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A REVIEW

Of the improvements, progress and state of Medicine in the eighteenth Century; read on the first day of the nineteenth Century before the Medical Society of South-Carolina, in pursuance of their vote, and published at their request.—By DAVID RAMSAY, *M. D.* 8vo. pp. 47. *Charleston.* Young, 1801.

THE author of this pamphlet affords an instructive example of extent and versatility of talents, and of the efficacy of diligence and enterprize. At one time we behold him immersed in the toil and anxiety of an arduous profession; and, at another, assisting and wedding in the public cause of his country. Lately we found him recording the eventful Story of our revolution and of the infancy of our national independence; now he recurs to his pieces of medical learning, and instructs us by a retrospection of the progress, improvements and state of medicine in the course of the eighteenth century. In all these departments of exertion he has obtained much commendation. The city in which he resides will gratefully attest the value of his services as a physician, for a series of years—the United States, and particularly the state of South-Carolina, will long remember his patriotic labours; the suffrage of the public, both in Europe and America, combines to rank him amongst the best of our historians; and the pamphlet now under consideration will be found fully to maintain that reflection which the author has hitherto held among American writers.

In order to exhibit a clearer view of what has been done in the course of the eighteenth century, Dr. Ramsay carries back his inquiries to the effect of the new mode of philosophizing, by the method of induction, proposed by Lord Bacon. This recalled men's minds from the purlieu of speculation, and directed their attention to facts and experiments. Under the influence of this improvement, Newton formed his system of the world, and Sydenham gained a deeper insight into the nature and properties of diseases. To these preparatory steps in the seventeenth century, he adds the discovery of the circulation of the blood by Harvey, of the lacteals by Asellius, and of the thoracic duct by Pecquet.

Entering at length, on that which properly belongs to the eighteenth century, Dr. R. holds up to view the great epitomizer writers who have chiefly succeeded in attracting distinction. Among these he ranks Boerhaave, Hoffman, Cullen, Brown and Darwin. Dr. R. omits not to include in groupe the name of Stahl, probably under the impression that his fanciful system is now too far exploded to deserve commemoration. But when we recollect the talents of this professor, the popularity of his doctrines, the number and ardour of his followers, the prevalence of his system in Germany, and the tincture which his principles did for a time, exercise upon the propriety of the omission may, perhaps, deserve to be questioned. In the list of the systematic writers of the eighteenth century, we find likewise our eminent countryman Professor Rush.

Dr. R. next proceeds more particularly to enumerate the principal discoveries and improvements of the eighteenth century in anatomy, surgery, midwifery, materia medica, and the theory and practice of physic. Our limits do not permit us to exhibit even an outline of the variety of objects mentioned under these heads. Full justice also done to the period under review in respect of the multiplication of societies or associations of learned men for literary and scientific purposes, and of institutions for the improvement of medicine and the auxiliary branches of philosophy. Nor does our author forget to render homage to the charity and benevolence of the century just elapsed, manifested in the institution and endowment of hospitals and infirmaries, far beyond what had been known in former ages.

The progress of natural history, and especially of botany, in the eighteenth century, receives from Dr. R. a proper degree of attention. The manner in which medicine has been enriched from this quarter, is known to every body. The laudable beginning of a collection towards an American Materia Medica, made by Professor Barton, of Philadelphia, is justly considered by our author, as, indeed, it must be by every judicious person, as an attempt of the highest importance, and in every respect entitled to the patronage of the public.

Dr. R. dwells with great pleasure on the progress and improvements of chemistry in the course of the late century. He chiefly confiders it in its relations to the practice of physic. In this view of the subject he takes notice of the enlargement of the materia medica which chemistry has procured, of the analysis of vegetable and animal substances and of the atmosphere, and of the prospect of advantage from pneumatic medicine.

As a specimen of Dr. R's mode of treating his subject, we extract the following paragraphs.

"In estimating the benefits that have resulted to mankind from the labours of physicians in the eighteenth century, we must extend our views far beyond the administration of medicine. In that enlightened period, the air we breathe, the aliment we confume, the clothes we wear, the pastimes and habits in which we indulge, the peculiarities incidental to our profession, age, and situation; and, in short, every circumstance connected with health or disease, has been the object of study and investigation.—The great triumphs obtained over the small-pox and scurvy, have not been so much from medicine, as from the application of medical principles. Who can tell the extent of the benefits that have resulted from the pointed recommendation of medical men in favour of cleanliness? Attention to this subject, has, of late years, almost totally exterminated cutaneous diseases from all decent families in Britain. It has almostextinguished the germ of infection, and of course prevented its spread and propagation. The writings of this useful profession have, within the last forty years, been read by thousands, and enlightened them in the great art of preserving health.

"In addition to several improved systems of medicine, and to the treatises already mentioned on the diseases of seamen, and of armies, the physicians of the eighteenth century have obliged the world with valuable publications on the diseases of literary persons, of tradesmen, of pregnant and puerperal women, of children, on fevers of almost every species, on the gout, on hypochlancholy and mental derangement, on the follies of youth, and the infirmities of age. They have treated largely of aliment, and principally of the medical police of the nations, on the means of obviating infection and contagion. They have lighted up a blaze of medical knowledge, by which a few disease have been nearly confined; some destroyed in their embryo state; others entirely prevented; and all, more or less, mitigated. They have also seconded and enforced the claims of our holy religion; for they have demonstrated, from acknowledged laws of the animal economy, that the cheerful hopes which the doctrines of the Christian religion inspire, and the restraints which it imposes (particularly its divine precepts enjoining the forgiveness of injuries) have a direct and positive influence in promoting health of the body, as well as the purity of the mind. On the whole, medical philosophy, in its late wide ranges, has effected a revolution in the habits of men, and in the nature and treatment of their diseases, which has eminently conduced to the lessening of human misery.

"In support of this assertion, I observe, that the plague, pestilential fevers, putrid fevers, and the small-pox, have not, of late, in the eighteenth century. This is true, in the great scale of enlightened nations, though the general prevalence of the yellow fever, in the sea ports of the United States, for the last eleven years, seems to form a local exception. Plateurs, a physician at Basle, who lived in the seventeenth century, has given an account of forty epidemic pestilential fevers, or plagues, which afflicted that city within seventy years. Bartholine mentions five that raged in Denmark in the same period. In the city of London in the fourteenth century there were five; in the fifteenth, two; in the sixteenth, seven; and in the seventeenth, there were four.—The first of these began in 1603, and continued for two years, and carried off 11,180 persons in the 1625; the third in 1636, and continued for thirteen years; and the fourth in 1665. In these four visitations of the plague in the seventeenth century, the city of London loft 133,983 persons. In York 11,000 died of an epidemic fever in 1691. In the eighteenth century, nothing of the kind has taken place in any part of England, and only one (and that 80 years ago) in Marseilles, which, in former centuries, ufed to be the head-quarters of the plague.

"To this abatement of the plague has, at least, in part, been effected by the goodness of Providence on the modern improvements, suggested by members of our profession, may be inferred from this circumstance—that Constantinople, Aleppo, Grand Cairo, and other places, on which, the fun of medical philosophy has never shone, do now, and throughout the eighteenth century, have suffered as much from the ravages of this disease, as they had ever done before.

"From a review of all that has been faid, we have reason to congratulate ourselves that we were born in this enlightened period—the age of investigation, of philosophy, and of medicine.

"While we bid adieu to the eighteenth century, we cannot but recollect its many triumphs. In the human race have been more fafely ushered into life, and in the passage through it, many of their unavoidable sufferings have been considerably lessened. In it every branch of medical knowledge has been carried to an amazing extent. Every department of the healing art has been improved. The chances for health and life have been enlarged. The avenues to death have been contracted. The dead have been taught to understand, the blind to see, and the apparently dead have been restored to life. We may rationally indulge an honest pride for having been bred to a useful a profession, and for being members of so respectable a fraternity. Among the practitioners of medicine, in the eighteenth century, are to be numbered, several of the greatest, wisest, and best of men, who have been the ornaments of human nature, and the benefactors of mankind. In supporting this assertion I need only call your attention to the names of Beerhaave, Ruysch, Hoffman, Monro, Cheselden, Heffman, Heister, Mead, Astruc, Sloane, Morgagni, Pringle, Cullen, Gregory, Hunter, Fothergill, Heberden, Pott, Warren, and many others who were the lights of the world, and men of the most extensive erudition, and unbounded philanthropy; who spent their lives in acquiring and diffusing a knowledge of the means of prolonging life, preferving health and lessening human misery.

"In our own little state, what ancient inhabitant of Carolina who has not heard the names of Lining, Moultrie, Chalmers and Garden, mentioned with the greatest respect and veneration, as physicians of the first character, for usefulness and respectability. Since the establishment of our society we have been witnesses of the great benevolence of our citizens, of the high place in the hearts of our citizens, which was held by Turnbull and Fayssoux; and of the high expectations which were formed from the rising talents of Bartram and Lesser.

"We are pleased to observe the respect and justice which Dr. R. thus renders to the eminent medical characters of South-Carolina. Every citizen of that state must exult in recollecting how dignafiy it has been distinguished by a number of physicians whose services will long be remembered with gratitude, and whose abilities will be revered by posterity. We hope such examples will be contemplated with veneration in every part of America, and that other states of the Union, in which medical fcientiffic men have resided, may, by their laudable ambition, well become emulous of the reputation and fame of South-Carolina.

A GREAT BARGAIN.

WILL be let for one year, a valuable Farm, in the county of Culpeper, and State of Virginia, on Flat Run, containing 740 acres of land is extremely fertile, and yields abundantly in the production of corn, wheat, and tobacco; there are about 200 acres of meadow land, which yield two crops annually, and is very well let in timothy, about 350 acres of the tract are cleared and well inclosed. This land is distant from Alexandria about 28 miles, and 50 miles from Alexandria and the City of Washington. There are several valuable merchant mills, in the vicinity, one within the distance of a mile, where the Fredericksburg prices are given for all kinds of grain.

Also will be sold the Reversion of 250 acres of land adjoining the above, on which are erected a number of valuable buildings, among them a tan yard, dwelling house 40 feet by 40, with four rooms on a floor, with fireplaces, and every necessary out-house.—A valuable peach and apple orchard.

A further description is deemed unnecessary, as any persons desirous of purchasing or leasing the premises, will do well to view the premises. For terms apply to Robert Brooke Vos, Esq. who lives adjoining the premises, or to the Subscriber.

I will also Sell or Rent,

Two three story brick houses in Alexandria, conveniently situated, on King and Columbian street, with sundry valuable property near the house, possession whereof may be had immediately. The situation for the flour and grocery business is equal to any in Alexandria.

For terms apply to Henry Thomas Moore, Alexandria, or to the Subscriber

NICHOLAS VOSS.

City of Washington, July 13, 1801.

N. B. I will let the house by the month, or until the 1st day of November, ten or twelve labourers, for whom liberal wages will be given.—Apply to N. Voss, on F street, or W. Voss, at the Navy-Yard. tawtf

ROBERT WARE PEACOCK,

ATTORNEY AT LAW AND CONVEYANCER,

HATH removed his office to north F street, on square 250; where conveyances of every kind are drawn with accuracy and dispatch; business transacted on commission; titles to City Lots investigated. His practice of the Law will be confined to the courts of Washington and Alexandria Counties, and the Supreme Court of the United States.

City of Washington, July 8, 1801. 3tawp

BROHAWN AND BOYS,

BEG leave to inform the citizens of Washington, that they have taken mr. N Young's wharf, very conveniently situated in the Capitol and Pennsylvania Square; where they have opened a LUMBER YARD, and expect to go pretty largely in that line of business; and in about two or three weeks will have a general assortment of the first quality of groceries that can be procured in Baltimore.

Washington June 24, 1801.

N. B. Any gentleman wishing to apply for bills of framing of any size or dimensions, may obtain it at the foretoth notice by applying as above. tf

The Schooner Dolphin & Kitty,

now lying at Mr. Young's Wharf will constantly take freights every three weeks from this to Annapolis or Baltimore. For terms apply to BROHAWN and BOYS.

Washington July 15, 1801. t

VARDEN & CARPENTER,

TAYLORS,

Gratefully acknowledge the favors of the public, which carrying on business opposite Mr. Stille's Tavern, and inform, that they have removed to the next house east of Mr. Tunficliff's Hotel, where gentlemen and ladies will be furnished a fhle of fashion and elegance which it has never been their wish to be, their study to excute, and they prefume, equal to the most populous cities in the Union.

Gentlemen and Ladies Habits made in the neatest manner.

May 15, 1801. wtf

For Sale and to Rent,

TWO elegant two story Brick DWELLING HOUSES, situated in the South side of Pennsylvania Avenue, a little to the west of the President's square. Each house contains two parlours and a passage on first floor; second, two rooms with fire-places, and well finished garrets, cellar and kitchen. In the front of the buildings extending to the avenue, is a neat yard planed with trees, palisaded, &c. The situation, in point of health and contiguity to the public buildings, is equal to any in the city, and is well adapted for private families, or to accomodate boarders. The title is indisputable. The terms will be moderate for part cash or credit. For particulars inquire of OWEN ROBERTS, on the premises, or of

THOMAS HERTY, Conveyancer

City of Washington, May 25, 1801. tf

NOTICE.

THE following negroes have been committed to the goal of Washington County, District of Columbia, the owners are requested to come and release them, otherwise they will be sold to the law directs, to pay prison expences.

ROBERT, a negro, the property of Richard Bland, of Orange county, Virginia; five feet fix inches high, about 24 years of age, has on a white negro jacket and trowsers.

JOHN BUTLER—(Who says he is a free man) about five feet ten inches high, 22 years of age, has on an old blue cloth coat, and drab trowsers.

ANDREW—Five feet four inches high, 33 or 34 years of age, has on an old blue coatand a pair of white cotton trowsers; says he is the property of Mr. Edward Gantt, of Berkeley county, Virginia.

JOHN PETERS—The property of Mrs. Rormdell, of Calvert county, Maryland; about five feet six inches high; 23 years old, has on a white negro coat, jacket and trowsers.

DANIEL C. BRENT,

Marshal of the district of Colombia.

April 27. tawtf

NAVY DEPARTMENT,

July 6, 1801.

Notice is hereby given,

THAT PROPOSALS will be received at the office of the Secretary of the Navy, until the 31st inst. inclusively, for the supply of all rations which may be required for the Marine Corps, from the 1st day of October next, to the 30th day of September 1802, at the City of Washington, Norfolk, or Norfolk, or at such other place or places, where marines may be required, marched or flationed, within the states of Maryland, Virginia, or North-Carolina, to consist of eighteen ounces of bread or flour, or where neither can be obtained, of one quart of rice or hominy and one half pound of fifhed or boiled lean meat, one and a quarter pound of fresh beef, one pound falted beef, or three quarters of a pound of fifted pork, and when fresh meat is issued, fait at the rate of two quarts for every hundred rations; one half gill of rum, whiskey or other ardent spirits; four gills at the rate of four pounds candles at the rate of one and an half pound, and vinegar at the rate of two quarts for every hundred rations. The price of the several components parts of the ration, as well as fubfitutes and alternatives must be specified.

H. DEARBORN,

Acting Secretary of Navy.

eptf.

The fubscriber respectfully acquaints the public, that he has removed to the corner of North and E streets, where he continues to manufacture and fell all kinds of Ornaments for Chimney pieces, Door Plates, Escrial compositions, Metal Saffies, &c. which may alfo be had at his store No. 51, Barclay street, New-York, and at Mr. Wild's store, Market street, Baltimore.

GEORGE ANDREWS.

Who wishes to let a BRICK HOUSE, the well fide of the President's house.

May 28, 1801. tf