forth to fill the woven net
Which in unnumbered crossing tides
The flood of burning life divides,
Then kindling each decaying part
Creeps back to find the throbbing heart.

But warmed with that unchanging flame
Behold the outward moving frame,
Its living marbles jointed strong
With glistening band and silvery thong,
And linked to reason's guiding reins
By myriad rings in trembling chains,
Each graven with the threaded zone
Which claims it as the master's own."

There is an almost irresistible temptation to linger over Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' books, so intensely interesting is his personality and so fascinating is his work. But several other eminent poets of the profession demand attention. To Crabbe's connection with surgery I have already incidentally referred, and inasmuch as he early abandoned the calling for the ministry, little need be said except that his youthful experience may have aided him in writing a scathing denunciation of the Quack, who believed wholly in the potence of "oxymel of squills," and of the Parish Doctor, who "first insults the victim whom he kills." The poet was a severe castigator, and was never less forbearing with the lash than when these impostors of his day were under his hand for flagellation. In Mark Akenside we come to a better specimen of the class which we are considering. At the age of twenty he went to Leyden, and three years later became, (as Dr. Johnson writes) "a doctor of physick, having, according to the custom of the Dutch

Universities, published a thesis." In the same year he published "The Pleasures of the Imagination," his greatest work. This was followed by a collection of odes, but he still sought a livelihood as a physician. Little success attended him, however, and Dr. Johnson records that Akenside was known as a poet better than as a doctor, and would have been reduced to great exigencies but for the generosity of an ardent friend. "Thus supported, he gradually advanced in medical reputation, but never attained any great extent of practice, or eminence of popularity. A physician in a great city," his biographer continues musingly, "seems to be the mere play-thing of Fortune; his degree of reputation is, for the most part, totally casual; they that employ him, know not his excellence; they that reject him, know not his deficiency." Yet it was otherwise with Sir Samuel Garth, doctor and poet, of whom Johnson himself records that "by his conversation and accomplishments he obtained a very extensive practice." His principal poem was "The Dispensary," relating to a controversy of the time between the College of Physicians, who desired to give gratuitous advice to the poor, and the Apothecaries, who wished to keep up the high price of medicine. Garth was "on the side of charity against the intrigues of interest, and of regular learning against licentious usurpation of medical authority," as Johnson put it; and he sprang into favour, was eventually knighted, and became physician-general to the army. His last literary work, and his worst, was a crude but ostentatious preface to a translation of Ovid. As a matter of fact his writing was invariably mediocre, and Pope, in calling attention to the fact that the "Dispensary" poem had been corrected in every edition, unkindly remarked that "every change was an improvement." John Phillips, who may be ranked among the physicians, though it is doubtful whether he practised, enjoyed a better fate as a man of letters than did either Akenside or Garth. He sprang into sudden popularity by the publication of a whimsical and clever medley called "The Silver Shilling," and this he followed up by a sort of official commemoration of the victory of Blenheim. His greatest achievement was a poem in two books on "Cider," and he was meditating an epic on "The Last Day" when he died, at the early age of thirty-three. One curious fact about his writings, small as it is, is worthy of mention. He sang the praises of tobacco in every poem he wrote, except that on Blenheim.

Dr. Johnson did not rate Phillips very highly; he said that what study could confer he obtained, but that "natural deficience cannot be supplied." The sturdy doctor, however, did his utmost to rehabilitate the damaged reputation of Blackmore, whom we may regard as the most remarkable of all the compounds of physician-poets with whom we can become acquainted. Blackmore obtained an undeserved success, which was followed by unmerited ridicule, and Johnson, who hated every form of injustice, constituted himself his champion. For the truth about Blackmore we must seek the medium between the extremes of Johnson's praise and of the censure of his enemies—the "malignity of contemporary wits," as Boswell termed it. When all is said and done the fact remains that Blackmore was a man of uncommon character, and a prodigious worker. His first work, a heroic poem in ten books, on Prince Arthur, was written, he related, by "such catches and starts, and in such occasional uncertain hours as his profession afforded, and for the greatest part in coffee-houses, or in passing up and down the streets." This work passed through several editions with rapidity, and two extra books were added to it. The King knighted him and gave him other advances, but the critics furiously assailed him, and his name became a by-word for all that was heavy and ridiculous in poetry. Notwithstanding this he persevered, and published successively a "Paraphrase on the Book of Job," a "Satire on Wit," "Elijah,"—an epic poem in ten books—"Creation, a Philosophical Poem," "Advice to Poets how to celebrate the Duke of Marlborough," "The Nature of Man," "Redemption," "A New Version of the Psalms," "Alfred"—an epic in twelve books—"A History of the Conspiracy against King William," and a host of others which his perverted reason or fantastic fancy suggested. Never, perhaps, was known such a voluminous author, or one so erratic in his system. What with his long heroic poems, his treatises on smallpox and other diseases, his theological controversies, his "Advices" to painters, poets, and weavers, and his prose contributions to periodical publications, "England's Arch-Poet" (as Swift described him) could never have idled away an hour. Of all that he wrote, a few passages from his "Arthur" and "Creation" are alone remembered, and but for Johnson's good-natured attempt to save him from oblivion, his name would only have lived in the satires of his remorseless critics. One saying of Blackmore's only is worth noting here. He had laid himself open to the imputation of despising learning, and Dr. Johnson himself thought him a shallow ill-read man. But

Blackmore said:—"I only undervalued false or superficial learning, that signifies nothing for the service of mankind; as to physic I expressly affirmed that learning must be joined with native genius to make a physician of the first rank; but if those talents are separated, I asserted, and do still insist, that a man of native sagacity and diligence will prove a more able and useful practiser than a heavy notional scholar encumbered with a heap of confused ideas."

One or two other doctors who in their time enjoyed a reputation as writers, but whose fame was transient, or, at least, is insecure, call for very brief notice before we pass on to a few of greater importance. Sir John Hill, M.D., an eighteenth century physician, was a fairly extensive litterateur, and in addition to producing treatises on botany, medicine, natural history, and philosophy, wrote half a dozen novels, and several dramas. His *chef d'œuvre* was "The Vegetable System," a work of such magnitude that it ran to twenty-six volumes, a copy of which was presented to the King of Sweden, and procured for the author the distinction of being included in the Order of the Polar Star. Dr. William Fullarton Cumming, a son of Burns' "Bonnie Leslie," was compelled to travel in mild climates for his health, and as a result wrote "The Notes of a Wanderer," a work abounding in poetic descriptions of the charming scenery of the East. He tells us that the real pleasure of travelling is not to boast of how many lions one may have slain in a single day, but to saunter about without an object, to inhale the moral atmosphere of places visited, to enter bazaars, not to buy, but to catch the hundred peculiarities of a new people, to stray hither and thither watching the work and the recreations of other races. John Chalmers, M.D. (not to be confused with the great divine, Dr. Thomas Chalmers), also deserves to be noted as a very graceful writer of romantic stories; and Sir Henry Thompson, under the name of "Pen Oliver," produced some years ago a strange little volume which enjoyed a season's success—"Charley Kingston's Aunt."

That most diffident and most delightful of authors, Dr. John Brown, who gave us the memorable "Rab and his Friends," was in practice at Edinburgh. As long as lovers of the animal creation are to be found, the story of Rab and of Marjorie will be read; and these sketches of brutes whom he almost humanised will probably outlive the genial doctor's more ambitious "Horæ Subsecivæ" and "John Leech and other Papers." Of a very different nature

was the author of “Ten Thousand a Year,” Dr. Samuel Warren, physician, lawyer, politician, novelist, and office-seeker. Tittlebat Titmouse is not much studied now, for the type is out-of-date, and the society of which the novel treats, the abuses prevalent, the general corruption which prevailed in public life, were exposures intended for a past generation. Yet there are passages in the work which should save it from absolute neglect, and it has for over half a century kept its author’s name alive. This is more than his “Passages from the Diary of a late Physician” could have done, or those dozen other works with the bare titles of which the present reading public is scarcely acquainted. John Abercrombie, the chief consulting physician in Scotland during the last century, sought and achieved literary fame with two volumes on “The Intellectual Powers,” and “The Moral Feelings.” They enjoyed a popularity scarcely commensurate with their actual merits.

David Macbeth Moir, who faithfully performed the arduous duties of a medical practitioner in Edinburgh, and whose life was almost wholly devoted to the service of his fellows, was the famous “Delta” of *Blackwood’s Magazine*. His poems, some four hundred of which he contributed to “Maga.” alone, are out of fashion now, though their delightful vein of reflectiveness and their charm of expression should preserve them from absolute neglect. The heavy labours of his profession did not seem to check his literary productiveness. His poems fill two large volumes; his prose works are by no means meagre or unimportant, and his “Sketches of the Poetical Literature of the past Half-century,” is a standard work on the poetry of his period. Medical treatises, too, came from his pen; and his “Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor,” is one of the most agreeable of genuine Scotch sketches. His biographer correctly summed up the merits of the worthy doctor as a literary worker in the words “Good sound sense, a simple healthy feeling, excited and exalted though these may be, never fail him. He draws from nature, and from himself direct.” Quiet humour and simple pathos, a love of humanity, deep reverential feeling, and originality of thought—all these are found in “Delta’s” writings, and serve, with his own admirable nature, to keep his memory green.

Of Dr. Conan Doyle, the most conspicuous instance of the hour of the doctor turned author, no detailed notice is requisite, as the main facts of his career are sufficiently well known, and his literary work promises to bring him both fame and fortune. Undoubtedly he exemplifies the fact that the

medical hand can scarcely be concealed when it takes to the pen, for his novels and stories abound in allusions which only his study, training, and experience as a doctor could suggest. His reading and observation largely provide the technique of his romances. Something of the same could be said of Smollett's work, though the medical knowledge of the author was often turned to less agreeable account. In fact, most of Smollet's references on this score were the reverse of delectable, and I refrain from a more precise examination of them. The unexpected use to which Mr. R. D. Blackmore has turned his knowledge of medicine—for he studied medicine as well as law seriously in his youth—in several of his novels, notably in the last, "Perlycross," has excited much interest and attention among the profession. So marked is this that I cannot refrain quoting from a singularly interesting criticism penned by a leading physician in the Midlands. "The medical incidents in 'Perlycross,'" he says, "are pourtrayed with an accuracy which shows an intimate knowledge of the profession and its members.... No doubt the opinions expressed by one learned doctor were those of the time represented in the story, though they could hardly be received with justice in the present day. Speaking of the illness of Sir Thomas Waldron, he says (p. 18):—'At present such a case could be dealt with best in Paris, although we have young men rising now who will make it otherwise before very long.' The key to this difficulty is found later on (p. 159) where the technical word 'introsusception' is mentioned as the disease or condition from which the patient suffered. At the time spoken of Parisian surgeons, headed by the eminent Dupuytren, excelled in the art of surgery; at the present time such a case could be treated as well by any hospital surgeon in England as in the metropolis of France.... The book contains an admirably-described case of catalepsy, which is equally well explained. The cure of the attack is described with consummate skill and power. The keystone of the whole position of medical knowledge is contained in a few words towards its close. In these days of rapid transition from one excitement to another it would be well to take the lesson to heart, and to remember what the author speaks of as two fine things—'If you wish to be sure of anything see it with your own good eyes,' and the second, 'Never scamp your work.' How these sayings may be applied in the practice of the profession may with profit be learned from a perusal of the pages of 'Perlycross.'" Perhaps I am going too far in claiming Mr. Blackmore as a medical man who has taken to literature,

but the excuse of his early training, combined with this curious result of it manifested in his writing, proves irresistible.

Not to stray, however, but to get our feet once more upon solid ground, we may refer to a classic example, with which this article, had it been aught else but discursive, should have begun. Galen, the Greek physician, must be counted among the first and most famous of his class who have written literary works. He was so voluminous a writer on philosophical subjects that scores of books on logic and ethics have been fathered upon him without much question arising as to the unlikelihood of his being the author of so many. As it is he is credited with eighty-three treatises, the genuineness of which is not disputed; there are nineteen suspected to bear his name unjustly, forty-five are proved to be spurious, and then there remain a further fifteen fragments and fifteen commentaries on Hippocrates, which may be accepted as his in part or whole. He made himself master of the medical, physiological, and scientific knowledge of his time. He was born in 130 A.D., and died in 201, and left a record of that period. In addition to preparing this massive work, he seems to have found time to devote himself to various branches of philosophy with such success that later writers were well pleased to trade with the talisman of his name. Were it worth while to go back to antiquity, and to the history of foreign nations for further examples of physicians whose writings were not confined to expositions of the medical system, Averrhoes, most famous of Arabian philosophers, and physician to the calif, a master of the twelfth century, would occupy a prominent position. But it is more to our purpose to draw attention to the remarkable career, and one that deserves to be held in remembrance, of Arthur Johnston, physician to King Charles the First. In the same year that he graduated at the university of Padua (1610) he was "laureated poet at Paris, and that most deservedly," as Sir Thomas Urquhart recorded. He was then only three-and-twenty years of age, and the prospect of many years being before him, he indulged in extensive travel, and visited in turn most of the principal foreign seats of learning. His journeying over, he settled in France and became equally well known as a physician and as a writer of excellent Latin verse. A courteous act, characteristic of the time, secured him the favour and patronage of the English royal family, for in 1645 he published an elegy on James I., and followed this up by dedicating a Latin rendering of the Song of Solomon to King Charles. Other specimens

of his rare culture and his poetical powers were forthcoming, and he achieved a European reputation. His Latin translation of the Psalms is held to be unexcelled by any other, unless it be Buchanan's, and the fact that his translation is still in use sufficiently attests its excellence and value. He died suddenly in 1641, while on a visit to Oxford, and in the centuries which have succeeded he has not been displaced in the front rank of refined and deeply versed Latin scholars and poets.

It would be a matter of considerable difficulty to make a complete list of literary doctors, but enough has perhaps been written to show that they are no small band so far as numbers go, and that their influence in the world of books has been very considerable and distinguished. We owe to them many great works of enduring repute, of value to the student, of perpetual entertainment to the general reader. When, too, we consider the willingness and the zeal with which the writing members of the medical profession have imparted their knowledge, we are led to believe that they accepted as their motto the noble utterance of Sir Thomas Browne, the chief of literary doctors:—"To be reserved and caitiff in goodness is the sordidest piece of covetousness, and more contemptible than pecuniary Avarice. To this (as calling myself a Scholar) I am obliged by the duty of my condition: I make not therefore my head a grave, but a treasure of knowledge; I intend no Monopoly, but a community, in learning; I study not for my own sake only, but for theirs that study not for themselves. I envy no man that knows more than myself, but pity them that know less. I instruct no man as an exercise of my knowledge, or with an intent rather to nourish and keep it alive in mine own head than beget and propagate it in his; and in the midst of all my endeavours there is but one thought that dejects me, that my acquired parts must perish with myself, nor can be Legacied among my honoured Friends."

# The "Doctor" in time of Pestilence.

By William E. A. Axon, f.r.s.l.

> "I do not feel in me those sordid and unchristian desires of my profession; I do not secretly implore and wish for Plagues, rejoice at Famines, revolve Ephemerides and Almanacks in expectation of malignant Aspects, fatal Conjunctions, and Eclipses."—Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici," pt. ii., sec. ix.

OF the great epidemics which have from time to time devastated Europe, Great Britain has had its full share. Between 664 and 1665 there were many visitations, resulting in heavy mortality, to which the general name of plague or pestilence has been given, although they were not always identical in form. Often the dread sisters Famine and Pestilence went hand in hand in the domains of merrie England in the good old times.

The Statute of Labourers declares, no doubt with perfect truth, that "a great part of the people, principally of artisans and labourers," died in the pestilence known as the Black Death of 1349, which had important consequences, socially and politically. There were many subsequent outbreaks, though they fortunately did not attain to the enormous proportions of the great mortality. We have from the graphic hand of Chaucer a life-like portrait of a medical man of the fourteenth century who had gained his money in the time of pestilence.

At the end of the fifteenth and middle of the sixteenth century, we have as alternating with bubo plague, the *Sudor Anglicanus*. Its appearance coincided with the invasion by which Richard III. lost his crown, and his rival became Henry VII. Dr. Thomas Forrester, who was in London during the outbreak of 1485, gives instances of suddenness with which the "sweat"

became fatal. “We saw two prestys standing togeder and speaking togeder, and we saw both of them die suddenly.” The symptoms were sweating, bad odour, redness, thirst, headache, “and some had black spots as it appeared in our frere Alban, a noble leech, on whose soul God have mercy.” Forrester complains of the quacks who put letters on poles and on church doors, promising to help the people in their need. He lays stress upon astrological causes, but does not overlook the defective sanitation which gave the plague some of its firm hold. The *Sudor Anglicanus* returned in 1508, 1517, 1528, and 1551. The last visitation was the occasion of a treatise by the worthy Cambridge founder, to whom Gonville and Caius College owes so much.

“The Boke of Jhon Caius aganst the sweatyng Sickness” is an interesting document. It opens with a long autobiographical passage as to his previous literary labours, which have ranged from medicine to theology. At first he wrote in English, but afterwards in Latin and Greek. The reason for this change is stated. “Sence y$^{t}$ that tyme diverse other thynges I have written, but with the entente never more to write in the Englishe tongue partly because the cōmodite of that which is so written, passeth not the compasse of Englande, but remaineth enclosed within the seas, and partly because I thought that labours so taken should be halfe lost among them which set not by learnyng. Thirdly, for that I thought it best to auoide the judgment of the multitude from whom in maters of lernyng a man shal be forced to dissente, in disprouyng that which they most approue, and approuyng that which they most disalowe. Fourthly for that the common settyng furthe and printīg of every foolishe thyng in englishe, both of phisicke vnperfectly and other matters vndiscretly diminishe the grace of thynges learned set furth in thesame. But chiefely because I would geve none example or comfort to my countrie men (whō I would to be now, as here tofore they have been, comparable in learnyng to men of other countries) to stande onely in the Englishe tongue, but to leaue the simplicitie of the same, and to procede further in many and diuerse knowledges both in tongues and sciences at home and in uniuersities, to the adornyng of the cōmon welthe, better service of their kyng, and great pleasure and commodite of their own selues, to what kind of life so euer they should applie them.” But his resolution not to write again in the vulgar tongue was broken by considerations of utility, for he saw that it could not be very serviceable to

ordinary English people to give them advice as to the treatment of the sweating sickness in a language which they did not understand. In his account of this dire malady, he lays stress upon errors and excess of diet as a strongly co-operating cause. “They which had thys sweat sore with perille or death, were either men of welthe, ease and welfare, or of the poorer sorte such as wer idls persones, good ale drinkers, and Tauerne haunters. For these, by ye great welfare of the one sorte, and large drinkyng of thother, heped up in their bodies moche evill matter: by their ease and idlenes, coulde not waste and consume it.” Against the infection of bad air he recommends avoiding carrion “kepyng Canelles cleane” and other general sanitary precautions. He suggests that the midsummer bonfires were intended for purging the air, “and not onely for vigils.” Rosewater and other perfumes are to be used, and he thinks it would be well to clear the house of its rushes and dust. It is to be feared that the rushes which served instead of carpets, even in great houses, were not renewed very frequently. The handkerchief was to be perfumed, and the patient was to have in his mouth “a pece either of setwel, or of the rote of *enula campana* wel steped before in vinegre rosate, a mace, or berie of Juniper.”

Dr. Caius, like Dr. Forrester, did not omit to warn his readers that even with the aid of his book a medical man was still necessary, and in doing so he gives us a glimpse of the quack doctors of the sixteenth century. “Therefore seke you out a good Phisicien, and knowen to haue skille, and at the leaste be so good to your bodies, as you are to your hosen or shoes for the wel-making or mending wherof, I doubt not but you wil diligently searche out who is knowē to be the best hosier or shoemaker in the place where you dwelle: and flie the unlearned as a pestilence to the comune wealth. As simple women, carpenters, pewterers, brasiers, sope ball sellers, pulters, hostellers, painters, apotecaries (otherwise then for their drogges), auaunters thēselves to come from Pole, Constantiple, Italie, Almaine, Spaine, Fraunce, Grece, and Turkie, Inde, Egipt or Jury: from y$^{e}$ seruice of Emperoures, kinges, and quienes, promisīg helpe of al diseases, yea vncurable, with one or two drinckes, by waters sixe monethes in continualle distillinge, by *Aurum potabile*, or *quintessence*, by drynckes of great and hygh prices as though thei were made of the sūne, moone, or sterres, by blessynges, and Blowinges, Hipocriticalle prayenges, and foolysh smokynges of shirts, smockes, and kerchieffes, wyth such other theire phantasies and mockeries,

meaninge nothng els, but to abuse your light belieue, and scorne you behind your backes with their medicines, so filthie, that I am ashamed to name theim, for your single wit and simple belief, in trusting thē most which you know not at al, and vnderstad least: like to them which thinke farre foules have faire fethers, although thei be never so euil fauoured & foule: as though there could not be so conning an Englishman, as a foolish running stranger (of others I speak not) or so perfect helth by honest learning, as by deceiptfull ignorance."

Dr. Caius laid stress upon exercise as an aid to health, but some popular games he thought "rather a laming of legges than an exercise." We need not follow him in the details of the treatment he recommends if in spite of the adoption of his preventive *regime*, the sweating sickness should come.

In 1561 there was issued "A newe booke conteyninge an exortacion to the sicke." The tract ends with the following parody on the nostrums current for the cure of the pestilence: "Take a pond of good hard penaunce, and washe it wel with the water of your eyes, and let it ly a good whyle at youre hert. Take also of the best fyne fayth, hope, charyte yt you can get, a like quantite of al mixed together, your soule even full, and use this confection every day in your lyfe, whiles the plages of God reigneth. Then, take both your handes ful of good workes commaunded of God, and kepe them close in a clene conscience from the duste of vayne glory, and ever as you are able and se necessite so to use them. This medicine was found wryten in an olde byble boke, and it hath been practised and proved true of mani, both men and women" (Collier's *Bib. Account*, i. 74).

The wealthy, on an outbreak of the plague, fled from the infected city, as we may learn from Boccaccio, and from Miles Coverdale's translation of Osiander's sermon, "How and whether a Christian man ought to flye the horrible plage of the pestilence," which appeared in 1537.

During the plague of London, in 1603, the physicians are asserted by Dekker to have "hid their synodical heads," but this is at all events not wholly true. Thomas Lodge, the poet, was also a graduate in medicine, and in his "Treatise on the Plague"—not the only one published in relation to this epidemic—we are told of his experiences of the plague-stricken city.

He gives some good advice in relation to the sanitary measures to be taken for the prevention of the plague.

The nature of the regulations devised in the Tudor times to ward off infection may be gathered from the rules laid down at Chester in November, 1574, when

“the right Worshipful Sir John Sauage, Knight, maior of the City of Chester had consideracion of the present state of the said cite somewhat visited with what is called the plage, and divisinge the best meanes and orderlie waies he can, with [the advice] of his Bretheren the alderman, Justices of peace within the citie aforesaid (through the goodness of God) to avoid the same hath with such advice, sett forth ordained and appointed (amongst other) the points, articles, clauses, and orders folowing, which he willeth and commandeth all persons to observe and kepe, upon the severall pains theirin contayned:

“Imprimis. That no person nor persons who are or shalbe visited with the said sickness, or any other who shall be of there company, shall go abrode out of there houses without license of the alderman of the ward such persons inhabite, And that every person soe licensed to beare openlie in their hands ... three quarters long ... ense ... shall goe abrode out of the ... upon paine that eny person doynge the contrary to be furthwith expulsed out of the said citie.

“2. Item if any person doe company with any persons visited, they alsoe to beare ... upon like payne.

“3. Item that none of them soe visited doe goe abroad in any part or place within the citie in the night season, upon like payne.

“4. Item that the accustomed due watche to be kepte every night, within the said citie, by the inhabitants thereof.

“5. Item the same watchman to apprehend and take up all night walkers and such suspect as shalbe founde within and to bring them to the Justice of peace, of that ... the gaile of the Northgate, that further order may be taken with them as shall appear....

“6. Item that no swine be kept, within the said citie nor any other place, then ... side prively nor openlie after the xiii$^{th}$ daie of this present moneth, upon paine of fyne and imprisonment of every person doing the contrary.

"7. Item that no donge, muck or filth, at any tyme, hearafter be caste within the walls of the said citie, upon paine of ffyne and imprisonment at his worships direction.

"8. Item that no kind or sort of ... or any wares from other place be brought in packs into the said citie of Chester, untill the same be ffirste opened and eired without the libities of the said citie, upon pain last recited.

"9. Item that papers or writing containing this sence Lord haue mercie upon us, to be fixed upon euery house, dore post, or other open place, to the street of the house so infected.

"10. Item that no person of the said citie doe suffer any their doggs to goe abrode out of their houses or dwellings, upon paine that euery such dogge so founde abrode shalbe presently killed. And the owners thereof ponished at his worships pleasure."

It has always been found easier to make laws than to have them enforced, and we find certain inhabitants complaining of the disobedience of infected persons in the following petition:—

"To the right worshipful Sir John Savage, knight, maior of the Citie of Chester, the aldermen, sheriffs, and common counsaile of the same.

"In most humble wise complayninge sheweth unto your worships, your Orators, the persons whose name are subscribed inhabiting in a certain lane within the same citie called Pepper Street, That where yt haue pleased God to infect divers persons of the same Street with the plage, and where also for the avoidinge of further infection your worships have taken order that all such so infected should observe certaine good necessarye orders by your worships made and provided. But so it is, right worships, that none of the said persons infected do observe any of the orders by your worships in that case taken, to the greate danger and perill, not only of your Orators and their famelyes being in number twenty, but also of the reste of the said citie, who by the sufferance of God and of his gracious

> goodness are clere and safe from any infection of the said deceas: In consideration whereof your Orators moste humbly beseche your worships for God's sake, and as your worships intend it your Orators should, by the sufferance of God, avoide the dangers of the said deceas with their family, and also for the better safty of the citie to take such directions with the said infected persons that they may clearly be avoided from thens to some other convenient for the time untill God shall restore them to their former health. And in this doing your Orators shall daily pray, &c."[1]

During the visitation of the plague at Manchester in 1645, when the place suffered severely, the authorities not only provided "cabins" at Collyhurst for the reception of those whom the disease attacked, but engaged the services of "Doctor Smith," who received £4 "for his charges to London and a free guift," and £39 "for part of his wages for his service in the time of the visitation." Thos. Minshull, the apothecary, was paid £6 2s. 6d. for "stuffe for ye town's service." Some "bottles and stuffe" were unused at the end of the plague, and these were sold to "Mr. Smith, Phissition," for £1.

The story of English pestilence closes with the Great Plague of London in 1665. It began about the west end of the city, Hampstead, Highgate, and Acton sharing the infection, and gradually worked eastward by way of Holborn. Out of an estimated population of 460,000 there died 97,306 persons, of whom 68,596 perished of pestilence. One week witnessed 8,297 deaths, and it has been seriously argued that the official figures very much underrate the truth, and that in this week of highest mortality the deaths really amounted to 12,000. "Almost all other diseases turned to the plague." Many of the clergy fled, and the places of some were occupied by the ejected Nonconformists. The complaint of absenteeism was also brought against the physicians, but there were certainly some who stayed in the infected and desolate city. "But Lord!" says Pepys, "what a sad time it is to all: no boats upon the river, and grass grown all up and down Whitehall Court, and nobody but poor wretches in the street." William Boghurst, who was an apothecary, and Nathaniel Hodges, who was a physician, each wrote full accounts of the plague.

Hodges was the son of a vicar of Kensington, where he was born in 1629. He was a King's scholar at Westminster, and was educated both at Cambridge and Oxford, taking his M.D. degree at the latter university in 1659. When the great plague broke out he remained at his house in Walbrook, and gave advice to all who sought it. There was unfortunately no lack of patients. Hodges' writings give us a minute account of the "doctor in the time of pestilence." The first doubtful appearances of the plague were noticed by Dr. Hodges amongst some of those who sought his counsel at the Christmas of 1664-5, in May and June there were some that could not be mistaken, and in August and September he was overwhelmed with work. He was an early riser, and after taking a dose of anti-pestilential electuary, he attended to any private business that needed immediate decision, and then went to his consulting room, and for three hours received a succession of patients, some already ill of the plague, others only infected by fear. Having disposed of these anxious inquirers, the doctor breakfasted, and then began his round of visits to patients who were unable to see him at home. Disinfectants were burnt on hot coals as he entered their houses, and he also took a lozenge. Returning home, he dined off roast meat and pickles, prefaced and followed by sack and other wine. A second round of visits did not terminate until eight or nine in the evening. He was an enemy of tobacco, but his dislike of the Indian weed did not extend to sack, which he seems to have drunk plentifully, especially perhaps on the two occasions when he thought he had himself caught the plague. These proved to be false alarms. Amongst the drugs he tried and found useless were "unicorn's horn" and dried toads. The Corporation of London testified a due sense of Hodges' services by a stipend and the position of physician to the city. His "Loimologia" is an important contribution to the literature of epidemics.

Hodges, who had thus been a witness of the Carnival of Death in the metropolis of England, may well have pondered on the words of one of his illustrious contemporaries, Sir Thomas Browne, who says:—"I have not those strait ligaments, or narrow obligations to the world as to dote on life, or be convulst and tremble at the name of Death. Not that I am insensible of the dread and horrour thereof; or by raking into the bowels of the deceased, continual sight of anatomies, skeletons, or cadaverous reliques, like vespilloes or grave makers, I am become stupid, or have forgot the apprehension of mortality: but that, marshalling all the horrors and

contemplating the extremities thereof, I find not anything therein able to daunt the courage of a man, much less a well resolved Christian.... For a Pagan there may be some motive to be in love with life; but for a Christian to be amazed at Death, I see not how he can escape this dilemma, that he is too sensible of this life, or hopeless of the life to come."

# Mountebanks and Medicine.

By Thomas Frost.

MOUNTEBANKS—a name derived from the Italian words *monta in banco*, mounting a bench—were, in company with their attendant zanies, or "Merry Andrews," a popular class of public entertainers down to the earlier years of the present century. Their chief object, however, was not to provide a free entertainment, but to dispose of their nostrums to the crowds which the entertainment brought together. Andrew Borde, a medical practitioner at Winchester, who obtained a more than local reputation, enjoying the distinction of being one of the physicians of Henry VIII., is said to have been the original "Merry Andrew." The story of his life is full of interest, and furnishes some curious information concerning the manners of his age and his class. Mr. George Roberts, who supplied Lord Macaulay with much material for his "History of England," relates that Borde was a man of great learning, and had travelled on the continent. He made many astronomical calculations, which may not unfairly be supposed to have been for the purposes of astrology. He was a celibitarian and an ascetic, drinking water three times a week, wearing a hair-shirt next his skin, and keeping the sheet intended for his burial at the foot of his bed. As a mountebank, he frequented fairs, markets, and other places of public resort, and addressed those assembled in recommendation of his medicines. He was a fluent speaker, and the witticisms with which he interspersed his lectures never failed to attract, obtaining for him the name of "Merry Andrew."

Mountebanks flourished on the continent as well as in England, and the *Belphegor* of the dramatist had many prototypes in Italy and France. Coryat, a little-known writer, who made the tour of Europe at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and published a narrative of his adventures and experiences, gives a good account of the mountebanks he saw at Venice. "Twice a day," he says, "that is, in the morning and afternoon, you may see five or six several stages erected for them.... These mountebanks at one end

of their stage place their trunk, which is replenished with a world of new-fangled trumperies. After the whole rabble of them has gotten up to the stage,—whereof some wear vizards like fools in a play, some that are women are attired with habits according to that person they sustain,—the music begins; sometimes vocal, sometimes instrumental, sometimes both. While the music plays, the principal mountebank opens his trunk and sets abroad his wares. Then he maketh an oration to the audience of half-an-hour long, wherein he doth most hyperbolically extol the virtue of his drugs and confections—though many of them are very counterfeit and false. I often wondered at these natural orators, for they would tell their tales with such admirable volubility and plausible grace, *extempore*, and seasoned with that singular variety of elegant jests and witty conceits, that they did often strike great admiration into strangers.... He then delivereth his commodities by little and little, the jester still playing his part, and the musicians singing and playing upon their instruments. The principal things that they sell are oils, sovereign waters, amorous songs printed, apothecary drugs, and a commonweal of other trifles. The head mountebank, every time he delivereth out anything, maketh an extemporal speech, which he doth eftsoons intermingle with such savoury jests (but spiced now and then with singular scurrility), that they minister passing mirth and laughter to the whole company, which may perhaps consist of a thousand people." The entertainment extended over two hours, when, having sold as many of their wares as they could, their properties would be removed and the stage taken down.

Jonson, in his comedy of "Volpone," presents a scene showing a mountebank's stage at Venice, and the discourse of the vendor of quack medicines has a remarkable resemblance to the oratory of the "Cheap Jacks" of the present day, of which old play-goers may remember hearing a very good imitation in the drama of "The Flowers of the Forest." Says Jonson's mountebank: "You all know, honourable gentlemen, I never valued this ampulla, or vial, at less than eight crowns; but for this time I am content to be deprived of it for six: six crowns is the price, and less in courtesy I know you cannot offer me. Take it or leave it, however, both it and I am at your service! Well! I am in a humour at this time to make a present of the small quantity my coffer contains: to the rich in courtesy, and to the poor for God's sake. Wherefore, now mark: I asked you six crowns, and six

crowns at other times you have paid me; you shall not give me six crowns, nor five, nor four, nor three, nor two, nor one, nor half a ducat. Sixpence it will cost you (or six hundred pounds); expect no lower price, for I will not bate."

Returning to the mountebanks of our own country, we find in the accounts of the Chamberlain of the Corporation of Worcester for the year 1631 the following item:—

> "They yeald account of money by them received of mountebanks to the use of the poor 58s. 9d."

It is suggested by Mr. John Noake, however, that these mountebanks were riders or posturers, and that the amount was the charge made for the permission accorded them to perform in the city. Later in the century, the eccentric Earl of Rochester, on one occasion, played the mountebank on Tower Hill, and the example was followed by more than one comedian of the next century. Leveridge and Penkethman, actors well known at Bartholomew Fair for many years, appeared at country fairs as "Doctor Leverigo and his Jack-Pudding Pinkanello," as also did Haines as "Watho Van Claturbank, High German Doctor." The discourse of the latter was published as a broadside, headed with an engraving representing him addressing a crowd from a stage, with a bottle of medicine in his right hand. Beside him stands a Harlequin, and in the rear a man with a plumed hat blows a trumpet. A gouty patient occupies a high-backed arm-chair, and an array of boxes and bottles is seen at the back of the stage.

"Having studied Galen, Hypocrates, Albumazar, and Paracelsus," says the discourse thus headed, "I am now become the Esculapius of the age; having been educated at twelve universities, and travelled through fifty-two kingdoms, and been counsellor to the counsellors of several monarchs. By the earnest prayers and entreaties of several lords, earls, dukes, and honourable personages, I have been at last prevailed upon to oblige the world with this notice, that all persons, young or old, blind or lame, deaf and dumb, curable or incurable, may know where to repair for cure, in all cephalalgias, paralytic paroxysms, palpitations of the pericardium, empyemas, syncopes, and nasieties; arising either from a plethory or a cachochymy, vertiginous vapours, hydrocephalus dysenteries, odontalgic or

podagrical inflammations, and the entire legion of lethiferous distempers.... This is Nature's palladium, health's magazine; it works seven manner of ways, as Nature requires, for it scorns to be confined to any particular mode of operation; so that it affecteth the cure either hypnotically, hydrotically, cathartically, poppismatically, pneumatically, or synedochically; it mundifies the hypogastrium, extinguishes all supernatural fermentations and ebullitions, and, in fine, annihilates all nosotrophical morbific ideas of the whole corporeal compages. A drachm of it is worth a bushel of March dust; for, if a man chance to have his brains beat out, or his head dropped off, two drops—I say two drops! gentlemen—seasonably applied, will recall the fleeting spirit, re-enthrone the deposed archeus, cement the discontinuity of the parts, and in six minutes restore the lifeless trunk to all its pristine functions, vital, natural, and animal; so that this, believe me, gentlemen, is the only sovereign remedy in the world. *Venienti occurite morbo.*—Down with your dust. *Principiis obsta.*—No cure no money. *Quærendo pecunia primum.*—Be not sick too late."

The mountebanking quack flourished in great state in the first half of the last century. "A Tour through England," published in 1723, gives the following account of one whom the author saw at Winchester:—"As I was sitting at the George Inn, I saw a coach with six bay horses, a calash and four, a chaise and four, enter the inn, in a yellow livery, turned up with red; four gentlemen on horseback, in blue, trimmed with silver: and as yellow is the colour given by the dukes in England, I went out to see what duke it was; but there was no coronet on the coach, only a plain coat-of-arms on each, with this motto: ARGENTO LABORAT FABER. Upon enquiry, I found this great equipage belonged to a mountebank, and that his name being Smith, the motto was a pun upon his name. The footmen in yellow were his tumblers and trumpeters, and those in blue his merry-andrew, his apothecary, and his spokesman. He was dressed in black velvet, and had in his coach a woman that danced on the ropes. He cures all diseases, and sells his packets for sixpence a-piece. He erected stages in all the market towns twenty miles round; and it is a prodigy how so wise a people as the English are gulled by such pickpockets. But his amusements on the stage are worth the sixpence, without the pills. In the morning he is dressed up in a fine brocade night-gown, for his chamber practice, when he gives advice, and gets large fees."

A passage in a letter written by the second Lord Lyttelton, about the year 1774, shows that this style of travelling was then still kept up by mountebanks. He says:—"As a family party of us were crossing the road on the side of Hagley Park, a chaise passed along, followed by a couple of attendants with French horns. Who can that be, said my father? Some itinerant mountebank, replied I, if one may judge from his musical followers. I really spoke with all the indifference of an innocent mind: nor did it occur to me that the Right Reverend Father in God, my uncle, had sometimes been pleased to travel with servants similarly accoutred." Nearly twenty years later, the famous quack, Katerfelto, travelled through Durham in a carriage, with a pair of horses, and attended by two negro servants in green liveries, with red collars. In the towns he visited these men were sent round to announce his lectures on electricity and the microscope, blowing trumpets, and distributing hand-bills.

There seems to be good ground for believing that among what may be called the amateur mountebanks, such as Rochester, we must count the author of "Tristram Shandy." Dr. Dibdin found in the possession of Mr. James Atkinson, a medical practitioner at York, a rather roughly executed picture, in oil colours, representing a mountebank and his zany on a stage, surrounded by a crowd. An inscription described the former as Mr. T. Brydges, and the latter as the Rev. Laurence Sterne. Mr. Atkinson, who was an octogenarian, told Dr. Dibdin that his father had been acquainted with Sterne, who was a good amateur draughtsman, and that he and Brydges each painted the other's portrait in the picture. The story is a strange one, but before it is dismissed as unworthy of belief, it must be remembered that the clerical story-writer was a droll and whimsical character, and at no time much influenced by his priestly vocation. It is quite conceivable, therefore, that he may have indulged in such a freak on some occasion during the period of his life in which he developed his worst moral deficiencies.

In the early years of the present century, a German quack, named Bossy, used to mount a stage on Tower Hill and Covent Garden Market alternately, in order, as he said, that both ends of London might profit by his experience and skill. It is said that on one of these occasions, when he had induced an old woman to mount his stage in the latter place, and relate the wonderful cures the doctor had performed upon her, a parrot that had learned some coarse language from the porters and costermongers frequenting the market,

and sometimes used it in a manner that seemed very apt to the occasion, exclaimed, “Lying old ——!” when the old woman concluded her narrative. The roar of laughter with which this criticism was received by the rough audience disconcerted Bossy for a moment; but quickly recovering his presence of mind, he stepped forward, with his hand on his heart, and gravely replied, “It is no lie, you wicked bird!—it is all true as is de Gospel!” Bossy attained considerable reputation, and ended his days with a fair competence.

The mountebank has long fallen from his former high estate. The quack may still be found vending his pills in the open-air markets of Yorkshire and Lancashire; but he does not mount a stage, and resembles his predecessors of the last century only in the fluency and volubility of his discourse on the virtues of his potions, pills, and plasters. The author of the paper on mountebanks in the “Book of Days” (edited by Robert Chambers), states that he saw one at York about 1860, who “sold medicines on a stage in the old style, but without the Merry Andrew or the music,” and adds that “he presented himself in shabby black clothes, with a dirty white neck-cloth.” Even the name had long before that time ceased to be connected with the vending of medicines, and had come to be applied to those itinerant circus companies who gave gratuitous performances in the open air, making their gains by the sale of lottery tickets. The present writer remembers seeing the circus company of John Clarke performing on a piece of waste ground at Lower Norwood, when the clown of the show went among the spectators selling tickets at a shilling each, entitling the holder to participate in a drawing, the prizes in which were Britannia metal tea pots and milk ewers, papier maché tea trays, cotton gown pieces, etc. That must have been about 1835, or within a year or two of that time.

Only a few years later, a lottery in sixpenny shares was similarly conducted at Alfreton, in Derbyshire, and probably in many other places, though contrary to the provisions of the Lottery Act.

The mountebank doctor of former times, with his carriage, his zany, and his musicians, can now only be met with in the provincial towns of France and Italy, and even there but seldom. Thirty or forty years ago, there was a man who, in a carriage drawn up behind the Louvre, used to practise dentistry and advertise his father, who had a flourishing dentist’s practice in one of

the narrow streets near the cathedral of Notre Dame. Another of this fraternity was seen at Marseilles by an English tourist a few years later, and in this instance some musicians accompanied the mountebank's phaeton, and drowned the cries of the suffering patients with the crash of a march. But these survivals remind us rather of *Belphegor*, in the pathetic drama of that name, than of *Dulcamara* in the opera of *L'Elisor d'Amore*, with his gorgeous equipage and his musical attendants, as old play-goers remember the personation of the character by the famous Lablache.

# The Strange Story of the Fight with the Small-Pox.

By Thomas Frost.

WHEN, at the present day, we hear of an epidemic of small-pox in some town where the practice of vaccine inoculation has been neglected, it is both instructive and consolatory to turn our thoughts back to the time, before the introduction of that practice, when that horrible disease caused ten per cent, of all the deaths in excess of those occurring in the ordinary course of nature. This statement, startling as it may seem to the present generation, may be verified by reference to the annual bills of mortality of the city of London. This fearful state of things had prevailed in England from the time of the Plantagenets, when, in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, a gleam of light was flashed upon the medical darkness of western Europe from the east. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, writing from Adrianople to a lady friend in the spring of 1717, flashed that light in the concluding portion of her letter, as follows:—

> "Apropos of distempers, I am going to tell you a thing that will make you wish yourself here. The small-pox, so fatal and so general amongst us, is here entirely harmless, by the invention of *ingrafting*, which is the term they give it. There is a set of old women who make it their business to perform the operation every autumn, in the month of September, when the great heat is abated. People send to one another to know if any of their family has a mind to have the small-pox; they make parties for this purpose, and when they are met (commonly fifteen or sixteen together), the old woman comes with a nut-shell full of the matter of the best sort of small-pox, and asks what vein you please to have opened. She immediately rips open that you offer to her with a large needle (which gives you no more pain than a common scratch), and puts into the vein as much matter as can

> lie upon the head of her needle, and after that binds up the little wound with a hollow bit of shell, and in this manner opens four or five veins.
>
> ... Every year thousands undergo this operation; and the French ambassador says pleasantly, that they take the small-pox here by way of diversion, as they take the waters in other countries. There is no example of any one that has died in it; and you may believe I am well satisfied of the safety of this experiment, since I intend to try it on my own little son."

This intention she carried into practice, and on her return to England made great exertions to introduce inoculation into general use. The medical profession opposed it so strongly, however, that for many years the horrible distemper continued to rage unchecked. Such announcements as the following were, in consequence, not unfrequent in the newspapers:—

> "WHEREAS the TOWN of BURY ST. EDMUND'S, where the GENERAL QUARTER SESSIONS of the PEACE of that Division are usually held, is now afflicted with the Small-Pox, for which reason it might be of exceeding ill consequence to the Country in General to hold the Sessions there; This is, therefore, to acquaint the PUBLIC that the next GENERAL QUARTER SESSIONS of the Peace will be held at the sign of the PICKEREL in IXWORTH, on Monday next.
>
> "COCKSEDGE, Clerk of the Peace."

Later on in the same year (1744) an advertisement appeared, signed by the clergy, churchwardens, and medical practitioners of the town, stating that "there were only twenty-one persons then lying ill of the small-pox." Scarcely a week passed, in those days, without advertisements appearing of the number of cases of the disease in certain towns. Careful study of a large number of these announcements shows, however, that it was only thought desirable to advertise when the epidemic was thought to be abating, or when it had abated. Take the following, for instance:—

> "Nov. 4, 1755.

"Upon the strictest Inquiry made of the present state of the SMALL-POX in Beccles, it appears to be in eleven houses, and no more, and that the truth may be constantly known, the same will be weekly advertised alternately in the Ipswich and Norwich papers by us,

"Tho. Page, Rector.
"Osm. Clarke and Is. Blowers, Churchwardens."

In the following year we find it announced that, "upon a strict inquiry made by the clerks through their respective parishes, delivered to us, and attested by them, there is but six persons now afflicted with the small-pox in this town,"—to wit, Colchester—and this statement is signed by three ministers and six medical practitioners. In the *Ipswich Journal* of Jan. 22nd, 1757, the following appeared:—"There will be no fair this year at Bildestone on Ash Wednesday, as usual, by reason of the small-pox being in several parishes not far off."

The practice of inoculation, though still frowned upon by a large proportion of the medical profession, was growing at this time, as appears from the following advertisement:—

"Colchester, May 12, 1762.

"The Practice of bringing people out of the country into this town to be inoculated for the Small-pox being very prejudicial to the town in many respects, but especially to the Trade thereof, and as by this practice the distemper may be continued much longer in the town than it otherwise would, in all probability, it is thought proper by some of the principal inhabitants and traders in the town, that this public notice should be given that they are determined to prosecute any person or persons whomsoever, that shall hereafter bring into this town, or who shall receive into their houses in the town as lodgers, any person or persons for that purpose, with the utmost severity that the law will permit.... But that they might not be thought discouragers of a practice so salutary and beneficial to mankind, as inoculation is found to be, which encourages great numbers to go into the practice, the persons who have caused this public notice to be

given have no objection to surgeons carrying on the practice in houses properly situated for the purpose."

The "great numbers" of persons referred to in this notice as having "gone into the practice" of inoculation for the small-pox appear to have been chiefly old women, as in Turkey, and by some of these it was carried on until the passing of the Vaccination Act in 1840. Five guineas was the fee advertised in the *Ipswich Journal* in 1761 for performing the operation by Robert Sutton, an operator in Kent, who announced that he had "only met with but one accident out of the many hundreds he has had under his cure."

The prevalence of this hideous disease in the last century, and the dread which it inspired, is curiously attested by the frequency with which advertisements for servants, etc., appeared in the newspapers, in which there was an express stipulation that applicants must have had the small-pox. A housemaid or footman whose face bore the traces of this disease would not, at the present day, find their appearance much in their favour: but the following selection of advertisements, culled from the *Ipswich Journal* and the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, show that in the last century the marks would increase their chances of obtaining employment very considerably. The dates range from 1755 to 1781, and such announcements might be increased to any extent.

"A Three Years' APPRENTICE is wanted to use the Sea between Manningtree and London, whose age is between 18 and 25 years, and has had the Small-pox. Such a one, inquiring of MR. WM. LEACH, at Mistley Thorne, in Essex, will hear of good encouragement."

"WANTED, about Michaelmas, as Coachman, in a gentleman's family, who can drive four horses, and ride postillion well. A Single Man, must have had the Small-pox, and know how to drive in London. Such an one, who can be well recommended, by giving a description of himself, his age, and abilities, in a letter directed to A. B., at MR. J. KENDALL'S, in COLCHESTER, may hear of a very good place."

"WANTED, a JOURNEYMAN BAKER, that is a good workman, and has had the SMALL-POX. Such a person may hear of a good place

by applying to Mr. John Stow, at Sudbury, or to the Printer of this paper."

"Wanted an Apprentice to an eminent Surgeon in full practice in the county of Suffolk. If he has not had the Small-Pox, it is expected he will be inoculated for it, before he enters on business.—Enquire of John Fox, at Dedham, Essex."

"Colchester, June 15th, 1762.

"Wanted immediately, a Stout Lad as an Apprentice to a Currier. If he can write it will be the more agreeable. Inquire further of Eleanor Onyon. N.B.—If he has not had the Small-pox, he need not apply."

"WANTED for a gentleman that lives most part of the year in London, A Genteel Person, between 28 and 40 years of age, that has had the Small-pox, to be as Companion and Housekeeper. One that has been brought up in a genteel, frugal and handsome manner, either a Maid or Widow, so they have no incumbrances."

"WANTED, a NURSEMAID. None need apply who cannot bring a good character from their last place; and has had the Small-pox."

"WANTS a place in a large or small family, in town or country, a YOUNG MAN, who is well versed in the different branches of a Gardener, has had the Small-pox, and can write a good hand."

"WANTED, in a large family, a STOUT WOMAN, about 30, single, or a widow without children, who has had the Small-pox, to take care of a lusty child, under a year old. Her character must be unexceptionable, and by no means a fashionable dresser, and lived in families of credit. Any person answering this description may enquire of Mrs. Mercer, at the Star and Garter, Andover, and be further informed."

It was about the time when the last of these advertisements appeared that Jenner commenced his inquiries concerning the prophylactic virtues of cow-pox, though nearly twenty years elapsed before they were sufficiently advanced to enable him to make the results known. His idea of using vaccine inoculation to bring about the total extinction of small pox was scouted by those of his professional brethren to whom he mentioned it, and we learn from one of his biographers that, at the outset, "both his own observation and that of other medical men of his acquaintance proved to him that what was commonly called cow-pox was not a certain preventive of small-pox. But he ascertained by assiduous inquiry and personal investigation that cows were liable to various kinds of eruption on their teats, all capable of being communicated to the hands of the milkers; and that such sores when so communicated were all called cow-pox." But when he had traced out the nature of these various diseases, and ascertained which of them possessed the protective virtue against small-pox, he was again foiled by learning that in some cases when what he now called the true cow-pox broke out among the cattle on a dairy farm, and had been communicated to the milkers, they subsequently had small-pox. These repeated failures perplexed him, but at the same time stimulated, instead of discouraging him. He conceived the idea that the virus of cow-pox might undergo some change which deprived it of its protective power, while still enabling it to communicate a disease to human beings. Following up the inquiry from this point, he at length discovered that the virus was capable of imparting protection against small-pox only in a certain condition of the pustule.

He was now prepared to submit his theory to the test of experiment, but it was not until 1796 that he had the opportunity. A dairymaid, who had contracted cow-pox from one of her employer's cows, afforded the matter, and Jenner introduced it into two incisions in the arms of a boy about eight years of age. The disease thus transferred ran its ordinary course without any ill effects, and the boy was afterwards inoculated with the virus of small pox, which produced no effect. The disappearance of the cow-pox from the dairies in the neighbourhood of his country practice in Gloucestershire prevented him from making further experiments; and when he visited London for that purpose, he had the mortification of finding that no one could be found who would consent to be operated upon. It was not until

1798 that this obstacle was overcome, and then, the results of the earlier experiments having been confirmed by a series of vaccinations, followed by inoculation for small-pox several months afterwards without effect, Jenner made his discovery public.

In the following year, vaccine inoculation began to spread, the practice being taken up by many of Jenner's friends, including several who were not in the medical profession. But, like inoculation for the small-pox, when introduced by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu,—like all innovations on established practices, indeed,—vaccination received for many years after its introduction the most violent opposition. Just as inoculation for small-pox had been denounced from the pulpit and in medical treatises as a "diabolical operation" and a wicked interference with the designs of Providence, so did a certain Dr. Squirrel denounce vaccination as an attempt to change "the established laws of nature." The most absurd stories were circulated of the effects alleged to have followed vaccination. "A lady," it is stated by Mr. Bettany, "complained that since her daughter had been vaccinated she coughed like a cow, and had grown hairy all over her body; and in one country district it was stated that vaccination had been discontinued there, because those who had been inoculated in that manner bellowed like bulls." There were even doctors who pretended to detect resemblances to bovine visages in the countenances of children, produced, as they did not hesitate to declare, by vaccination! Self-interest may have had as much to do as prejudice in prompting the opposition of the profession. Many practitioners derived a considerable portion of their income from fees for inoculation for small-pox. Sutton, as we have seen, charged five guineas for the operation, and advertised himself in many provincial newspapers; and the income of Dr. Woodville, at one time physician to the Small-Pox Hospital, is said to have sunk in one year from a thousand pounds to a hundred on his adopting the practice of vaccination.

Notwithstanding the prejudice and interested antagonism to which the new practice was exposed, it continued to make way. The Rev. Dr. Booker, of Dudley, gave the following striking testimony to its beneficial effects:—"I have, previous to the knowledge of vaccine inoculation, frequently buried, day after day, several (and once as many as eight) victims of the small-pox. But since the parish has been blessed with this invaluable boon of Divine Providence (cow pox), introduced among us nearly four years ago, only two

victims have fallen a prey to the above ravaging disorder (small pox). In the surrounding villages, like an insatiable Moloch, it has lately been devouring vast numbers, where obstinacy and prejudice have precluded the Jennerian protective blessing."

In 1803, the Royal Jennerian Institution was founded under royal patronage, and with Jenner as president, to promote vaccination in London and elsewhere; and its operations were continued for a few years with much success, ceasing, however, on the establishment of the National Vaccine Institution in 1808. Two years prior to this event, Lord Henry Petty, who then held the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, carried a motion in the House of Commons, that the Royal College of Physicians should be requested to inquire and report on the progress of vaccination. The report, which appeared in the following year, set forth that, within eight years from the discovery of vaccination, some hundreds of thousands of persons had been vaccinated in the British Islands, and upwards of eight hundred thousand in our East Indian possessions, and that the practice had been generally adopted on the continent of Europe. Considering that small-pox destroyed one-sixth of those whom it attacked, and that nearly one-tenth, and in some years more than that proportion, of the entire mortality in London was caused by it, and also the number, respectability, and extensive experience of the advocates of vaccination, compared with the feeble and imperfect testimonies of its few opponents, the value of the practice seemed firmly established.

This report did much to advance vaccination in public opinion. At the next quarter sessions held at Stafford, it was taken into consideration by the county magistrates, who, from its statements and the reports and testimonials sent to Jenner, considered themselves justified in placing it on record—"That vaccine inoculation, properly conducted, appeared never to have failed as a certain preservative against small-pox; that it was unattended by fever, and perfectly free from danger; that it required neither confinement, loss of time, nor previous preparation; that it was not infectious, nor productive of other diseases; that it might be performed with safety on persons of every age and sex, and at all times and seasons of the year." It was not, however, until 1840 that the results of the labours of Jenner, the report of the Royal College of Physicians, and the opinions of nearly the entire medical profession received legislative endorsement by the

passing of the Vaccination Act, since which small-pox has become a thing of the past, except in cases where it has been conserved by prejudice and ignorance.

# Burkers and Body-Snatchers.

By Thomas Frost.

HOW recollections will crowd upon the mind when a train of thought is set in motion by the association of ideas! When, many years ago, I visited Dr. Kahn's anatomical museum, then located in Tichborne Street, I there saw a human skeleton which was affirmed by the lecturer, Dr. Sexton, to be that of John Bishop, who was hanged in 1831, for the murder of an Italian boy named Carlo Ferrari, at a house in Nova Scotia Gardens, one of the slums then existing in the north-eastern quarter of London. Though nearly forty years had elapsed since the commission of the crime, and I was only ten years of age when I heard the horrible story which the sight of that ghastly relic of mortality recalled to my mind, all the incidents connected with it immediately passed before my mental vision like a hideous phantasmagoria. The vividness with which they came back to me may be accounted for by the deep impression which they made upon my mind at the time of their occurrence. Those whose memories will carry them back sixty years will readily understand this.

At the time when the public mind was harrowed by the narration in the newspapers of the horrible circumstances connected with the murder, and for some time previously, a fearful excitement had been created in all parts of the country by stories of murders committed and graves robbed of their ghastly tenants for the purpose of supplying with "subjects" the dissecting tables of the London and Edinburgh schools of anatomy. In the latter city two miscreants named Burke and Hare had been convicted of murder for this purpose, and one of them hanged for their crimes; but the scare had not abated. Stories were told with appalling frequency of corpses missing from lonely graveyards and of narrow escapes from murder in little frequented places. Chloroform had not then been discovered, but the Scotch professors of the art of murder had introduced the practice, popularly named after one of them, of disabling their victims by means of a pitch plaster suddenly

clapped on the mouth. Every person who was missing was thought to have been "burked," and the watching of graves to prevent the removal of newly-buried corpses became an established practice. As the dark nights of the late autumn came on, the fears of the timid and nervous were doubled, and persons who lived in lonely places, or in the ill-lighted parts of towns, became afraid to leave their houses after nightfall. I remember hearing such fears expressed by several persons at Croydon, with whom my parents were acquainted, and also of neighbours combining to assist in watching the graves of deceased members of each others' families.

A few years ago, I was one day exchanging reminiscences of a long bygone generation with a brother journalist, when, on this gruesome subject being mentioned, he placed in my hands a report of the trial of the murderers of Carlo Ferrari, which appeared to have been detached from a volume of criminal trials. No feature of the horrible record impressed me so much as the cool, business-like manner in which the wretches concerned in the crime hawked the corpse of their victim from one school of anatomy to another, and the equally cool and business-like manner in which the matter was dealt with by those with whom their nefarious occupation brought them in contact. The procuring of corpses for anatomical purposes was, in fact, a regular trade, and the biographer of Sir Astley Cooper states that "the Resurrection-men were occasionally employed on expeditions into the country to obtain possession of the bodies of those who had been subjected to some important operation, and of which a *post mortem* examination was of the greatest interest to science. Scarcely any distance from London was considered an insuperable difficulty in the attaining of this object, and as certainly as the Resurrectionist undertook the task, so certain was he of completing it. This was usually an expensive undertaking, but still it did not restrain the most zealous in their profession from occasionally engaging these men in this employment." The price of a subject ranged from seven to twelve guineas, but when the "body-snatchers" were specially employed to procure some particular corpse, the incidental expenses were often as much more.

As an illustration of the times in which such horrors were possible, the story of the murder of Carlo Ferrari may, at this distance of time from the event, be worth telling. In the autumn of 1831, there lived in one of a row of small houses, known as Nova Scotia Gardens, in the poverty-stricken district of

Bethnal Green, a man named John Bishop, with his wife and three children. He had formerly been a carrier at Highgate, but had long been suspected of "body-snatching," as the practice of robbing graves was termed, and had no visible means of honest living. He had the look of a man whose original rustic stolidity had been supercharged with cockney cunning. The house adjoining Bishop's was occupied by a man named Woodcock, who had succeeded in the tenancy a glass-blower named Thomas Williams, described as a little, simple-looking man, of mild and inoffensive demeanour. About two o'clock on the morning of the 4th of November, Woodcock was awakened by a noise, as of a scuffle, in Bishop's house, and afterwards heard two men leave it and return in a few minutes, when he recognised the voices as those of Bishop and Williams. At noon the same day these two men were in a neighbouring public-house, accompanied by two other men, one of whom was known as James May, who had formerly been a butcher, but for the last few years had been suspected of following the same ghastly and revolting occupation as Bishop. In the afternoon three men alighted from a cab at Nova Scotia Gardens, two of them being recognised as Bishop and Williams, and afterwards returned to the vehicle, when the former and the third man were carrying something in a sack, which they placed in the cab. The three men then entered, and it was driven off.

About seven o'clock the same evening, Bishop and May presented themselves at Guy's Hospital, carrying something in a sack, and asked the porter if a "subject" was wanted. Receiving a negative reply, they asked him to allow "it" to remain there until the next morning, to which he consented. Half-an-hour later, the two traffickers in human flesh called at Grainger's anatomical theatre, in Webb Street, Southwark, and told the curator they had "a very fresh male subject, about fourteen years of age." The offer being declined, they went away, and later on they were, accompanied by Williams, in a public-house, where May was seen by a waiter to pour water on a handkerchief containing human teeth, and then rub the teeth together, remarking that they were worth two pounds to him.

Next morning, May called upon a dentist named Mills, on Newington Causeway, and sold a dozen teeth to him for a guinea, observing that they were the teeth of a boy fourteen years of age. On examining them, Mills found that morsels of the gums and splinters of the jaw were adhering to

them, as if much force had been used to wrench them out. Two hours later, Bishop and May called again at the anatomical theatre in Southwark, and repeated their offer of the preceding evening, which was again declined. Shortly afterwards, they went to Guy's Hospital, accompanied by Williams and a man named Shields, to remove the "subject" left there the evening before, and it was given to them in the sack, as they had left it, and placed in a large hamper, which Shields had brought for the purpose. There was a hole in the sack, through which the porter saw a small foot protruding, apparently that of a boy or a woman.

About midnight, the bell of King's College was rung, and the porter, on going to the gate, found there Bishop and May, whom he had seen there before, it seems, and on similar business. May asked him if anything was wanted, and receiving an indifferent answer, added that they had a male "subject," a boy about fourteen years of age. The porter inquired the price, and was told they wanted twelve guineas for it. He then said he would ask Mr. Partridge, the demonstrator in anatomy, and they followed him to a room adjoining the dissecting room. Nine guineas were offered, which May, with an oath, refused, and went outside. Bishop then said to the porter, "Never mind May, he is drunk; it shall come in for nine in half-an-hour." They then went away, returning at the stipulated time, accompanied by Williams and Shields, the latter carrying on his head the hamper containing the corpse brought from Guy's Hospital. It was taken into a room, where it was opened, and the corpse turned out of the sack by May. The porter, observing a cut on the left temple, and that the left arm was bent and the fingers clenched, conceived suspicions of foul play, and communicated them at once to Mr. Partridge. That gentleman thereupon examined the corpse, and mentioned its condition to the secretary, who immediately gave information to the police.

In order to detain the men until the arrival of the police, the demonstrator showed them a £50 note, observing that he must get it changed for gold before he could pay them. Several constables were soon on the spot, and the four men were arrested, and taken to the station-house in Vine Street, Covent Garden. On being charged on suspicion with having unlawful possession of a corpse, May said he had nothing to do with it, and had merely accompanied Bishop. A similar statement was made by Williams, and Bishop said he was only removing the corpse from St. Thomas's

Hospital to King's College. Shields, who was known as a porter, said he was employed to carry the hamper, which he did in the exercise of his vocation. They were all then removed to the cells.

The evidence given at the coroner's inquest by Partridge and two other surgeons left no doubt that the unfortunate lad, respecting whose identity there was no evidence, had been killed by a violent blow on the back of the neck, which had affected the spinal cord. The four accused men were present in custody during the inquiry, and Bishop, after reading a bill relating to the murder, which was displayed on the wall of the room, was heard by a constable to say, in a subdued tone, to May, "It was the blood that sold us." Volunteering to give evidence, he said he got the corpse from a grave, but declined to name the place whence he had got it, alleging that the information would get into trouble two watchmen, who had large families. May also made a voluntary statement, to the effect that he got two "subjects" from the country, which he took first to Grainger's theatre of anatomy, and afterwards to Guy's Hospital, subsequently meeting Bishop, who promised him all he could get for a "subject" above nine guineas if he would sell it for him. The inquest was adjourned, and the police proceeded with their investigation.

The houses of Bishop and May had been promptly visited and searched by the police, who found at the former's a sack, a large hamper, and a brad-awl, the last showing recent bloodstains. At May's house in Dorset Street, New Kent Road, they found a pair of breeches, stained with blood at the back. On a second visit to Bishop's house the garden was dug over, and a jacket, trousers, and a shirt found in one spot, and in another a coat, trousers, a vest with blood on the collar and one shoulder, and a shirt with the front torn. When the brad-awl was produced at Bow Street police-court, May said, "That is the instrument I punched the teeth out with." Shields was eventually discharged from custody, but the other three prisoners were committed for trial on the capital charge.

The identity of the victim remained a mystery until the 19th of November, a fortnight after the murder, when the corpse was recognised by a foreigner named Brun as that of a boy named Carlo Ferrari, whom he had brought from Italy two years before, but had not seen since July, 1830. The boy picked up the means of living by exhibiting a tortoise and a pair of white

mice in the streets. He had been seen by several persons in or near Nova Scotia Gardens on the 3rd of November, but he had not been seen since, nor had he returned on that day to his miserable lodgings in Charles Street, Drury Lane. The clothes found in Bishop's garden corresponded with the description given of those worn by him when he was last seen, and a little boy who played with Bishop's children stated that they had, on the following day, shown him two white mice in a cage similar to the one carried by Ferrari.

The incidents of the crime, as revealed from day to day, and the mystery in which the identity of the victim was for some time veiled, created so much excitement in the public mind, that when the prisoners were placed in the dock at the Old Bailey, early in December, the court was crowded, and a guinea each was paid for seats in the gallery, the occupants of which, all fashionably dressed, as might be expected of those who could afford to pay that price for the gratification of their love of the sensational, had taken their seats the day before. Though the evidence was but a recapitulation of the story told before in the police-court and the inquest-room, it was listened to with the utmost avidity. The witnesses for the defence were few, and their evidence valueless, except in the case of May, for whom an *alibi* was established in respect of the time between the afternoon of the day preceding the murder and noon on the following day. The prisoners were sentenced to death, but in May's case the sentence was commuted into transportation for life. A sea-faring relative of mine, who was second officer of the vessel in which May was sent out to Sydney, described him as an athletic, wiry-looking man, with features expressive of sternness, and a determined will, quite a different-looking man, therefore, to his two companions in crime, who were duly hanged at Newgate.

The crime of these men, and the deeds of Burke and Hare, created such a scare, and exposed so vividly the temptation to murder afforded by the prices paid by surgeons for "subjects," that the attention of parliament was directed to the matter, and a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire and report as to the facilities which might be given for obtaining bodies for anatomical purposes in a legitimate manner.

Sir Astley Cooper, who was one of the eminent surgeons who gave evidence before this committee, was asked whether the state of the law

prevented teachers of anatomy from obtaining the body of any person, which, in consequence of some peculiarity of structure, they might be desirous of procuring. He replied:—“The law does not prevent our obtaining the body of an individual if we think proper; for there is no person, let his situation in life be what it may, whom, if I were disposed to dissect, I could not obtain.... The law only enhances the price, and does not prevent the exhumation. Nobody is secured by the law; it only adds to the price of the subject.” The result of this inquiry was the passing of the Anatomy Act, by which the bodies of persons dying in hospitals and workhouses, if unclaimed by the relatives, may be placed at the disposal of the schools of anatomy.

# Reminiscences of the Cholera.

By Thomas Frost.

IT is now more than sixty years since the strange and mysterious visitation, as it was then considered, known as the cholera morbus, for which fearsome name that of Asiatic cholera has since been substituted, made its first appearance in this country, or anywhere west of the Ural Mountains. Coming first from India, from the banks of the Ganges and the Indus, the dread pestilence moved steadily westward and north-westward until, creeping along the rivers of Russia, and desolating all the most considerable towns of that country, it reached St. Petersburg. There it raged with fearful severity, mowing down as with the scythe of Death more than a thousand persons daily. So dreadful were the features of the unknown malady, and so rapidly were its victims carried off, that the ignorant populace of the capital attributed it to poison administered by the doctors. A fearful tumult was excited by this belief, and it was with great difficulty that it was suppressed.

From Russia the dire disease spread rapidly into almost every country in Europe, and wherever it appeared created the profoundest awe and the most bewildering terror. In Paris it broke out with extreme malignity in March, 1832, and soon raged there with greater virulence than it had exhibited in any other city in Europe except St. Petersburg. The deaths soon reached from four to five hundred daily, and during April they rose to a total for the month of twelve thousand seven hundred. It was hinted that the ravages of this new and dreadful disease were caused by the poisoning of the meat sold in the markets and the water in the public fountains; and the dwellers in the slums became so infuriated by this horrible and absurd rumour that mobs perambulated the streets howling for vengeance on the poisoners. Many unfortunate persons were murdered in the streets on being denounced as the perpetrators of these imaginary crimes, and so paralysed was the arm of justice by the influence of terror that nothing was done to vindicate the

majesty of the law. Everyone who could afford to leave Paris fled from it with precipitation, and the city was abandoned to desolation and anarchy. The legislative labours of the two Chambers were suspended, and the peers and deputies were the first to set the example of flight, though Louis Philippe and his family continued to reside at the Tuileries, with an occasional sojourn of a few days at Neuilly.

I have a vivid recollection of the mingled awe and terror which this fell disease inspired when it was announced that it had crossed the sea and made its first victims in this country. It had made its way across the continent from town to town on the banks of the great rivers, but into England it was imported by sick sailors. Many generations had passed away since anything like a pestilence had been known in England, and the cholera therefore created a panic among all classes of the people, which served to augment its virulence and render those of a nervous temperament more liable to be attacked by it. Doctors were utterly unacquainted with its proper treatment, and indeed had no knowledge whatever of the disease. Hence it raged without check wherever it appeared, and the rapidity with which it carried off its victims added to the terror inspired by its approaches. The first death at Lower Norwood, where my parents then resided, was that of the pastor of the Independent Chapel, situated only two doors from my father's house. He died in a few hours from the time he experienced the premonitory symptoms, and such was the dread of infection that the corpse was buried the same night by torchlight, in the burial-ground of the chapel, wrapped in a sheet coated with pitch.

Though a period of seventeen years separated the first cholera epidemic from the second, the lessons which the former should have taught had not been so well learned as they should have been, and the latter, with which these reminiscences are chiefly concerned, inspired a wild, unreasoning terror in only a little less degree than that of 1832.

I remember a case at Mitcham, in which the women attending a patient were seized with a panic on the approach of death, and rushed out of the house, leaving the poor wretch, a woman, to die alone, the corpse being afterwards found rigid and distorted.

The apparently erratic manner in which the disease spread, sometimes carrying off victims from one side of a street and sparing the other side, sometimes smiting every member of a family in one house, and passing over all the other houses in the same street, was a puzzle to persons who had given no attention to the causes of the disease, and were content to regard it as a sign of the wrath of God, reasoning about the matter as little as did the Israelites whose relatives were swept off at Kibroth-hattaavah. They had not given sufficient attention to the laws of health to understand that the disease found its victims where those laws were neglected, whether from carelessness or from ignorance.

I remember two cases at Croydon in which all the inmates of the houses in which the disease manifested its dread presence were carried off by it. One occurred in a cottage in St. James's Road, one of a row which had originally been level with the road, but had become overshadowed by the approach to the railway bridge. There were three victims in that house, and no other case in the same row, or in the neighbourhood. The other case occurred in King Street, one of several narrow, closely-built streets in the centre of the town, and the victims were a widow and her only child, the latter dying not alone, for, like Byron's Haidee,—

"——she held within
A second principle of life, which might
Have dawned a fair and sinless child of sin;
But closed its little being without light,
And went down to the grave unborn, wherein
Blossom and bough lie withered with one blight."

A remarkable incident occurred while the fell disease was in the full swing of its ravages. The wife of a working man living in the Old Town, a low-lying and densely populated quarter, was attacked by it, and at once removed to a temporary hospital that had been established on Duppas Hill, a tabular eminence overlooking the town, and in the thirteenth century the scene of the tournament in which the son of Earl Warrenne was by misadventure slain. There her husband went, on his return from labour, to ascertain her condition, and heard with a shock which the reader may imagine that she was dead. When the poor fellow had in some degree recovered from the blow, he expressed a wish to see the corpse and take it

to his home. He seems to have been unable to realise that his wife was really dead, though the nurses and doctors assured him that she had passed away. The idea that life yet lingered in the form that was apparently lifeless grew upon him as he gazed and though he may never have read "The Giaour," he may have felt the force of the thought so finely expressed by Byron in the lines that introduce his picture of the Greece of his day:—

"He who hath bent him o'er the dead,
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress
(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers),
And marked the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,
The fixed yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the pallid cheek,
And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,
And but for that chill, changeless brow,
Where cold Obstruction's apathy
Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
Yes, but for these, and these alone,
Some moments, aye, one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power;
So fair, so calm, so softly sealed,
The first, last look by death revealed!"

Whether it was feeling or reason that inspired the thought that life yet lingered in the apparently inanimate, but not yet rigid form, which the loving husband conveyed to his humble dwelling, it was undoubtedly to that inspiration that the woman owed her preservation from death. For she was not dead. Signs of returning animation were perceived when the supposed corpse was placed upon the bed, and the neighbour women who came in to perform the last sad offices for the dead were there to welcome her on her return to life. I will not attempt to describe the feelings with

which the husband beheld the eyelids of his wife unclose, and the rose-tints return to the pallid cheeks. Like the Greek painter who, conscious of the inadequacy of his art to fully portray the grief of Agamemnon for the loss of his son, covered the countenance of the old king with a veil, I draw the curtain upon the scene, and leave it to the imagination of the reader.

Among the remedies for the cholera which came into vogue during the prevalence of the epidemic of 1849, the rubbing of the stomach with brandy and salt obtained a considerable degree of repute; and the chemists vied with each other, as in the recent epidemics of influenza, in the concoction and advertising of various cholera mixtures, one of the most efficacious of which was a preparation of opium and chalk.

The lessons of the cholera were not so entirely neglected on this occasion as they were after the epidemic of 1832; but it is a sad reflection on our legislation that we were indebted to the ravages of disease, or rather to the fear inspired by them, for sanitary reforms which ought to have resulted from foresight. There had been sanitary inquiries by Royal Commissions between 1842 and 1849, but little had been done towards carrying out the recommendations which resulted from them. The existence of cholera in India, and the causes which produced it, had long been known; but so long as its ravages were confined to the people of that country no one seemed to think that it concerned the people of England. It was known, too, that whatever might be the true causes of zymotic diseases, concerning which medical opinions differed, accumulations of filth, contaminated sources of water supply, and an impure condition of the atmosphere tended to produce their outbreaks, and to aggravate their virulence. But then we had been used to these evils since the days of the Plantagenets, and though they had become intensified with the increase of population and the growth of the large towns, had not Malthus taught us that epidemics of disease were one of the means used by divine providence to prevent the numbers of the human race from exceeding the means of subsistence?

The cholera epidemic of 1849 roused the public mind from its lethargy, and prepared it to act upon the recommendations of the General Board of Health and to comply with the Sanitary Act of that year. The old wells of London were closed, and the like course was adopted in Croydon, where a constant supply of practically pure water was obtained by boring down to the chalk.

Other towns followed the example, one of the foremost being Birmingham, which received a supply which enabled the inhabitants to dispense with the insalubrious rain-water butt. Sewerage works were undertaken where no efficient system of drainage had before existed. Attention was called to the important questions of sewage disposal and the pollution of rivers; and though much even now remains to be done in this direction, and in the improvement of the water supply of the large manufacturing towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire, sanitation has been cleared of most of its difficulties by better knowledge of the philosophy of cause and effect, so that we no longer regard the calamities resulting from our own ignorance and neglect of the laws of nature as the inflictions of Providence.

# Some Old Doctors.

By Mrs. G. Linnæus Banks.

IT is not my intention to go back to those Greek fathers of the healing art, Hippocrates and Galen, or to dwell on the days when every monastery held within its walls some learned brother accredited to administer to bodies as well as souls diseased, or when the mistress of every feudal castle, every baronial-hall, was trained and skilled in leechcraft, distilled herbs, concocted potions and unguents, and not only physicked her household, but was prepared to staunch and dress the gaping wounds received in siege or tournay. Nor yet have we ought to do with those pretenders to science who mingled astrology with pharmacy, ascribed to every plant its ruling planet, and held that the potency of all herbs depended on the conjunction of planets, or the phase of the moon under which they were gathered—a belief, indeed, under which old Nicholas Culpepper compiled his well-known "Herbal" early in the seventeenth century.

Medicine and surgery have made rapid strides since the days, not a century agone, when in the naval cockpit, and on the open battlefield, the hatchet was the ready implement for amputation, the rough cautery that of a red hot iron applied to the fizzing flesh; and when the doctor cried, "Spit, man, spit" to the suffering soldier with a gunshot wound in his chest, and when the sputum came tinged with blood, simply plugged up the bullet-hole and left the poor fellow to his fate, while he passed on to cases less hopeless. And *en passant* I may say that wooden legs and stumps for arms were so common in the writer's young days as scarcely to attract attention—so ready were army surgeons to amputate.

These are not matters on which I have to dwell, but I think the present work would be incomplete without a record of those men of original mind, whose acute observation and unwearied investigations in the past have indissolubly linked their names with discoveries which have revolutionised the practice of both medicine and surgery.

In the opinion of Solomon, “there is nothing new under the sun;” and if such was the case in his day, how much more of a verity must be the truism in ours.

So the most startling and perfect revelation of any great fact in human physiology may have been dimly perceptible to earlier intelligences groping in the dark, faint adumbrations of which may fall on the sensorium of the final discoverer, until a ray of divine light dispels the mists of ages, and the man, developing his crude idea with infinite pains, realises a great truth, and cries out “Eureka” to an astonished—and too often—an unbelieving world.

Thus it may have been with the renowned practitioner, WILLIAM HARVEY, who came into the world when all England was filled with alarms of an “Invincible Spanish Armada,” then preparing to devastate our shores and spare neither man nor maid, babe nor mother. Yet the scare passed and peace came, and the boy grew, until his educational course at Cambridge ended, and his bias led him towards Padua, then the great seat of academical and medical lore, and there he took his doctor’s degree in physic. With the prestige of Padua upon him, in 1607, when he was but twenty years of age, he was elected Fellow of the College of Physicians (founded by Dr. Linacre in the reign of Henry VII.), and in 1715, the man of twenty-eight became their Anatomical Reader.

A noteworthy appointment this, since consequent study and investigation led to the grand discovery that the heart—to speak unscientifically—was a sort of muscular pumping-engine, sending the blood circulating along a series of blood-vessels to every part of the system, changing in character on its course until it returned to its centre, the seat of life, to be pumped out afresh to circulate as before and do its appointed work.

In 1628, Harvey made his discovery known in a learned treatise “On the circulation of the blood,” and as may be supposed, his daring assertions roused a violent spirit of opposition amongst his medical brethren, even among those who began to feel the pulses of their patients for the first time, and to comprehend *why* there should be a fluttering or audible beating under the sick one’s ribs, and wherefore the fatal hemorrhage following a sword-thrust or a gunshot wound.

In spite of opposition his teaching created a revolution in medical practice. The discoverer was called before Charles I. and his Court to demonstrate the action of the heart and subsidiary organs, in support of his new doctrine.

Fresh honours fell upon him even when too old to bear the burden. And when in the fulness of time, William Harvey, who had outlived three monarchs, made his own exit under Cromwellian rule, he bequeathed infinitely more to posterity in his invaluable discovery than can be summed up in the estate, library, and museum now in the proud possession of the College of Physicians. These are held by a mere body of men. The other has a world-wide significance.

Yet, as in his life, even in his grave, detractors strove to dim the glory of his important revelation, ascribing to the theological physician Servetus, to Realdus Columbus, and to Andreas Cæsalpinas, the credit of prior discovery.

It remained for another learned physician, a century later, to deal with these counter-claims, and whilst admitting their vague individual conceptions of an elusive mystery, to establish once and for ever William Harvey's inalienable right as sole discoverer.

This notable champion was JOHN FREIND, M.D., F.R.S., distinguished as the Medical Historian, and Harveian lecturer to the College of Physicians, at a time when he and his fellows shaved their heads and mounted Ramillies wigs as outward guarantees for the profundity of wisdom they enshrined.

But apart from his flowing wig, or his defence of Harvey, or his learned medical history, written in part when he was a prisoner in the Tower for supposed complicity in the Atterbury Plot, or for skill in the treatment of disease, John Freind had a pioneer's claim to distinction.

The doctor, strange to say, was a Member of Parliament, and on resuming his seat on his release from incarceration, he brought before the House of Commons, in 1725, a remarkable petition from the Royal College of Physicians, to restrain "the pernicious use of spirituous liquors." And though he might speak but as the mouthpiece of his brother Fellows, it needed no small degree of courage to broach such a subject in those days of

general coarse indulgence among all classes; especially if his own language was as direct and forcible as that of the petitioners.

Therefore, in his triple character as the historian of medicine, as the champion of William Harvey, and as the foremost M.P. to advocate the cause of temperance before our national legislative assembly, John Freind, M.D., claims a niche in our Walhalla of notable old doctors.

In the nave of Westminster Abbey on a memorial of polished granite is this inscription—"Beneath are deposited the remains of JOHN HUNTER, born at Long Calderwood, Lanarkshire, N.B., on February 14th, 1728; died in London on October 10th, 1793. His remains were removed from the Church of St. Martins-in-the-Fields to this Abbey on March 28th, 1858. The Royal College of Surgeons of England have placed this table over the grave of Hunter to record their admiration of his genius as a gifted interpreter of the Divine power and wisdom that works in the laws of organic life, and their grateful veneration for his services to mankind as the Father of scientific surgery. 'O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all.'"

Such honours are not paid to the remains of men of common stamp. And of no common stamp was the sandy-headed youth who, having spent ten years of his life learning cabinet making, resolved on striking out a better career for himself; and in his twentieth year took horse and journeyed to London to place himself under his elder brother, WILLIAM HUNTER, then rising into note as a medical practitioner and a teacher of anatomy. In October, 1748, he entered his brother's dissecting room, and whether the fitting of joints in cabinetware had been of initiatory service, or he had had access to the books of his medical relations in Glasgow, or that as a boy upon his father's farm, observation of the domestic animals and of the wild inhabitants of wood and fell, had roused the desire to master the secrets of animated nature, sure it is that William speedily foretold a successful future for his new pupil as an anatomist.

At all events he used his interest to place his promising brother under the eminent surgeon of Chelsea Hospital, and later under another at St. Bartholomew's. Then, shocked by the rough speech and manners of his

countrified brother, and his need of education, the classical elder packed him off to college to pick up a little refinement along with Latin and Greek.

In vain. Irrepressible and hot-tempered John could not sit down quietly to study dead languages. Back he came from Oxford in haste, to study dead bodies in his brother's dissecting room, and serve as demonstrator to his course of lectures, simultaneously with his study of living bodies at St. George's Hospital, where in a comparatively short time he became house-surgeon.

His appointment as staff-surgeon to our troops on foreign service marked the six intervening years before he settled down to practise in London. He had laboured ten years on human anatomy, and had dissected a number of the lower animals, laying the foundation of his collection of comparative anatomy. Even while on foreign service he had amused himself with studying the digestive faculties of snakes and lizards when in a torpid state, and many were the contributions he sent home to his brother's museum.

His return to London, as a teacher of surgery and anatomy, was a marked success, though private practice had to grow. In 1776, he was appointed surgeon extraordinary to His Majesty George III., but eleven years prior to this was admitted a Fellow of the Royal Society, slightly in advance of his elder brother. Then in 1768, the bachelor, William, shifted himself and his museum from Jermyn Street to Windmill Street, and resigned the lease to John, thus securing independent action to the latter, and facilities for creating a natural-history museum of his own.

Hitherto, the brothers had worked together in unison, but now John committed the unpardonable offence of bringing home to Jermyn Street "a tocherless bride," fourteen years younger than himself, endowed only with beauty and accomplishments, and a faculty for filling the house with assemblies of wit and fashion, which blunt-spoken John designated "kick-ups," no doubt with an irreverent big D as a prefix, swearing being as characteristic as hard work.

And work hard he did, early and late, not merely to maintain his extensive and lucrative practice, but to provide and prepare subjects for the museum in the rear of his town house, and for the valuable and original lectures he delivered in language forcible and clear, if neither refined nor academic.

His chief workshop, so to speak, was at his country "Box" at Earl's Court, the grounds of which he had converted into a zoological garden, so many wild animals were there kept for study. There is a story told of his facing an escaped lion and flicking him back to his den with his pocket handkerchief, showing his fearlessness and his knowledge of leonine nature.

Another tale is told of his intervention between fighting dogs and leopards, he dragging the infuriated leopards back to their cage by their collars—and *fainting* when the feat was accomplished, for his was not a burly frame, and his heart was in a threatening condition.

An element of humour mingles with the gruesome in Sir B. W. Richardson's account of the ruse employed to cheat watchful executors, and obtain the body of O'Brien the Irish Giant,[2] so as to convert it into the skeleton now in the Hunterian Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn.

Those were the days when surgeons were not particular where they obtained subjects for their scalpels, whether from the resurrection men or from the gallows, and John Hunter was not more dainty than his fellows. But also from travelling shows and menageries, and from animals that died in the Tower he was supplied. And so rapidly did his museum grow, absorbing the bulk of his income, that ere long he had to remove to what is now Leicester Square, and erect a building in the rear for his collection.

Honours fell upon him thickly as they had fallen on his brother, alike British and foreign, of which he took little heed, absorbed as he was in the pursuit of knowledge, and its demonstration. His discoveries placed him far ahead of the science of his time, though his courtly brother, earlier in the field and first to leave it, ran him close. Indeed their final quarrel and alienation arose out of a disputed claim to a certain discovery in feminine physiology, brought before the Royal Society, a quarrel which transferred William's museum to the University of Glasgow, and excluded John from his will.

The so-called "Lyceum Medicum" in Leicester Square, became the home of the "Society for the Improvement of Medical and Chirurgical Knowledge," and the "Philosophical Transactions" of the Society testify to the genius and untiring activity of its promoter. How he found time for his many written

essays and discourses on topics wide apart as “Gunshot-wounds” and “Teeth” is a marvel. No wonder the frail human machine wore out so early. He had worked when he should have rested, worked regardless of premonitions and attacks John Hunter must have well understood, and died at last at sixty-two, a victim of one of those fits of passion no man with a diseased heart can indulge in safely.

Setting out originally from the tablet in Westminster Abbey to describe what manner of man was the old doctor who lay beneath, it became imperatively necessary to bracket the two brothers, John and William Hunter, together, since, according to Sir B. W. Richardson, they were “twins in science,” if not in birth. Had not William already come to the front when John sought him out, he could not have been his teacher, or given his younger brother his first start in life, his introduction, or his facilities for study. Then they worked together, became one in anatomical discovery, in their zeal for collecting all that illustrated their theories, all that was rare and curious, into unprecedented museums. Yet how widely the personalities of the brothers differed. They both stood out among contemporaries, yet William, with his slight form, mildly refined face, set off by an unpretentious wig, and delicate hands, under lace ruffles, and wide coat cuffs, a classical scholar, an antiquary, a numismatist, as well as a naturalist,—Queen Charlotte’s medical referee, stepping out from his chariot, gold cane in hand, to visit his courtly patients, was the very *beau ideal* of a fashionable physician of that day, one who shone in drawing-rooms as well as in the lecture-hall. Blue-eyed John, with high cheek bones, broad, slightly receding forehead, tangled red hair, and a shaggy mane of whisker that made his keen face a triangle, tender of heart, yet brusque and coarse of speech, rough in manner as in dress (with not a sign of frill or ruffle), despising dilettante coteries, not squeamish in seeking “subjects,” passionate and determined, caring little for empty honours, for money only to swell his museum, and nothing for courtly circles, though created surgeon-extraordinary to George III., and owing his large practice solely to the force of his character, his science, and his skill. So far he was his brother’s antithesis. John was a diamond in the rough; William the gem cut and polished. And such were the two old doctors to whom England’s College of Surgeons owes its Hunterian Museum; the University of Glasgow the other. Had not the brothers quarrelled, the two would have formed one grand unrivalled collection.

Space is limited, and so must be our notes of these other celebrated "old doctors," whom it would be invidious to overlook. Of these EDWARD JENNER stands prominently out, but he has been already dealt with by another hand.

It is scarcely possible to pass by JOHN ABERNETHY, F.R.S., the eccentric physician, whose principle was that men should eat to live, not live to eat, who maintained that the stomach was the chief seat of health or disease, according as it was used or abused, and that water was the one natural and nutrient beverage. The practical way in which he illustrated his theories respecting overfeeding,—filling a pail with food from various dishes in correspondence with the heterogeneous mixture on his patients' plates—and his brusque replies to some other of his patients, have perpetuated his name through his oddities, rather than as a benefactor of his kind, who revolutionized the medical practice of his time, and of course excited envy and antagonism. His hair, kept together at the nape of the neck with a ribbon tie, was brushed back from his forehead, and added a degree of sharpness to his somewhat hatchet-shaped face, when he told the timorous lady who was "afraid she had swallowed a spider," "Then put a fly in your mouth, madam, and the spider will come up to catch him." Or when he threw the shilling from his fee back to a mother with a delicate daughter, "Take that, madam, and buy her a skipping-rope," an intimation that exercise was needed. It was an age of coarse feeding and strong drinking, an age of drastic purges and much blood-letting, and Abernethy's temperance principles, so much in advance of his time, provoked considerable opposition from his medical brethren, whose satirical epigrams he was not slow to cap.

But contemporary squibs and satires cannot affect the real good which has made Abernethy's name a household word. Indeed it has been stamped upon a biscuit. It is stamped also on a medical society he founded at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where his centenary has recently been celebrated.

Many have been the contributions to scientific medicine and surgery since the rough days of the old doctors I have endeavoured to chronicle, but these men of wigs and ties, gold-headed canes and pouncet-boxes, breeches and buckled shoes, were the pioneers of progress, they cleared the way for the men of this day and generation, and left their mark on their own age, not to

be effaced by newer and more advanced successors, to whom they have served as stepping-stones.

# The Lee Penny.

THE story of the Lee Penny is full of historic interest, and the legends respecting it furnished Sir Walter Scott with some incidents for his novel the “Talisman.”

This amulet is a stone of a deep red colour and triangular shape, in size about half-an-inch on each side, and is set in a silver coin. The various accounts which have come under our notice are agreed that this curious relic of antiquity has been in the Lee family since a period immediately after the death of King Robert the Bruce.

The monarch was nearing his end, and as he lay on his death-bed, he was much troubled for having failed to visit in person the Holy Land to assist in the Crusade. His long war with the English had rendered it impossible for him to leave his kingdom to fight in a foreign land, even in the cause of religion.

Sir James Douglas, his tried and trusty friend, stood beside the bed of his king, and was in sore distress. As a last request the king implored that as soon as possible after his soul had left his body Douglas would take his heart to Jerusalem. On the honour of a knight, Sir James faithfully promised to discharge the trust.

The king died in 1329, and his heart was enclosed in a silver case. Sir James suspended it from his neck with a chain, and without delay gathered round him a suitable retinue, and made his way towards the Holy Land. He was not destined to reach that country, for on his route the intelligence reached him that Alphonso, King of Leon and Castile, was waging war with the Moorish chief, Osmyn of Granada. To assist the Christians, he felt it was his duty, and in accordance with the dying charge of his king. With courage he engaged in the fray, but was soon surrounded by horsemen, and he who had fought so long and bravely, realised that he must meet his doom far from the country he loved so well. He made a desperate effort to escape. The

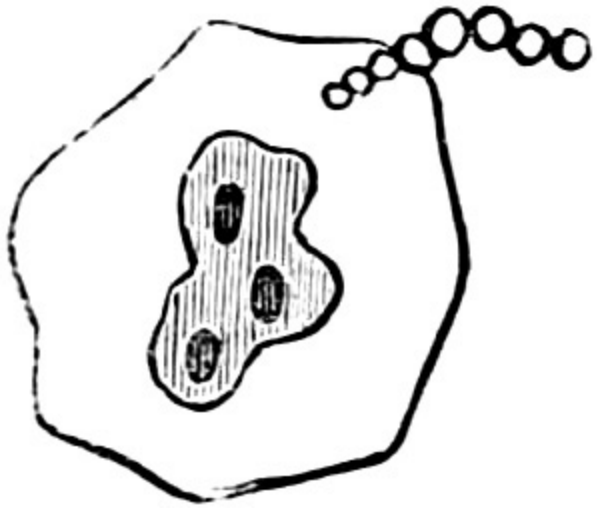
precious casket he took from his neck and threw it before him, saying, “Onward, as thou were wont, thou noble heart! Douglas will follow thee.” He followed it and was slain. After the battle was over the brave knight was found resting on the heart of Bruce. The mortal remains of the valiant knight were carried back to his home and buried in his church of St. Bride, at Douglas.

The heart of Bruce was entrusted to Sir Simon Locard, and by him borne back to Scotland, and at last found a resting-place beneath the high altar of Melrose Abbey, and its site is still pointed out. Mrs. Hemans wrote a charming poem on Bruce’s heart in Melrose Abbey, commencing:—

> “Heart! that did’st press forward still,
> Where the trumpet’s note rang shrill;
> Where the knightly swords are crossing,
> And the plumes like sea-foam tossing,
> Leader of the charging spear,
> Fiery heart! and liest thou here?
> May this narrow spot inurn
> Aught that could so beat and burn?”

We are told the family name of Locard was changed to Lockheart, or Lockhart, from the circumstance of Sir Simon having carried the key of the casket, and was granted as armorial insignia, heart with a fetter-lock, with the motto, “Corda serrata pando.” According to a contributor to Chambers’s “Book of Days,” v., 2, p. 415, from the same incident, the Douglases bear a human heart, imperially crowned, and have in their possession an ancient sword, emblazoned with two hands holding a heart, and dated 1329, the year Bruce died.

Lockhart was not daunted at the failure of the first attempt to reach Jerusalem, and, in company with such Scottish knights as escaped the fate of their leader, they once more proceeded, and arrived in the Holy Land, and for some time fought in the wars against the Saracens.



THE LEE PENNY.

The following adventure is said to have befallen him. He made prisoner in battle an Emir of wealth and note. The aged mother of his captive came to the Christian camp to save her son from his captivity. Lockhart fixed the price at which his prisoner should ransom himself; and the lady, pulling out a large embroidered purse, proceeded to tell down the amount. In this operation, a pebble inserted in a coin, some say of the lower empire, fell out of the purse, and the Saracen matron testified so much haste to recover it as to give the Scottish knight a high idea of its value. “I will not consent,” he said, “to grant your son’s liberty unless the amulet be added to the ransom.” The lady not only consented to this, but explained to Sir Simon the mode in which the talisman was to be used. The water in which it was dipped operated as a styptic, or a febrifuge, and the amulet possessed several other properties as a medical talisman.

Sir Simon Lockhart, after much experience of the wonders which it wrought, brought it to his own country, and left it to his heirs, by whom, and by Clyde side in general, it was, and is still, distinguished by the name of the Lee Penny, from the name of his native seat of Lee.

Its virtues were brought into operation by dropping the stone in water which was afterwards given to the diseased to drink, washing at the same time the part affected. No words were used in dipping the stone, or money permitted

to be taken by the servants of Lee. People came from all parts of Scotland, and many places in England, to carry away the water to give to their cattle.

Some interesting information respecting this amulet appears in an account of the Sack and Siege of Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1644. “As one of the natural sequences,” says the writer, “of prolonged distress, caused by this brave but foolhardy defence against overwhelming odds, the plague broke out with fatal violence in Newcastle and Gateshead, as well as Tynemouth and Shields, during the following year. Great numbers of poor people were carried off by it; while tents were erected on Bensham Common, to which those infected were removed; and the famous Lee Penny was brought out of Scotland to be dipped in water for the diseased persons to drink, and the result said to be a perfect cure. The inhabitants (that is to say, the Corporation, we presume), gave a bond for a large sum in trust for the loan; and they thought the charm did so much good, that they offered to pay the money down, and keep the marvellous penny with a stone in which it is inserted; but the proprietor, Lockhart of Lee, would not part with it.”

We are told that many years ago a remarkable cure is alleged to have been performed on Lady Baird of Sauchton Hall, near Edinburgh, who, having been bitten by a mad dog, was seized with hydrophobia. The Lee Penny was sent for, and she used it for some weeks, drinking and bathing in the water it had been dipped in, and she quite recovered.

“The most remarkable part of the history,” as Sir Walter Scott says, “perhaps was, that it so especially escaped condemnation when the Church of Scotland chose to impeach many other cures which savoured of the miraculous, as occasioned by sorcery, and censured the appeal of them, ‘excepting only the amulet called the Lee Penny, to which it pleased God to annex certain healing virtues, which the Church did not presume to condemn.’”

The Lee Penny is preserved at Lee House, in Lanarkshire, the residence of the present representative of the family.

# How Our Fathers were Physicked.

By J. A. Langford, ll.d.

DELIGHTFUL old Fuller tells us "Necessary and ancient their Profession ever since man's body was subject to enmity and casualty." There is no doubt of the necessity and antiquity of the doctor's calling, but there is, without doubt, no profession in which such great and beneficent advance has been made in modern times as in the medical. The tortures which our fathers endured under the old treatment are terrible to think of. It was not enough that they were afflicted by disease; the pains which they had to suffer from the supposed remedies far exceeded those which nature imposed. Cupping, blistering, and especially bleeding, were the common applications in nearly all complaints, the Bleeding was also used as a preventive, which proverb truly tells us "is better than cure"; but in this case the supposed disease could scarcely have been worse than the supposed prevention. Five times in the year—"in September, before Advent, before Lent, after Easter, and at Pentecost"—were the periods at which men in health were accustomed to "breathe a vayne." Besides letting of blood, the physician's cane and the surgeon's club were vigorously used on the unfortunate sufferers. Mr. J. C. Jeaffreson, in his very interesting "Book about Doctors," says, "For many centuries fustigation was believed in as a sovereign remedy for bodily ailments as well as moral failings, and a beating was prescribed for an ague as frequently as for picking and stealing." So what with the lancet and the stick combined, our fathers must indeed have shuddered at the approach of any of the "natural shocks that flesh is heir to."

The medicines of those good old times were of a very strange and objectionable kind. Some of the concoctions were composed of many ingredients, and were formed of abominable, not to say disgusting, materials. All nature was ransacked for out-of-the-way and horrible things which could be used as drugs and nostrums for suffering and gullible

sufferers. In the reign of Charles II., Dr. Thomas Sherley "recommended a clumsy and inordinate administration of violent drugs" for gout. "Calomel he habitually administered in simple doses. Sugar of lead he mixed largely in his conserves; pulverized human bones he was very fond of prescribing; and the principal ingredient in his gout-powder was 'raspings of a human skull unburied.' But his sweetest compound was his 'Balsam of Bats,' strongly recommended as an unguent for hypochondriacal persons, into which entered adders, bats, sucking-whelps, earth worms, hogs' grease, the marrow of a stag, and the thigh-bone of an ox." A good idea of the things sold to a confiding public as cures for its ills may be gathered from two verses on Colonel Dalmahoy, a well-known—shall we say quack—of the past:—

"Dalmahoy sold infusions and lotions,
Decoctions, and gargles, and pills,
Electuaries, powders, and potions,
Spermaciti, salts, scammony, squills.

Horse aloes, burnt alum, agaric,
Balm, benzoine, blood-stone, and dill;
Castor, camphor, and acid tartaric,
With specifics for every ill."

Metals and precious stones were extensively used in the prescriptions of bygone doctors. Every metal and every stone was credited with some special and peculiar virtue which it alone possessed, and it was applied as a cure for that ailment over which it had influence and power. Bacon tells us, "We know Diseases of Stoppings, and Suffocations, are the most dangerous in the body; And it is not much otherwise in the minde. You may take *Sarza* to open the Liver; *Steele* to open the Spleene; *Flowers of Sulphur* for the Lungs; *Castoreum* for the Braine," for each of which parts it was believed that the specifics named were most efficacious. The prescriptions of Dr. Bulleyn, in the reign of Elizabeth, are wonderful examples of how our fathers were physicked. Here are two of those quoted by Mr. Jeaffreson. The first is

"*An Embrocation.*—An embrocation is made after this manner:—Px. Of a decoction of mallowes, vyolets, barly, quince seed, lettice leaves, one pint;

of barly meale, two ounces; of oyle of vyolets and roses, of each, an ounce and half; of butter, one ounce; and then seeth them all together till they be like a brouthe, puttyng thereto, at the ende, foure yolkes of eggs; and the maner of applying is with peeces of cloth, dipped in the aforesaid decoction, being actually hoate."

Our second is "truly a medicine for kings and noblemen;" it is called an

"*Electuarium de Gemmis.*—Take two drachms of white perles; two little peeces of saphyre; jacinth, corneline, emerauldes, grannettes, of each an ounce; setwal, the sweete roote dorsnike, the rind of pomecitron, mase, basal seede, of each two drachms; of redde corrall, amber, shewing of ivory, of each two drachms; rootes both of white and red lichen, ginger, long peper, spicknard, folium indicum, saffron, cardamon, of each one drachm; of troch diarodon, lignum aloes, of each half a small handful; cinnamon, galinga, zurnbeth, which is a kind of setwal, of each one drachm and a half; thin pieces of gold and sylver, of each half a scruple; of musk, half a drachm. Make your electuary with honey emblici, which is the fourth kind of mirobulans with roses, strained in equall partes, as much as will suffice. This healeth cold diseases of ye braine, harte, stomack. It is a medicine proved against the tremblynge of the harte, faynting and swooning, the weakness of the stomacke, pensiveness, solitarines. Kings and noble men have used this for their comfort. It causeth them to be bold-spirited, the body to smell wel, and ingendreth to the face good colour."

The most innocent articles used in the old medicines were fruits, and herbs, and vegetables. To some kinds special virtues are assigned, and Dr. Bulleyn's "Book of Simples," is very pleasant reading. "Pears, apples, peaches, quinces, cherries, grapes, raisins, prunes, raspberries, oranges, medlons, raspberries and strawberries, spinage, ginger, and lettuces are the good things thrown upon the board." We are told of a prune growing at Norwich, and known as the "black freere's prune," that it is "very delicious and pleasaunt, and no lesse profitable unto a hoate stomacke." "The red warden is of greate virtue, conserved, roasted or baken to quench choller." We are also informed that "Figges be good agaynst melancholy, and the falling evil, to be eaten. Figges, nuts, and herb grase do make a sufficient medicine against poison or the pestilence. Figges make a good gargarism to cleanse the throates."

Some of the Doctor's prescriptions are very curious. He prescribes "a smal young mouse rosted," for a child afflicted with a nervous ailment. Nor did he disdain to use the snail in certain cases. He tells us that "Snayles broken from the shelles and sodden in whyte wyne with oyle and sugar are very holsome, because they be hoat and moist for the straightnes of the lungs and cold cough. Snails stamped with camphery, and leven will draw forth prycks in the flesh." Snail broth is not entirely unknown in some country places, even at the present time. Bezoar stone and unicorn's horn were also used in confections.

Cancer has always been, and unfortunately still is, a terrible and an incurable disease, and has afforded a fine field for all kinds of nostrums and specifics which were to produce a "safe and certain cure." One of these, called a "precious water," was thus composed. "Take dove's foote, a herb so named, Arkangell ivy with the berries, young red bryer toppes, and leaves, whyte roses, theyre leaves and buds, red sage, celandyne and woodbynde, of each lyke quantity, cut or chopped and put into pure cleane whyte wyne, and clarified honey. Then breake into it alum glasse and put in a little of the pouder of aloes hepatica. Destill these together softly in a limbecke of glasse or pure tin; if not then in a limbecke wherein aqua vitæ is made. Keep this water close. It will not onely kyll the canker (cancer), if it be duly washed therewyth; but also two droppes dayly put into the eye wyll sharp the syght, and breake the pearle and spottes, specially if it be dropped in wyth a little fenell water, and close the eyes after."

In 1739, the British Parliament passed an Act which is unprecedented in the annals of folly. A female quack, named Joanna Stephens, was reported to have effected some most extraordinary cures by the use of a medicine of which she only possessed the secret. She proposed to make it public for the sum of £5,000, and a vain attempt was made to raise the sum by subscription, but only £1,356 3s. was thus raised. An appeal was made to Parliament, and a commission was appointed to enquire into the subject, and a certificate signed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishops, Peers, and Physicians, was presented to the House, declaring that they were "convinced by experiment of the utility, efficacy, and dissolving power," of the tested medicine, and Joanna Stephens was rewarded with the desired £5,000. The prescriptions were published, and the following extracts will

suffice to show how easily sufferers from diseases may be, and sometimes are, gulled. This lucky quack says:—

> "My medicines are a Powder, a Decoction, and Pills."
>
> "The Powder consists of egg-shells and snails, both calcined."
>
> "The Decoction is made by boiling some herbs (together with a ball which consists of soap, swine's-cresses burnt to a blackness, and honey), in water."
>
> "The Pills consist of snails calcined, wild carrot seeds, burdock seeds, asken keys, hips and hawes, all burnt to a blackness—soap and honey."

Our readers will willingly dispense with the directions of how these dearly purchased medicines should be prepared. Surely

> "The pleasure is as great,
> In being cheated as to cheat!"

In 1633, Stephen Brasnell, Physician, published a small volume entitled "Helps | for | Svddain | Accidents | Endangering Life. | By which | Those that live farre from Physitions or Chirurgions | may happily preserve the Life | of a true Friend or Neigh-| bour, till such a Man may be | had to perfect the Cure. | Collected out of the best authors | for the generall good." The following is his prescription for all kinds of poisons:—viz. "the Hoofe of an Oxe cut into parings and boyled with bruised mustard-seed in white wine and faire water. The Bloud of a Malard drunke fresh and warme: or els dryed to powder, and so drunke in a draught of white wine. The Bloud of a Stagge also in the same manner. The seeds of Rue and the leaves of Betony boyled together in white wine. Or take ij scruples (that is fortie graines) of Mithridate; of prepared Chrystall, one dram (that is three score grains), fresh Butter one ounce. Mix all well together. Swallow it down by such quantities as you can swallow at once; and drink presently upon it a quarter of a pint of the decoction of French Barley, or so much of six shillings Beere. Of this I have had happy proofe."

There is a much more effective, though a somewhat revolting prescription for "those with abilitie." "Take," says our seventeenth century physician,

“take a sound horse, open his belly alive, take out all his entrayles quickly, and put the poysoned partie naked into it all save his head, while the body of the horse retains his naturall heate, and there let him sweat well.” Our author admits that “this may be held a strange course, but the same reason that teacheth to devide live pullets and pigeons for plague-sores approveth this way of sweating as most apt to draw to itselfe all poysons from the heart and principall parts of the patient’s body. But during this time of sweating he must defend his braine by wearing on his head a quilt.” The quilt is to be made by taking a number of dried herbs, which are to be made into a “grosse powder and quilt them up in sarsnet or calico, and let it be so big as to cover all the head like a cap, then binde it on fast with a kerchief.” This is called “a Nightcap to preserve the Brain.”

There are also curious prescriptions for the stings of bees and wasps, the “bitings of spiders,” of which he says “the garden ones are the worst.” He tells us that the “flesh of the same beast that biteth, inwardly taken, helpeth much,” and that “outwardly the best thing to be applied is the flesh of the same beast that did the hurt, pounded in a morter and applied in manner of a poultis.” Here is one about that pretty little animal, the shrew-mouse: “Now the shrew-mouse is a little kind of a mouse with a long sharpe snout and a short tayle; it liveth commonly in old ruinous walls. It biteth also very venomously, and leaveth foure small perforations made by her foure foreteeth. To cure her biting, her flesh roasted and eaten is the best inward antidote if it may be had. And outwardly apply her warme liver and skin if it may be had. Otherwise *Rocket-reeds* beaten into powder, and mixed with the bloud of a dog. Or els the teeth of a dead man made into a fine powder.”

The toad comes in for a good share of attention, and Mr. Bradwell gives a personal anecdote on this subject. He says:—“Myself, while I was a student at *Cambridge*, was so hurt by the spouting of a venomous humour from the body of a great toad into my face while I pashed him to death with a brickbat. Some of the moisture lighted on my right eye, which did not a little endanger it, and hath made it ever since apt to receive any flux of Rheume or Inflammation.” Some of our readers may think that this was a fit punishment for having “pashed” the toad to “death with a brickbat.”

Among the strangest things ever used as medicine must be placed human skulls. In 1854, Mr. T. A. Trollope gave a short account in *Notes and*

*Queries* of a book by Dr. Cammillo Brunoni, published at Fabriano in 1726. It was entitled *Il Medico Poeta* (the Physician a Poet), and gives an account "of the medical uses of human skulls." Dr. Brunoni informs us, says Mr. Trollope, that "all skulls are not of equal value. Indeed, those of persons who have died a natural death, are good for little or nothing. The *reason* of this is, that the disease of which they died has consumed or dissipated the essential spirit! The skulls of murderers and bandits are particularly efficacious. And this is clearly because not only is the essential spirit of the cranium concentrated therein by the nature of their violent death, but also the force of it is increased by the long exposure to the atmosphere, occasioned by the heads of such persons being ordinarily placed on spikes over the gates of cities! Such skulls are used in various manners. Preparations of volatile salt, spirit, gelatine, essence, etc., are made from them, and are very useful in epilepsy and hœmorrhage. The notion soldiers have, that drinking out of a skull renders them invulnerable in battle, is a mere superstition, though respectable writers do maintain that such a practice is a proved preventive against scrofula."

This very curious book consists of a "poem in twelve cantos, or 'Capitoli,' as from the fifteenth century downwards it was the Italian fashion to call them, on the physical poet—a sort of medical *ars poetica*; and followed by a hundred and seventy-two sonnets on all diseases, drugs, parts of the body, functions of them, and curative means. Each sonnet is printed on one page, while that opposite is occupied by a compendious account in prose of the subject in hand. We have a sonnet on the stomach-ache, a sonnet on apoplexy, a sonnet on purges, another on blisters, and many others on far less mentionable subjects. The author's poetical view of the action of a black-dose compares it to that of a tidy and active housemaid, who, having swept together all the dirt in the room, throws it out of the window. Mystic virtues are attributed to a variety of substances, animal, vegetable, and mineral."

That delightful work, The Memoirs of the Verney Family, by Lady Verney, affords some very striking examples of the medical treatment of poor suffering humanity in the 17th century. Our selections are from the third volume.

One of the most extraordinary medicines of this, or of any age, was without doubt that known as Venice Treacle. In 1651, Sir Ralph Verney was in Venice, and the Memoirs furnish the following graphic account of this terrible drug, which was a concoction of the most disgusting materials. Sir Ralph sends it to Mrs. Isham, for her family medicine chest, and says "hee that is most famous for Treacle is called Sig$^{r}$ Antonio Sgobis, and keepes shopp at the Strazzo, or Ostridge, sopra il ponte de'Baretteri, on the right hand going towards St. Mark's. His price is 19 livres (Venize money) a pound, and hee gives leaden Potts with the Ostridge signe uppon them, and Papers both in Italian and Lattin to show its virtue." "This celebrated and incredibly nasty compound," adds Lady Verney, "traditionally composed by Nero's physician, was made of vipers, white wine, and opium, 'spices from both the Indies,' liquorice, red roses, tops of germander, juice of rough aloes, seeds of treacle mustard, tops of St. John's wort, and some twenty other herbs, to be mixed with honey 'triple the weight of all the dry species' into an electuary." The recipe is given as late as 1739, in Dr. Quincey's "English Dispensatory," published by Thomas Longman, at the Ship in Paternoster Row. "Vipers are essential, and to get the full benefit of them 'a dozen vipers should be put alive into white wine.' The English doctor, anxious for the credit of British vipers, proves that Venice treacle may be made as well in England, 'though their country is hotter, and so may the more rarify the viperime juices'; yet the bites of our vipers at the proper time of year, which is the hottest, are as efficacious and deadly as them. But he complains that the name of Venice goes so far, that English people 'please themselves much with buying a Tin Pot at a low price of a dirty sailor ... with directions in the Italian tongue, printed in London,' and that some base druggists 'make this wretched stuff of little else than the sweepings of their shops.' Sir Ralph could pride himself that his leaden pots contained the genuine horror. It was used as 'an opiate when some stimulus is required at the same time'; an overdose was confessedly dangerous, and even its advocates allowed that Venice treacle did not suit everyone, because, forsooth, 'honey disagrees with some particular constitutions.'" For centuries this medical "horror" was taken by our drastically treated forefathers.

The treatment was indeed drastic, and we might truly add cruel. Tom Verney had "a tertian ague and a feaver," and for this he had "only a vomit,

glister, a cordiall, and breathed a vane"—that is, was bled. Another patient, Sir George Wheler, who had caught a chill after dancing, had all sorts of "Applications of Blisters and Laudanums," so that his Christmas dinner at Dr. Denton's cost him "the best part of 100 pounds." For an eruption in the leg, Sir Ralph Verney was advised to apply a lotion "so virulent, a drop would fech of the skin when it touched."

Young Edmund Verney was ill in 1657, and writes to his father, "Truly I might compare my afflictions to Job's. I have taken purges and vomits, pills and potions, I have been blooded, and I doe not know what I have not had, I have had so many things." In 1657-58 the epidemic known as "The New Disease," proved very fatal, and created quite a panic. The treatment adopted by the doctors may be gathered from a prescription of Dr. Denton's, one of the most famous physicians of the time. He writes to Sir Ralph Verney, "I see noe danger of Wm. R., and if he had followed your advice by taking of a vomit, and if that had not done it, then to have beene blooded, I beleeved he had beene well ere this." Then he adds "It is the best thinge and the surest and the quickest he can yet doe, therefore I pray lett him have one yett. 3 full spoonfulls of the vomitage liquor in possitt drinke will doe well, and he may abide 4 the same night when he goes to rest; let him take the weight of vi$^{ds}$ of diascordium the next day or the next but one; he may be blooded in the arm about 20 ounces."

Some of the ladies of the time did not, however, approve of this kind of treatment, and preferred their own remedies, or their own notions of remedies, to the doctor's prescriptions. We select two examples. Lady Fanshawe described the disease as "a very ill kind of fever, of which many died, and it ran generally through all families." While she suffered from it she ate "neither flesh, nor fish, nor bread, but sage possett drink, a pancake or eggs, or now and then a turnip or carrott." But Lady Hobart ventured to prescribe. She writes, "If you have a new dises in your town pray have a car of yourself, and goo to non of them; but drink good ale for the gretis cordall that is: I live by the strength of your malt." Few, we anticipate, would object to her ladyship's advice, and most would prefer her "good ale" to Dr. Denton's "vomitts," and the loss of 20 ounces of blood.

Our illustrations might be indefinitely multiplied, but those given will amply suffice to show the way in which our fathers were physicked.

# Medical Folk-Lore.

By John Nicholson.

TO ease pain and endeavour to effect a cure, man will try every suggested remedy, likely and unlikely, and when numberless things have been tried, each of which was alleged to be a certain cure, he reverts to some simple thing, taught him by his old grandmother, or the "wise woman" of his early days; and which, by reason of its simplicity, had been at first contemptuously rejected in favour of more complex but inefficacious compounds. There is scarcely a market but has a stall kept by a herb woman, who, in warm old-fashioned hood, with a little shawl round her shoulders, her ample waist encircled by broad tapes from which is suspended a pocket, capacious and indispensable, lays out with great care her stock of simples—roots, leaves, or flowers, studiously gathered at the proper time, when their virtue is strongest. Here may be seen poppy heads for fomentation, dandelion roots for liver complaint, ground ivy for rheumatism, celandine for weak eyes, and other herbs, all "for the service of man," to alleviate or cure some of the "ills that flesh is heir to." She can relate wondrous tales of marvellous cures wrought by her wares, of cases, long standing, and given up by the duly qualified medical fraternity, a brotherhood she holds in contempt because of their new-fangled remedies and methods.

This chapter, however, deals chiefly with superstitious remedies, or at least those remedies which seem to have no scientific bearing on the case; thus, a person having a sty on the eye, will have it rubbed with a wedding ring, or the gold ring of a young maiden; or cause it to be well brushed seven times with a black cat's tail, if the cat were willing. Another cure is more efficacious if administered as a surprise. The patient is placed in front of the operator, who unexpectedly spits on the eye affected; which action often leads to angry remonstrance, met by derisive laughter, which causes, it may be, broken friendship and general unpleasantness for a time.

It is a common belief, almost world-wide in its extent, that toothache is caused by a little worm which gnaws a hole in the tooth. Not long ago I was shewn a large molar, which when *in situ* had caused its owner great pain, and he pointed to the nerve apertures, saying, "That's where the worm was!" Shakespeare, in "Much Ado About Nothing,"[3] speaks of this curious belief:—

> "*D. Pedro.* What! sigh for the toothache?
>
> *Leon.* Where is but a humour or a worm."

"This superstition was common some years ago in Derbyshire, where there was an odd way of extracting, as it was thought, the worm. A small quantity of a mixture, consisting of dried and powdered herbs, was placed in a tea-cup or other small vessel, and a live coke from the fire was dropped in. The patient then held his or her open mouth over the cup, and inhaled the smoke as long as it could be borne. The cup was then taken away, and a fresh cup or glass, containing water, was then put before the patient. Into this cup the patient breathed hard for a few moments, and then, it was supposed, the grub or worm could be seen in the water."[4]

The following was communicated to the *Folk Lore Journal* by Wm. Pengelly, Esq., Torquay, February 1st, 1884:—

> "Upwards of sixty years ago, a woman at Looe, in south-east Cornwall, complained to a neighbouring woman that she was suffering from toothache, on which the neighbour remarked that she could give a charm of undoubted efficacy. It was to be in writing, and worn constantly about the person; but, unfortunately, it would be valueless if the giver and receiver were of the same sex. This difficulty was obviated by calling in my services, and requesting me to write from dictation the following words:—
>
> 'Peter sat in the gate of Jerusalem. Jesus cometh unto him and saith, "Peter, what aileth thee?" He saith, "Lord, I am grievously tormented with the toothache." He saith, "Arise, Peter, and follow me." He did so, and immediately the toothache left him;

> and he followed him in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'
>
> The charm, being found to be correctly written, was held to have been presented to me by the dictator. I at once gave it to the sufferer, who placed it in a small bag and wore it round her neck."

A Roumanian charm against toothache is to sit beside an anthill, masticate a crust of bread, spit it out over the anthill, and as the ants eat the bread the toothache will cease.

Some believe that if you pick the aching tooth with the nail of an old coffin, or drink the water taken from the tops of three waves, the wearying pain may be relieved or cured. In Norfolk, the toothache is called the "love pain," and the sufferer does not receive much sympathy.

Some time ago, a man wished to shew me some antiquity he had found, but his jacket pocket was so filled with odds and ends ("kelterment," he called it) that he turned all out in order to better prosecute his search. Among the miscellaneous collection I noticed a potato, withered, dry, hard, and black; and was informed it was kept as a preventive and cure for rheumatism. For the same distressing, disabling disease, some people spread treacle on brown paper, and apply hot to the part affected.

The following curious passages have been transcribed by my friend, Mr. George Neilson, solicitor, Glasgow, from the Kirk Session Records of the parish of Gretna, and are here inserted by his consent, most freely given:—

"Graitney Kirk, *Feb. 11, 1733*.

> Session met after Sermon.
>
> It was represented by some of the members that the Charms and Spells used at Watshill for Francis Armstrong, Labouring under distemper of mind, gave great offence, and 'twas worth while to enquire into the affair and publickly admonish the people of the evil of such a course, that a timely stop be put to such a practice.

Several of the members gave account that in Barbara Armstrang's they burned Rowantree and Salt, they took three Locks of Francis's hair, three pieces of his shirt, three roots of wormwood, three of mugwort, three pieces of Rowantree, and boiled alltogether, anointed his Legs with the water, and essayed to put three sups in his mouth, and meantime kept the door close, being told by Isabel Pott, at Cross, in Rockcliff commonly called the Wise Woman, that the person who had wronged him would come to the door, but no access was to be given. Francis, tho' distracted, told them they were using witch-craft and the Devils Charms that would do no good. It is said they carried a candle around the bed for one part of the inchantment. John Neilson, in Sarkbridge, declared before the Session this was matter of fact others then present. Mary Tate, Servant to John Neilson in Sarkbridge is to be cited as having gone to the Wise Woman for Consultation."

"Graitney Kirk, *Feb. 25, 1733*.

Session met after Sermon

Mary Tate having been summoned was called on, and compearing confessed that she had gone to Isabel Pot, in the parish of Rockcliff, and declared that the s$^{d}$ Isabell ordered South running water to be lifted in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and to be boiled at night in the house where Francis Armstrong was, with nettle roots, wormwood, mugwort, southernwood and rowantree, and his hands, legs and temples be stroaked therewith, and three sups to be put in his mouth, and withal to keep the door close: She ordered also three locks of his hair to be burnt in the fire with three pieces clipt out of his shirt, and a Slut, *i.e.*, a rag dipt in tallow to be lighted and carried round his bed, and all to be kept secret except from near friends: Mary Tate declared that the said Francis would allow none to touch him but her, and at last Helen Armestrange, Spouse to Archibald Crighton, Elder, assisted her, and after all the said

> Francis, tho' distracted, told them they were using witchcrafts and the Devil's Charms that would do no good: Mary Tate being admonished of the Evil of such a course was removed: Notwithstanding her acknowledgments of her fault she is to be suspended *a sacris*, and others her accomplices, and that none hereafter pretend Ignorance the Congregation is to be cautioned against such a practice from the Pulpit."

Ague used to be much more prevalent than it now is. Drainage and sanitation have banished many evils, and with the evil, the exorcists' charm for the banishment of the evil. Charms, rather than medical remedies, for the cure of ague, are very prevalent. Rider's *British Merlin* for 1715 lies before me. It is a thin 16mo. booklet of 48 printed pages and 42 blank pages, but some of the blank inter-leaves have been torn out. It is bound in parchment with gilt edges, and has had a clasp, which has disappeared. One of the interleaves bears this written charm:—"And Peter sat at the gate of Jerusalem and prayed, and Jesus called Peter, and Peter said, Lord, I am sick of an ague, and the evil ague being dismissed, Peter said, Lord, grant that whosoever weareth these lines in writing, the evil ague may depart from them, and from all evil ague good Lord deliver us." The following charm is taken from an old diary of 1751[5]:—"When Jesus came near Pilate, He trembled like a leaf, and the judge asked Him if He had the ague. He answered, He had neither the ague, nor was He afraid; and whosoever bears these words in mind shall never fear ague or anything else." A strange charm for this dreaded disease was to be spoken up the wide cavernous chimney by the eldest female of the family on St. Agnes' Eve. Thus spake she:—

> "Tremble and go!
> First day shiver and burn;
> Tremble and quake!
> Second day shiver and learn;
> Tremble and die!
> Third day never return."

A curious anecdote is related of Lord Chief Justice Holt. When a young man, he, with companions who were law students like himself, ran up a score at an inn, which they were not able to pay. Mr. Holt observed that the

landlord's daughter looked very ill, and, posing as a medical student, asked what ailed her. He was informed she suffered from ague. Mr. Holt, continuing to play the doctor, gathered sundry herbs, mixed them with great ceremony, rolled them up in parchment, scrawled some characters on the same, and to the great amusement of his companions, tied it round the neck of the young woman, who straightway was cured of her ague. After the cure, the pretending doctor offered to pay the bill, but the grateful landlord and father would not consent, and allowed the party to leave the house with hearts as light as their pockets.

Many years after, when on the Bench, a woman was brought before him accused of witchcraft. She denied the charge, but said she had a wonderful ball, which never failed to cure the ague. The charm was handed to the judge, who recognised it as the very ball he had made for the young woman at the inn, to help himself and his companions out of a difficult position.[6]

In the west of England a live snail is sewn up in a bag and worn round the neck as an antidote for ague; though others in the same district imprison a spider in a box, and, as it pines away, so will the disease depart.

It is a common belief in the north of England that a person bitten by a dog is liable to madness, if the dog which bit them goes mad. In order to secure the bitten one from such a terrible fate, the owner of the dog is often compelled to destroy it. Should he refuse to do so, the friends of the injured party would probably poison it, The condition peculiar to the morning following a night of debauchery, is said to need "a hair of the dog that bit you," which doubtless refers to the means taken to prevent ill effects following a dog bite. A wise saw from the Edda tells us that "Dog's hair heals dog's bite." The following incident recorded in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Oct. 12th, 1866, shews most gross superstition in this Victorian age. "At an inquest, held on the 5th of October, at Bradfield, (Bucks.), on the body of a child of five years of age, which had died of hydrophobia, evidence was given of a practice almost incredible in civilised England. Sarah Mackness stated that at the request of the mother of the deceased, she had fished out of the river the body of the dog by which the child had been bitten, and had extracted its liver, a slice of which she had frizzled before the fire, and had then given it to the child to be eaten with some bread. The dog had been

drowned nine days before. The child ate the liver greedily, drank some tea afterwards, but died, in spite of this strange specific."

Erysipelas in Donegal is known as the "rose." It is very common, but can be cured by a stroker. The following is said to have happened. A nurse of a Rector had the "rose," and the doctor was called in. After he was gone, the woman's friends brought in a stroker, who rubbed the nurse with bog moss, and then threw a bucket of bogwater over her in bed. This treatment cured the woman, and is said to be generally in vogue, but is not efficient except the right person does it.[7] In some parts of Yorkshire, sheep's dung is applied as a poultice for the cure of erysipelas.

What is more distressing, both to patient and nurse, than whooping cough, or king-cough, as it is sometimes called? A change of air is deemed beneficial to the afflicted one, so the mothers of Hull take their suffering children across the Humber to New Holland and back again. Some call it "crossing strange water." Other people procure a "hairy worm," and suspend it in a flannel cover round the neck of the sufferer, in the belief that as the creature dies and wastes away, so will the cough depart. This custom seems to be the relic of an old belief that something of the nature of a hairy caterpillar was the cause of the cough, and Mr. Tylor, in his *Primitive Culture*,[8] speaks of the ancient homœopathic doctrine that what hurts will also cure. In Gloucestershire roasted mouse is considered a specific for whooping cough; though in Yorkshire the same diet cure is adopted for croup, while rat pie is the one to be used for whooping cough. The Norfolk peasants tie up a common house spider in a piece of muslin, and when the luckless long-legged spinner dies, the cough will soon disappear. A correspondent of *Notes and Queries* states that when staying in a village in Oxfordshire, he was informed by an old woman that she and her brothers were cured of whooping cough in the following way. They were required to go, the first thing in the morning, to a hovel at a little distance from their house, where a fox was kept. They carried with them a large can of milk, which was set down before the fox, and when he had taken as much as he cared to drink, the children shared among them what was left. The *Aberdeen Evening Gazette* of 24th August, 1882, tells of a curious superstition in Lochee:—

> "Hooping-cough being rather prevalent in Lochee at the present time, various cures are resorted to with the view of allaying the distress. Amongst these the old 'fret' of passing a child beneath the belly of a donkey has come in for a share of patronage. A few days ago, two children living with their parents in Camperdown Street, were infected with the malady. A hawker's cart, with a donkey yoked to it, happening to pass, the mothers thought this an excellent opportunity to have their little ones relieved of their hacking cough. The donkey was accordingly stopped, the children were brought forth, and the ceremony began. The mothers, stationed at either side of the donkey, passed and repassed the little creatures underneath the animal's belly, and with evident satisfaction appeared to think that a cure would in all probability be effected. Nor was this all; a piece of bread was next given to the donkey to eat, one of the women holding her apron beneath its mouth to catch the crumbs which might fall. These were given to the children to eat, so as to make the cure effectual. Whether these strange proceedings have resulted in banishing the dreaded cough or not, has not been ascertained, and probably never will be. A few years ago, the custom was quite common in this quarter, but with the spread of education the people generally know better than to attempt to cure hooping-cough through the agency of a donkey."

The *North British Mail* for 20th March 1883, among other superstitions in Tiree, says, "On the west side of the island there is a rock with a hole in it, through which children are passed when suffering from whooping-cough or other complaints."

It is a common belief that if you wash your hands in water in which eggs have been boiled, warts will make their appearance; also, that the blood of a wart will cause other warts. Anyhow, if the warts be there, they can either be cured or charmed away. The writer once had a row of warts, thirteen in number, on his left arm. He was told by an aged dame, who sat on a three-legged stool before her cottage door, smoking a short black pipe, to take thirteen bad peas, throw them over his left shoulder, never heeding where

they went, all the while repeating some incantation, which has been forgotten.

Cures are effected by rubbing the warts with something, which is afterwards allowed to decay. Some rub the warts with a grey snail or slug, and then impale the poor creature on a thorn; others steal a bit of beef, not so much as Taffy made off with, rub the beef on the warts, and then bury the beef. Lord Bacon, in his *Natural History*, says:—"I had from my childhood a wart upon one of my fingers; afterwards, when I was about sixteen years old, being then at Paris, there grew upon both my hands a number of warts, at the least an hundred in a month's space. The English Ambassador's lady, who was a woman far from superstitious, told me one day she would help me away with my warts: whereupon she got a piece of lard with the skin on, and rubbed the warts all over with the fat side; and among the rest, the wart which I had from my childhood; then she nailed the piece of lard, with the fat towards the sun, upon a post of her chamber window, which was to the south. The success was, that within five weeks' space all the warts went quite away; and that wart which I had so long endured, for company.... They say the like is done by the rubbing of warts with a green elder stick, and then burying the stick to rot in muck."

In Withal's *Dictionary* (1608) there is the following couplet:—

> "The bone of a haire's foot closed in a ring,
> Will drive away the cramp whenas it doth wing,"

but Pepys, who tells us the whole of his experience, with comments thereon, used a hare's foot as a charm for colic. He says:—(20 Jan. 1664-5) "Homeward, in my way buying a hare and taking it home, which arose upon my discourse to-day with Mr. Batten in Westminster Hall, who showed me my mistake, that my hare's foot hath not the joynt in it, and assures me he never had the cholique since he carried it about him; and it is a strange thing how fancy works, for I no sooner handled his foot but I became very well, and so continue."

(22nd.) "Now mighty well, and truly I can but impute it to my fresh hare's foot."

(March 26) “Now I am at a loss to know whether it be my hare’s foot which is my preservation; for I never had a fit of collique since I wore it, or whether it be my taking a pill of turpentine every morning.”

The following newspaper cutting from the *Boston Herald*, 7th February, 1837, is worth preserving:—

> “Nothing could be more absurd than the notions regarding some of these supposed cures; a ring made of a hinge of a coffin had the power of relieving cramps, which were also mitigated by having a rusty old sword hanging up by the bedside. Nails driven in an oak tree prevented the toothache. A halter that had served in hanging a criminal was an infallible remedy for a head-ache when tied round the head; this affection was equally cured by the moss growing upon the human skull taken as cephalic snuff dried and pulverised. A dead man’s hand could dissipate tumours of the glands, by stroking the part nine times; but the hand of a man who had been cut down from the gallows was the most efficacious. The chips of a gallows on which several had been hanged, when worn in a bag round the neck would cure the ague. A stone with a hole in it, suspended at the head of a bed, would effectually stop the night-mare, hence it was called a hag-stone, as it prevents the troublesome witches from sitting upon the sleeper’s stomach. The same amulet, tied to the key of the stable door, deterred witches from riding horses over the country.”

Our forefathers firmly believed in planetary influence on the minds and bodies of men, and no operation could be performed on any part of the body unless the planet, ruling that particular part, were propitious. Rider’s *British Merlin* for 1715, places the name of some part of the body—face, neck, arms, breast, etc., opposite the days of the month, indicating that the influence of the planets on that day is favourable to that particular part or organ. An old proverb says:—

> “Friday hair, Sunday horn,
> You’ll go the devil afore Monday morn,”

shewing that these days were unlucky for clipping hair and cutting nails. The *York Fabric Rolls*[9] tell us that Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday, was termed Shere Thursday, because "in olde faders dayes the people wold that day *sheer* theyr heddes and clype theyr berdes and poll theyr heedes and so make them honest ayenst Easter Day." The same interesting volume[10] gives the following account of charming away fevers: —

> "1528. Bishopwilton. Isabel Mure presented. She took fier, and ij yong women w$^{t}$ hirr, and went to a rynnyng water, and light a wypse of straw and sett it on the water, and said thus, 'Benedicite, se ye what I see. I se the fier burne, and water rynne and the gryse grew, and see flew and nyght fevers and all unkowth evils flee, and all other, God will,' and after theis wordes said xv Pater Noster, xv Ave Maria and thre credes."

The following is a reproduction of a receipt for Yellow Jonus (Jaundice) copied from an old book in my possession. "A quart of whine (wine), a penoth of Barbary barck, a penoth of Tormorch (Turmerich), a haporth of flour of Brimstone for Jonous."

# Of Physicians and their Fees,

## WITH SOME PERSONAL REMINISCENCES.

By Andrew James Symington, f.r.s.n.a.

IN the whole range of professional life, or in any section of the community, there is no set of men so self-denying, sympathetic, philanthropic, liable to be called at any hour, day or night, and so hard-worked, as medical practitioners. To begin with, there is first, a long and expensive course of study, and, often, several years pass, before a practice becomes even self-sustaining. Those at the head of the profession attain to large incomes, and make their £20,000 a year. Noted specialists, in particular, such as the late Dr. Mackenzie, get large fees; but the majority of the profession conscientiously perform their laborious and kindly ministrations ungrudgingly and with moderate remuneration, which, in most cases, is certainly far short of their deserts.

This state of matters has prevailed for many centuries, and, taking the different value of money into account, notwithstanding the advance of medical science, there is but little change in the scale of remuneration, whether as to large fees paid by Royal or titled personages, fees by the middle classes, or by the rural or working population.

It has been well said, that "the theory and practice of medicine is the noblest and most difficult science in the world; and that there is no other art for the practice of which the most thorough education is so essential."

Whittier observes:—"It is the special vocation of the doctor to grow familiar with suffering—to look upon humanity disrobed of its pride and glory—robbed of all its fictitious ornaments—weak, hopeless, naked—and undergoing the last fearful metempsychosis, from its erect and god-like image, the living temple of an enshrined divinity, to the loathsome clod and

the inanimate dust! Of what ghastly secrets of moral and physical disease is he the depository!"

Sir Thomas Browne, in his "Religio Medici," says:—"Men, that look no further than their outsides, think health an appurtenance unto life, and quarrel with their constitutions for being sick; but I, that have examined the parts of man, and know upon what tender filaments that fabrick hangs, do wonder that we are not always so; and, considering the thousand doors that lead to death, do thank my God that we can die but once."

This model physician, who said, "I cannot go to cure the body of my patient, but I forget my profession and call unto God for his soul," in the same work, finely says of charity:—"Divinity hath wisely divided the act thereof into many branches, and hath taught us, in this narrow way, many paths unto goodness; as many ways as we may do good, so many ways we may be charitable. There are infirmities not only of the body, but of soul and fortunes, which do require the merciful hand of our abilities. I cannot contemn a man for ignorance, but behold him with as much pity as I do Lazarus. It is no greater charity to clothe his body than apparel the nakedness of his soul."

His distinguished position, as a physician and an author, demands very special and reverential mention in these pages.

Sir Thomas Browne was born in London on the 19th of October, 1605. He died at Norwich on the 19th of October, 1682, having reached exactly the age of seventy-seven. His father was a wealthy merchant, of a good Cheshire family, but died when his more illustrious son was a boy, and his mother shortly afterwards married Sir Thomas Dutton. After travelling on the Continent, he settled as a practising physician at Shipley Hall, near Halifax, for a time, and then moved to Norwich, where the remaining forty-two years of his life were spent. His library contained vast stores of learned works on antiquities, languages, and the curiosities of erudition. He corresponded with the best men of his day, and was often able to assist them in their various investigations. His friend Evelyn, alluding to Browne's home, at Norwich, tells us "His whole house and garden being a paradise and cabinet of rarities, and that of the best collections, especially medals, books, plants, and natural things." He was knighted by Charles II. in 1671.

Throughout the troublous times of the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and the Restoration, he led a quiet studious life, issuing volume after volume full of profound, penetrating, and far-reaching thought, set forth in stately, sonorous, and musical language, the perfect form or style of which, at times, is only equalled but not excelled by the best cadenced prose of Milton or Jeremy Taylor.

His "Religio Medici," "Hydrotaphia or Urn Burial," and "The Garden of Cyrus," have been my favourites for more than half a century. Of the latter work, John Addington Symonds has finely and truly said, that "the rarer qualities of Sir Thomas Browne's style (are) here displayed in rich maturity and heavy-scented blossom. The opening phrase of his dedication to Sir Thomas Le Gros—'When the funeral pyre was out, and the last valediction over, men took a lasting adieu of their interred friends, little expecting the curiosity of future ages should comment on their ashes;'—this phrase strikes a key-note to the sombre harmonies which follow, connecting the ossuaries of the dead, the tears quenched in the dust of countless generations, with the vivid sympathy and scrutinizing sagacity of the living writer.... I will only call attention to the unique feeling for verbal tone, for what may be called the musical colour of words, for crumbling cadences, and the reverberation of stationary sounds in cavernous recesses, which is discernable at large throughout the dissertation. How simple, for example, seems the collocation of vocables in this phrase—'Under the drums and tramplings of three conquests!' And yet with what impeccable instinct the vowels are arranged; how naturally, how artfully, the rhythm falls! Take another, and this time a complete sentence,—'But the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men, without distinction to merit of perpetuity.' Take yet another—'The brother of death daily haunts us with dying mementoes.'"

I take leave of this, the most notable of English Physicians, by transcribing the following grand, suggestive, and characteristic passage from his "Fragment on Mummies":—"Yet in these huge structures and pyramidial immensities of the builders, whereof so little is known, they seemed not so much to raise sepulchres or temples to death, as to contemn and disdain it, astonishing heaven with their audacities, and looking forward with delight to their interment in those eternal piles. Of their living habitations they made little account, conceiving of them but as *hospitia*, or inns, while they

adorned the sepulchres of the dead, and planting them on lasting basis, defied the crumbling touches of time and the misty vaporousness of oblivion. Yet all were but Babel vanities. Time sadly overcometh all things, and is now dominant, and sitteth upon a sphinx, and looketh unto Memphis and old Thebes, while his sister Oblivion reclineth semisomnous on a pyramid, gloriously triumphing, making puzzles of Titanian erections, and turning old glories into dreams. History sinketh beneath her cloud. The traveller, as he paceth amazedly through those deserts, asketh of her, who builded them? and she mumbleth something, but what it is he heareth not."

The medical profession is a noble and pleasant one, though laborious and often full of anxiety, straining mind and body. The good physician is the sympathizing, confidential, and comforting *friend* of the family. He values the humble gifts and testimonials of gratitude from the poor, even more than the costly presents of the rich.

The virtuous poor are always grateful. It can truly be said of the physician's kind and often gratuitous services to them, in the language of scripture:—

> "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

Among savages, sorcerers, and magicians, are the medicine men; these are still represented, in civilisation, by impostors and quacks. Members of the profession, as a rule, keep themselves posted up in the medical science of the day, honestly and unselfishly do everything that can be done for their patients, and rejoice in being the means of their recovery, far more than in their fee.

Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy," treating of "Physician, Patient, and Physick," when astrology, ignorance, and queer nostrums, were then more in vogue than practical science, says:—"I would require Honesty in every Physician, that he be not over careless or covetous, Harpylike to make a prey of his patient, or, as an hungry Chirurgeon, often produce and wire-draw his cure, so long as there is any hope of pay. Many of them, to get a fee, will give physic to every one that comes, when there is no cause,

thus, as it often falleth out, stirring up a silent disease, and making a strong body weak." Burton then quotes the following sensible Aphorism from Arnoldus:—"A wise physician will not give physick, but upon necessity, and first try medicinal diet, before he proceedeth to medicinal cure."

Latimer thus severely censured the mercenary physicians of his day:—"Ye see by the example of Hezekiah that it is lawful to use physick. But now in our days physick is a remedy prepared only for rich folks, and not for the poor, for the poor man is not able to wage the Physician. God indeed hath made physick for rich and poor, but Physicians in our time seek only their own profits, how to get money, not how they might do good unto their poor neighbour. Whereby it appeareth that they be for the most part without charity, and so consequently not the children of God; and no doubt but the heavy judgment of God hangeth over their heads, for they are commonly very wealthy, and ready to purchase lands, but to help their neighbour, that they cannot do. But God will find them out one day I doubt not."

"Empirics and charlatans are the excrescences of the medical profession; they have obtained in all ages, yet the healing art is not necessarily the occasion for deception; nor the operations of witchcraft, charms, amulets, astrology, alchemy, necromancy, or magic; although it has its mysteries like other branches of occult science."

Paracelsus, the prince of charlatans, styled himself "King of Physic," but, though he professed to have discovered the *elixir of life*, he humbly died at the early age of forty-eight years.

We are told of a patient who, instead of the medicine prescribed, swallowed the prescription! and *Punch* records an extraordinary case of a voracious individual who bolted a door, and threw up a window!

Sydney Smith, on being told by his doctor to take a walk on an empty stomach, asked—"Upon whose!" But a truce to stories suggested by the queer nostrums of quacks.

Empirics, however, often believed in their nostrums, and were, sometimes, amiable and unselfish.

In the year 1776, we are told, there lived a German doctor, who styled himself, or was called, "the Rain-water doctor;" all the diseases to which

flesh is heir he professed to cure by this simple agent. Some wonderful cures were, it is said, achieved by means of his application of this fluid, and his reputation spread far and wide; crowds of maimed and sickly folk flocked to him, seeking relief at his hands. What is yet more remarkable still, he declined to accept any fee from his patients!

Dr. Haygarth, of Bath, had a pair of wooden tractors made in precisely the same shape and appearance as Perkin's metallic ones; and the same results followed as when the others, which cost five guineas a pair, were used.

The story is well known of the condemned criminal in Paris, who was laid on a dissecting table, strapped down, with his eyes bandaged, and slightly pricked, when streamlets of water set a-trickling made him think, as he had been told, that he was being bled to death. His strength gradually ebbed away, and he actually died, although he did not lose a drop of blood.

I knew of a gentleman who, when pills to procure sleep were ordered to be discontinued, lay awake. The doctor made up a box of bread pills, which were administered as the others had been, and the patient slept, and recovered rapidly.

A young medical man fell in love with a young lady patient, and, when he had no longer any pretext for continuing his visits, he sent her a present of a pair of spring ducks. Not reciprocating his attentions, she did not acknowledge the present, upon which he ventured to call, asking if the birds had reached her. Her reply was—"Quack, quack!"

Dr. Lettsom, a quaker in the time of George III., near the close of the last century, had such an extensive practice that his receipts in some years were as much as £12,000; and this although half his services were entirely gratuitous, and rendered with unusual solicitude and care to necessitous clergymen and literary men. Generosity was the ruling feature of his life. On one occasion he attended an old American merchant whose affairs had gone wrong, and who grieved over leaving the trees he had planted. The kind hearted doctor purchased the place from the creditors, and presented it to his patient for life.

Pope, a few days before his decease, bore the following cordial testimony to the urbanity and courtesy of his medical friends:—"There is no end of my

kind treatment from the Faculty; they are in general the most amiable companions, and the best friends, as well as the most learned men I know."

And Dryden, in the postscript to his translation of Virgil, speaks in the same way of the profession. "That I have recovered," says he, "in some measure the health which I had lost by too much application to this work, is owing, next to God's mercy, to the skill and care of Dr. Guibbons and Dr. Hobbs, the two ornaments of their profession, whom I can only pay by this acknowledgment."

When Dr. Dimsdale, a Hertford physician and member of Parliament, went over to Russia to inoculate the Empress Catherine and her son, in the year 1768, he received a fee of £12,000, a pension for life of £500 per annum, and the rank of Baron of the Empire.

Dr. Henry Atkins was sent for to Scotland by James the Sixth to attend Charles the First (then an infant), ill of a dangerous fever. The King gave him a fee of £6000, with which he purchased the manor of Clapham.

Louis XIV. after undergoing an operation, gave his physician and his surgeon 75,000 crowns each.

Dr. Glynn once attended the only son of a poor peasant woman, ministering to his wants with port wine, bark, and delicacies. After the lad's recovery, his mother waited on the doctor, bringing a large wicker basket with an enormous magpie, which was her son's pet, as a fee to show their gratitude.

A thousand pounds were ordered to be paid to Sir Edmund King for promptly bleeding Charles the Second, but he never received this fee.

Dr. Mead, in the time of George the First, was generous to a degree, and like many of his brethren, would not accept fees from curates, half-pay officers, and men of letters. At home his fee was a guinea. When he visited patients of means, in consultation or otherwise, he expected two guineas or more. But to the apothecaries who waited on him at his coffee houses of call he charged only half a guinea for prescriptions, written without his having seen the patient. He had an income one year of £7,000, and for several years received between £5,000 and £6,000, which, considering the value of money at that time, is as much as that of any living physician.

The physicians who attended Queen Caroline had five hundred guineas, and the surgeons three hundred guineas each; Dr. Willis was rewarded for his attendance on George III. by £1,500 per annum for twenty years, and £650 per annum to his son for life. The other physicians, however, had only thirty guineas each visit to Windsor, and ten guineas each visit to Kew.

Dr. Abernethy was annoyed by a lady needlessly consulting him about her tongue. One morning she came, as he was descending the steps from his door and putting on his gloves. She said:—"Doctor, I'm so glad I have caught you!" The doctor asked if it were the old trouble. On her saying "Yes," he told her to put out her tongue. She did so, and he said, "Stand there till I come," and left her so, in the street, setting out on his round of visits.

Once when prescribing nutritious and expensive diet for a young man in consumption, he observed the look of despair on the young wife's face, and the evidence of straitened circumstances around; when the lady appealed to him, asking if there was really nothing else he could suggest for her husband. He replied:—"When I think of it, I'll send along a box of pills in the afternoon!" A messenger brought the box. On the lid was written "One every day," and, on being opened, it was found to contain twenty guineas!

He once bluntly told a *bon-vivant* gentleman to "Live on sixpence a day, and earn it!"

Long ago, a friend told me of a lady in Devonshire, belonging to a family she knew, who read medical books, and at length imagined she had every disease under the sun. Whenever she discovered what she believed to be a new symptom, she at once went off to consult different medical men regarding it, spending several hundreds a year in this way, and all quite needlessly. At length she confided to her friends that since doctors differed so widely, and she could obtain no satisfaction as to what ailed her, she had resolved to go to town and consult one of the Queen's physicians.

A consultation was held in the family, and her nephew was sent to explain matters to the physician, in the hope of his being able to cure her hypochondria. When she reached town, the street in which the physician lived was blocked with the carriages of patients. After waiting hours, her turn at last came. The physician examined her, asked a few questions, then

enquired if she had any friends in town, as he would rather call to see her when under their roof, and there tell her what he had got to say. She protested that she was quite prepared to hear the worst—that she had for long years looked death in the face—that the notices of her death were lying in her desk, all written out and addressed, only requiring the date to be filled in, etc. The physician said he was busy—more than twenty patients were still waiting in the street—he was averse to scenes, and would much prefer to see her at her friend's house. She still persisted, and begged of him to tell her all, there and then, on which he said:—"Madam, it is my melancholy duty to inform you—that there is nothing whatever the matter with you!"

This interview fortunately effected her cure, to the great delight of her friends, who paid the physician a handsome fee.

Sir Astley Cooper one year received in fees £21,000. This sum was exceptional, but for many years his income was over £15,000. His great success was achieved very gradually. "His earnings for the first nine years of his professional career progressed thus:—In the first year he netted five guineas; in the second, twenty-six pounds; in the third, sixty-four pounds; in the fourth, ninety-six pounds; in the fifth, a hundred pounds; in the sixth, two hundred pounds; in the seventh, four hundred pounds; in the eighth, six hundred and ten pounds; and in the ninth—the year in which he secured his hospital appointment—eleven hundred pounds."

On one occasion when he had performed a perilous surgical operation on a rich West Indian merchant, the two physicians who were present were paid three hundred guineas each; but the patient, addressing Sir Astley, said:—"But you, sir, shall have something better. There, sir, take *that*," upon which he flung his nightcap at the skilful operator. "Sir," replied Sir Astley, picking up the cap, "I'll pocket the affront." On reaching home, he found in the cap a draft for a thousand guineas from the grateful but eccentric old man.

A cynical lawyer once advised a young doctor to collect his fees as he went along, quoting the following verse to back his recommendation:—

> "God and the doctor we alike adore,
> But only when in danger, not before;

The danger o’er, both are alike requited—
God is forgotten, and the doctor slighted.”

The following story illustrates the too frequent weary waiting, when hope makes the heart sick, and also shows on what curious casual incidents the success of a career may sometimes turn. It has been told in different ways, and attributed to different men, such as to Dr. Freind, and others; but, quite possibly, the same or a similar incident may have repeatedly occurred. I simply give it as it was narrated to me. A young doctor having graduated with honours, took a house at a high rent in Harley Street, London. The brass plate attracted no patients; months passed idly and drearily, and the poor fellow took to drink. One night the door-bell rang—a servant man, from a lady of title round the corner, begged him to come at once, as his mistress was dangerously ill, lying on the floor; her own doctor was out, and he was sent to fetch the first doctor he could find. The young doctor regretfully thought what a fool he was, for here was his chance, when he could not avail himself of it; but he would go, and try hard to pull himself together.

When he reached the room, he had enough conscience or sense left to know that he was not in a fit state to prescribe, and exclaiming, “Drunk, by George!” took his hat and bolted from the house. Next morning he received a scented note from the lady, entreating him not to expose her, inviting him to call, and offering to introduce him professionally to her circle! Before the season was ended, his practice was yielding him at the rate of some £1500 a year!

Curiously enough, it is recorded of a British doctor that he once actually took a fee from a *dead* patient. Entering the bedroom immediately after death had taken place, he observed the right hand tightly clenched. Opening the fingers, he found in them a guinea. “Ah, that was clearly for me,” said the doctor, putting the gold into his pocket.

It may be remembered here, that the Royal College of Physicians, London, was founded by Thomas Linacre, physician to Henry VIII., in 1518; and that the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh was incorporated by Charter of Charles II., November 20th, 1681.

As to the fees paid to physicians, we find that Dr. Edward Browne, the son of Sir Thomas Browne, who became a distinguished physician in London, in his Journal, under the date of February 16th, 1664, records: “I went to visit Mr. Edward Ward, an old man in a feaver, when Mrs. Anne Ward gave me my first fee, 10 shillings.”

In a work entitled “Levamen Infirmi,” published in the year 1700, we find that the scale of remuneration to surgeons and physicians was as follows: —“To a graduate in physic, his due is about ten shillings, though he commonly expects or demands twenty. Those that are only licenced physicians, their due is no more than six shillings and eightpence, though they commonly demand ten shillings. A surgeon’s fee is twelvepence a mile, be his journey far or near; ten groats to set a bone broke or out of joint; and for letting blood one shilling; the cutting off or amputation of any limb is five pounds, but there is no settled price for the cure.”

Till recent times neither barristers nor physicians could recover their fees by legal proceedings against their clients or patients unless a special contract had been made. In the case of lawyers this custom can be traced back to the days of ancient Rome. Their services were regarded as being gratuitously rendered in the interests of friendship and justice, and of a value no money could buy. The acknowledgment given them by clients was regarded as an *honorarium*, and paid in advance, so that all pecuniary interest in the issue of the suit was removed, thus preserving the independence and respectability of the bar.

Equity draftsmen, conveyancers, and such like, however, could recover reasonable charges for work done.

So in the medical profession, surgeons, dentists, cuppers, and the like were always entitled to sue for their fees; but the valuable services of a consulting physician were of a different kind, not rendered for payment but acknowledged by the gratitude and honour of his patients.

But this code of honour was modified when all medical practitioners were relieved by the Act of 21 and 22 Vict. 90, which applied to the United Kingdom, and enabled them to recover in any court of law their reasonable charges as well as costs of medicines and medical appliances used. This

rule applies to physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries as defined by the statute.

The following information is taken from “Everybody’s Pocket Cyclopædia” (Saxon & Co.).

### London Medical Fees.

“Patients are charged according to their supposed income, the income being indicated by the rental of the house in which they reside. The following are the charges usually made by medical practitioners:—

| | Rentals. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | £10 to £25 | £25 to £50 | £50 to £100 |
| Ordinary Visit | 2s 6d to 3s 6d | 3s 6d to 5s | 5s to 7s 6d |
| Night Visit | Double an | Ordinary | Visit |
| Mileage beyond two miles from home | 1s 6d | 2s | 2s 6d |
| Detention per hour | 2s 6d to 3s 6d | 3s 6d to 5s | 5s to 7s 6d |
| Letters of Advice | Same charge | as for an | Or- dinary Visit |
| Attendance on Servants | 2s 6d | 2s 6d to 3s 6d | 3s 6d to 5s |
| Midwifery | 21s | 21s to 30s | 42s to 105s |
| Consultants. | | | |
| Advice or visit alone | 21s | 21s | 21s |
| Advice or visit with another Practitioner | 21s | 21s to 42s | 21s to 42s |
| Mileage beyond two miles from home | 10s 6d | 10s 6d | 10s 6d |

“Special visits, *i.e.*, of which due notice has not been given before the practitioner starts on his daily round, are charged at the rate of a visit and a half. Patients calling on the doctor are charged at the same rate as if visited by him.

“There are about 23,000 physicians and surgeons in the United Kingdom, or one to every 1,600 inhabitants.”

It has been my privilege to know several doctors intimately. Our family doctor when I was a boy in Paisley, was Dr. Kerr, a man far in advance of his day. He was the means of introducing a pure water supply to the town of Paisley, always strenuously urging the importance of sanitary matters and good drainage, when such things were then but little understood, and greatly neglected. Shortly after the water had been introduced to the houses, from Stanley, an old man—who had been accustomed to purchase water from a cart which went through the streets selling it from a barrel—on being asked how he liked the new water, replied indignantly, “Wha’s going to pay good siller for water that has neither smell nor taste?”

On one occasion, an elderly gentleman, who was slightly hypochondriac, consulted Dr. Kerr about his clothing, saying that he regulated the thickness of his flannels by the thermometer. Dr. Kerr, losing patience, said, “Can you not use the thermometer your Maker has put in your inside, and put on clothes when you are cold?”

Dr. Kerr’s son and assistant, whom we then called “the young doctor,” died a few years ago in Canada, over eighty years of age. No man could possibly have been more considerately kind, gentle, and tender-hearted. On one occasion, in 1841, when, in typhus fever, I was struggling for my life, he sat up with me for three whole consecutive nights, and brought me through. He ever kept himself abreast of the science of the day, and devoted his abilities and energies, *con amore*, to the benefitting of men’s souls as well as their bodies.

Another model village and country doctor, also an intimate friend of my parents, Dr. Campbell of Largs, I knew very well. Good, genial, and accomplished, he was a perfect gentleman, and equally at home dining with Sir Thomas Brisbane, or drinking a cup of tea at some old woman’s kitchen fireside. He read the *Lancet*, and tried all new medicines, and repeatedly,

when going to London, at his request I procured the most recent instruments for him. He was intimate with Dr. Chalmers, Lord Jeffrey, Lord Moncrieff, Lord Cardwell, etc. In telling me of experiments with Perkin's metallic tractors, and that the same results were obtained with wooden ones, showing the power of imagination, he gave me a recent curious illustration. He had lately had the old fashioned little panes of glass taken out of the windows of his house, and plate glass inserted. His mother, who did not know of the change, calling one afternoon, sat on an easy chair, close by the gable window, knitting. On suddenly looking round she said, "Oh John, I've been sitting all this time by an *open* window," and forthwith she began to sneeze! She actually took cold, and even afterwards could scarcely be persuaded that it had *not* been an open window, for she said she felt the cold! The doctor told me of an old maiden lady who consulted him, and who, when he prescribed in a general way, insisted on knowing exactly what ailed her. He said she was only slightly nervous, and would soon be all right. This did not at all please her, and she at once loudly protested—"Me nervous! There is not a nerve in my whole body!"

A West India merchant, one of his patients whom I knew, he also told me, one day said to him, "Doctor, for forty years I never knew I had a stomach, and now I can think of nothing else!"

At the cholera time Dr. Campbell was laid down by the disease. The fact spread like wildfire over the village, and, at once, prayer-meetings for his recovery were called by the public bellman, meetings of *all* the different denominations, including the Roman Catholics (Dr. Campbell was a Free Church Elder), and there were truly heartfelt rejoicings in the whole district over his recovery.

I once asked him how he managed to get in his fees, since he never refused to visit when sent for. He said that one year, from curiosity, he kept an account of his gratuitous visits, and it ran into three figures; but he never took the trouble to note them again, as it served no purpose.

Many years ago he went to his rest, and, at his request, during his last illness, I paid him a farewell visit.

There are few finer descriptions of the country doctor than that contained in Ian Maclaren's "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush," a book which speaks

directly home to every true Scottish heart.

Dr. Campbell, in his large-hearted and genial Christian charity, scientific research, and philosophical acquirements, always reminded me of Sir Thomas Browne, “the beloved physician” of Norwich.

The following pleasing incident, relating to a medical man, came under my own notice. I often visited a country minister, an intimate friend, a learned man, and a genius, the quaint originality of whose observations often reminded me of Fuller, the Church historian, or Charles Lamb. Although of limited means, the Rev. Robert Winning, of Eaglesham, was ever hospitable; if he knew of any poor student, he would invite him to the manse for a month, on the plea that he would help to prepare him for his examination in Hebrew and Greek. The old manse servant, also an original, was paid a sum of money as compensation for refusing tips from visitors. One day, seeing an advertisement of a new book in a magazine I was reading, Mr. Winning remarked to me, “Andrew, I wish you would buy that book, *cut the leaves*, and lend it to me to read!”

One evening a message reached him from the village inn, saying that a doctor had come to an urgent case, which required him to stay over night, that there was no room in the inn, and asking if the minister could give him a bed. His wife, knowing the house was full, asked her husband what they should do. His reply was, “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Give him a room, though we have to sleep on the floor.” He was accordingly hospitably entertained.

Some time after, the minister took ill. The medical guest heard of it, went to see the local doctor, and, with his consent, visited the minister twice a week, from a distance of nine miles, and for a period of some four months, till his death. When the widow afterwards sent for his account, he said there was none, for it had been more than discharged on the first evening he had spent at the manse.

Dr. Stark, of Glasgow, who attended my family for years, was a skilful practitioner, but eccentric. He generally made light of trifling ailments, but was most energetic when aroused by any appearance of danger. I knew of his being suddenly called in to see an old lady who was far gone in an advanced stage of cholera. He at once asked to be shown over the house,

looked at the different fireplaces, but as none of them suited his purpose, he went to the kitchen, threw off his coat, took out the range, made a fire in the recess that would have roasted an ox, had the old lady carried down in blankets and placed before it, worked energetically with her the whole night, and brought her through. In a similar way he once stayed over night and saved the life of one of my boys. One day I called at his house, and, finding him with a bad cold, eyes red and watery, throat husky, said, "Doctor, if you found me so, you would prescribe placing the feet in hot water and mustard, warm gruel, medicine, and going to bed! Physician, heal thyself!" The doctor's Shakespearian reply was, "Do you think I am such a fool as to take physic?"

Once when accompanying me to the coast to visit one of my children, there was a heavy sea on, and the steamer, on approaching the pier, rolled alarmingly, and was close on a lee shore. A strange lady on board, in terror, laid hold of the doctor, a tall, stalwart man, saying, "Oh! sir, are we going to the bottom?" On which he said, dryly, "Behave yourself, if you are going there, you are going in good company!" which odd answer reassured and caused her to laugh.

In speaking of a Greek gem representing Cupid and Pysche, one day, when driving in Wigtonshire with the late Dr. David Easton, a medical friend, he said I had not given the correct pronunciation of the names. Always willing to learn, I asked to be put right; whereupon, the doctor gravely informed me that I ought to have said—Cupped and Physic!

I have spoken of the kindness of medical men, such as Dr. Garth Wilkinson, to clergymen, artists, and literary men. I add one more expression of gratitude, which is a good modern instance:—

When at St. Helens, in Jersey, during his last illness, my friend Samuel Lover, the genial poet and artist, wrote the following lines to Dr. Dixon, his friend and physician. I first copied them some years ago from Lover's MS. note-book, kindly lent me by his widow when I was engaged in the preparation of his life. Such cordial tributes are a good physician's most highly-valued fees:—

> "Whene'er your vitality
> Is feeble in quality,

And you fear a fatality
May end the strife,
Then Dr. Joe Dickson
Is the man I would fix on
For putting new wicks on
The lamp of life."

From the many varied facts and incidents adduced in these pages, it will be seen that, in anxiety or sorrow, the good family doctor is a true and sympathetic friend, whose services can never be paid by gold.

Next to religion, nothing is more precious or comforting than the sympathy of those who know and fully understand our sufferings, for, as my old favourite, Sir Thomas Browne, to whom I ever revert with renewed pleasure, truly and beautifully says:—"It is not the tears of our own eyes only, but of our friends also, that do exhaust the current of our sorrows, which, falling into many streams, runs more peaceably, and is contented with a narrower channel."

# Index.

**Footnotes:**

[1] “Chester in the Plantagenet and Tudor Periods,” by Rupert H. Morris, 1894, pp. 78-79.

[2] The *Asclepiad*, Vol. viii.

[3] Act ii., sc. 2.

[4] Dyer’s English Folk Lore, p. 156.

[5] Dyer’s English Folk Lore, p. 158.

[6] *Records of York Castle*, p. 230.

[7] Folk Lore Journal, v. 5.

[8] Vol. i., p. 761.

[9] P. 353.

[10] P. 273.

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