

T H E
P R O G R E S S
O F
P H Y S I C :
A
P O E M.

W I T H
N O T E S and O B S E R V A T I O N S from a n t i e n t A U T H O R S.

By a P H Y S I C I A N.

[A. Bonper]
Tantæ molis erat ----- V I R G.

----- operosa parvus

Carmina fingo. ----- H O R.

L O N D O N :

Printed for C. C O R B E T, at *Addison's* Head,
opposite St. *Dunstan's* Church, *Fleet-Street*.

M D C C L.

[Price One Shilling.]

THE
P R O G R E S S

OF
P H Y S I C S :

A R I T H M E T I C
P O E M .

WITH
Notes and Observations from various Authors.

By
P H Y S I C I A N .

Trans. from the
Virg.

of the
Virg.

Carmina Virg.
Hor.

L O N D O N .

Printed for C. Corbett, at Adolphus Head,
opposite St. Dunstons Church, Fleet Street.

MDCCL.
[Price One Shilling]

T H E
A R G U M E N T.

MEDICINE *artless and simple, much older than* Physic *exercis'd as an Art.*--That *and a new Train of Diseases introduc'd after the Flood, by Luxury.*--*Its Beginning rude.*—*Sprung up in the Eastern Nations.*—*Grounded upon the suppos'd Influence of the Stars.*—*Studied and practis'd by the Magi.*—*Hence it pass'd into Ægypt, where the Priests still had the chief Exercise of it.*—*Their Cures, &c. inscrib'd on the Pillars and Walls of their Temples.*—*Particular Branches of the Science studied by particular Persons.*—*Hence transplanted into Greece, but not brought to any great Degree of Perfection till Hippocrates's Time, who first made Physic rational.*—*A short Digression, by way of Encomium on J. B—ll—e, M. D.*—*Physic next travels into Italy, brought into Disgrace by Quackery, &c.* Galen, at
B
length,

length, explains every thing by the rigid Doctrines of the Peripateticks. — Did a great deal of Mischief, as well as Service, to this noble Art. — Much blam'd for This, but commended for the Pains he took with a View of improving Medicine. — Physic lost with other Arts and Sciences when the Goths, &c. over-ran Europe, but revives amongst the Arabs, after some Ages, tho' Galen's Errors still predominant. — Chymistry, the first great Improver of this Science. — Distinguish'd from Alchymy, an Art as old as Tubal Cain. — Another short Digression on the Vanity of hunting after the Philosopher's Stone. — The Discovery, or Demonstration of the Circulation of the Blood, by our Countryman Harvey, fixes Physic on a more certain Basis than ever. — That, and Experimental Philosophy, afterwards carried to so great Lengths by Mr. Boyle, brought the Art nearer to Perfection in this Island than can be boasted of by any other Nation. — Physic, at length, fixes her Empire in Britain. — Which concludes the Whole.

T H E

THE
P R O G R E S S
O F
P H Y S I C.

LONG ere *Physicians* knew the *Healing Art*,
Disease to quell—or ease the aching *Heart*—
* *Med'cine* arose—at first by *Heav'n* design'd
With balmy *Wing* to *shield*, and *blefs* *Mankind* :

In

* THE *Injuries* and *Vicissitudes* of the *Air* — The *Nature* and *Qualities* of *Foods* — the *Violence* of external *Bodies* — the *Actions* of *Life* — and lastly, the *Structure* of the *Human Frame*, must have render'd some *Diseases*, and consequently *Medicine*, almost as old as *Mankind*, tho' much chang'd and complicated in *After-Ages*.

In ev'ry *Field* some wholsom *Simple* grew,
 Its *Use* each ruder *Clown* and *Peasant* knew;
 Which, cull'd with Care, the wish'd *Assistance* gave;
 Not prompt to *kill*—if impotent, to *save*—
 From *Trees*—from *Plants*—the easy *Cure* was sought
 And from the murm'ring *Rill* Health flow'd *unbought*.
 The friendly, limpid *Draught*—the temp'rate *Meal*,
 Ne'er ask'd the *Aid* of *Bolus*—or of *Pill*—
 With equal *Force* their vig'rous *Pulses* beat,
 No *Cordials*, then, to raise the *extinguish'd Heat*;
 No frantic *Mirth*—nor *Melancholly*, then—
 Heav'n's sharpest *Curse* upon the *Sons of Men*!
 To calm a *Fever's* Rage no *Arts* were try'd,
 Till, haply, of the * *Doctor*—*Patients* dy'd—
 Feebly, the *Limbs* no slacken'd *Nerves* sustain'd,
Hereditary Health—and *Vigour* reign'd.

BUT say, my *Muse*! these happier Ages past,
 How *Sickness* and *Disease* broke in at last—

From

* 'Tis hop'd the *Faculty* will not resent this little *Stroke* of *Satyr*, and one that follows, since they are not *levell'd* at the *Science Itself*, but the *Abuse* of it. — At *Quacks*, nor *Regular Practisfers*.

From *Man* to *Man* how *Plagues* unnumber'd spread,
 When *Physic* rear'd her *Scientific Head*.
 Such *Ills* combin'd, what *Mortal* can endure?
 How *Few* out-live the *Sickness*—and the *Cure*?

NOT long the *Flood* had left the Face of *Earth*,
 And lost *Mankind* receiv'd a *Second-Birth*,
 Ere *Lux'ry* rose— with *Sickness* in her *Train*—
 And all the frightful *Family* of *Pain*:
Nature's spare *Wants* forfok the homely *Board*,
 With mad *Profusion* see each *Table* stor'd!
Invention labour'd to debauch the *Treat*,
 And whet the jaded *Appetite* to eat:
 Intoxicating *Wines*, henceforth, began
 T' inflame the *Blood*— not chear the *Heart* of *Man*:
 Hence *Gout* and *Stone* afflict the *Human Race*;
 Hence lazy *Faundice*—with her *Saffron Face*—
Palsy, with shaking *Head*, and tott'ring *Knees*,
 And bloated *Dropsy*— the stanch *Sot's Disease*!
Consumption pale, with keen, but hollow *Eye*,
 And sharpen'd *Feature*, shew'd that *Death* was nigh—
 The feeble *Offspring* curse their crazy *Sires*,
 And, tainted from his *Birth*, the *Youth* expires.

FIRST, thro' the *East*, in social *League*, we find
 The sage *Physician* to the *Priesthood* join'd—
Physic, alone, the Rev'rend *Magi* knew ;
 Its first *Inventors* — and *Corruptors* too —
 On *Stars*, and *Planets*, the rude *Art* they found,
 And tread, *inglorious!* on *enchanted Ground*;
 Nor dar'd the healing *Med'cine* to apply,
 If * *Saturn* glanc'd with a *malignant Eye*.
 To *Ægypt* next *Physic* directs her *Flight*,
 There prun'd her *Wing*, and bless'd a clearer *Light* ;
 O'er her fair *Face* no artful *Veil* was thrown,
 Nor only from huge *Volumes* was she known,
 On † *Marble* sculptur'd — and the faithful *Stone* :
 Recording *Temples* did at once insure
 The *Leech's Fame*—and propagate the *Cure*.
 Nor *Each* to ev'ry *Branch* as yet applies —
 But *This* the *Heart* could cure, and *That* the *Eyes* ;

The

* THE *Chaldeans* were the first *Astronomical Observators*, and are suppos'd to have built their *Notions of Physical Matters* upon *Astrological Grounds*—either the *Influence* of a particular *Planet*, or of some *Tutelar Dæmon*, were still consider'd.— Hence this *Superstitious Practice*, with the *Science Itself*, was deriv'd to the *Ægyptians*.—

† SEE *Wotton on Ancient and Modern Learning*, P. 107.

The ulcer'd *Limb* some only knew to *heal*,
While *Female Patients* blest'd another's *Skill*.

HERE flourish'd long the *Pharmaceutic Art*;
Whence *Commerce*, next, the *Science* did impart
To ancient *Greece* — but slow its *Progress* still —
Rude and imperfect yet the *Medicinal Skill*:
When, lo! *Apollo's* fav'rite *Son* arose,
The *Depths* of *Physic* studious to *disclose*;
* *Hippocrates* — who with a purer *Ray*
Beam'd on his *Followers* a brighter *Day*.
By *simplest* *Methods*, *slow* indeed, but *sure*,
Who first prescrib'd the *Dietetic Cure*:
Hence stubborn *Chronics* dwindled by *Degrees*,
And *Food* grew *Health* — that late was the *Disease*;
The *Fever's* *Rage*, obedient to *subside*,
Life's purple *Current* pour'd a gentler *Tide*!

Honey

* BEING a Master of *Experience* as well as of *Analogy* and *Reason*, and withal vers'd in pure *Philosophy*, he first made *Physic* *rational*, and laid the *Foundation* of the *Dogmatic* *Medicine* which has since obtain'd. — He pres'd no *Hypothesis* into his *Service*, as may be seen in his *Book* of *Diseases*, *Affections*, &c. — He first started the *Doctrine* of *Critical* *Days* in *Diseases*; for which, when *Polytheism* was in vogue, they were ready to take him for a *God*. — 'Tis certain none of the *Physicians* of *Old Greece* follow'd any *Theory* — Of whom *Baglivi* says:—*Quod nos per Leges Theoriæ, id Illi solâ mentis perspicacitate, longo Ufu confirmatâ peragebant.* —

Honey and Milk the sole *Specifics*, then
 The mild *Decoction*—and the cool *Ptisana*—
 From *Nature's* Source he drew unerring *Laws*;
 Such *B—ll—e's* Practice now—such * *Syd'nam's* was.—

O *B—ll—e!* if these *Numbers* reach thine Ear,
 Accept this *Tribute*—as Thyself sincere—
 Forgive the *Muse* officious thus t'employ
 Those *Hours of Health* you help her to enjoy:
 How *Few*, like *Thee*, such diff'rent *Virtues* blend,
 And mix the *True Physician* with the *Friend*?
 In whom thy *Classic Taste* and *Learning* join,
 T' instruct, t' adorn—to polish and refine—
 How *Few* like *Thee*, with kindred *Sorrow* melt,
 And weep those *Evils* which they never felt?
Balm to my *Woe*—and *Comfort* in *Distress*!
Living I'll love *Thee*—and shall, *Dying*, bless.

SUCH was the *Medic Art*—O shame to tell
 What yet the Faithful *Muse* must now reveal!

Nurs'd

* *ARTIS nostræ Ornator & Ornamentum, qui se positus Opinionum Commentis ad
 Observationes prorsus se dedit, & a primâ Ætate ad Extremum usque senium cum Na-
 turâ cohabitavit*—says a learned *Foreigner*.—

Nurs'd long in *Græcian Climes* with tend'rest Care,
 She *Westward* fled — and breath'd a * *Roman Air* —
 But *soon*, alafs! her new-blown *Honours* fade,
 Her rising Lustre base *Impostors* shade,
 By *Roman M---s---b---ns* and *W---ds* betray'd.
Rome had her *Quacks* — for such all *Climes* produce —
 The *Bane* of Science — and its worst *Abuse* —
 No *Mead* — no *Hulse* was then — the Art to save —
 It sunk — *detested* by the *Wise* and *Brave*.

GALEN, at length, review'd the sacred *Plan*,
 And to *collect* its scatter'd *Parts* began;
 Greedy of *Fame*, digested 'em with Care —
 Well were it, had his *Labours* ended there —
 But boasting clearer *Lights*, he tack'd to *These*
 Strange *Humours* — *Elements* — and *Qualities* —

* PLINY says the *Romans* had an *Aversion* to *Physicians*, and their *Art*, till *Archagatus* came from *Greece* to *Rome*, where he practis'd *Physic* and *Surgery* with *Reputation* — in the Year of *Rome* 535. — However, 'tis certain the *Art* was sunk very low in the *Opinion* of the *Romans* before that Time, by the *Roguary* and *Ignorance* of *Quacks*. — None but *Freed-Men*, &c. practis'd for a long Course of Years. —

D

Con-

Confounding, thus, the † *Coan Master's Rule*,
 With the rude *Cant* of *Aristotle's School*;
 Of *Observation* left the fruitful *Fields*,
 For the wild *Waste* that * *Speculation* yields:
 A *Fairy-Land*—and a neglected *Shore*—
 No *Æsculapian Sage* ere trod before—
Experience now held but the second *Place*,
 And *Truths*, best founded on her solid *Base*.
 No more—O sad *Reverse*! in one we view
 The watchful ‡ *Nurse*, and wise *Physician* too—
 Subtle † *explode*—as artful to *invent*—
 By *Midnight Lamps* a *Galen's Hours* were spent,
 Some fav'rite *System* anxious to *maintain*,
 The monstrous *Child* of his prolific *Brain*—
 By dark *Solutions* to out-strip the *Wife*,
 And ere the *Race* was run—to snatch the *Prize*.

THUS

† *Cos*, or *Coos*, an Island in the *Archipelago*, where *Hippocrates* was born.—
 Hence so called.—

* *Si excipias* (says a learned Author) *Paucos illos Observatores, qui Casus & Historias Medicas ad vivum prout, ab ipsâ Rei Naturâ procedebant, describendo, Medicinæ pomœria summopere ampliarunt; ea quæ Reliqui adjecere, falsam Theoriam, & hujusmodi Ineptias spectantia, turbarunt potius, impediveruntque illius Progressus, quam indicarunt aut promoverunt.*—

‡ *In Hippocrates's Time*, and after, the most eminent *Physicians* watch'd almost *Day and Night* by their Patients *Bed-Sides*, and stuck close to *Observation*.—
 Whence called the *Clinic Sect.*—

THUS far the *Muse*, reluctant, dares to blame
Whom † *sixteen Hundred Years* have giv'n to *Fame*;
Pleas'd she proceeds—still ardent to commend—
Foe to his *Faults*—but to his *Worth* a *Friend*.

IF unknown *Worlds* of *Med'cine* to explore,—
T' expound their *Virtues*, and increase their *Store*;
In search of *Truth*, if any Praise it be,
To drain the *Mines* of deep *Philosophy*;
Of known *Effects* to trace the hidden *Cause*,
And scan by Rules of *Art* wise Nature's *Laws*;
By *Envy's* self the *Debt* shall sure be paid,
And latest *Honours* dignify his *Shade*.

WHAT Time the **Gothic Swarms* forfook their *Hive*,
Learning no longer cou'd the *Shock* survive;

Of

† GALEN flourish'd in the Time of *Trajan*, and three succeeding *Emperors*.—He wrote 15 *Volumes*, besides *Notes*, on *Hippocrates*—and died at *Rome*, *Anno Dom.* 140.—

* AFTER the *sixth Century*, the *Arts* were not only extinguish'd, but almost all *Memory* of them lost till the *Ninth*, from which to the *Thirteenth* *Medicine* was vigorously cultivated by the *Arabs* in *Asia*, *Africa*, and *Spain*: Who applying Themselves particularly to the Study of the *Materia Medica*, and its *Preparations*, and to the *Operations* of *Chirurgery*, render'd both more just and copious at the same time — and yet *Galen's Errors* became now more predominant than ever.—

Of Human *Art* no *Traces* we descry,
Art's fairest *Fruit*, and *Learning* wither'd lie:
 Defac'd—o'erthrown—and mingled with the *Dust*—
 The labour'd *Column*—and the breathing *Bust*.—
Chaos return'd--- all *Peace* and *Order* fled—
 O'er *Customs*, *Language*, *Laws*, thick *Night* was spread.
 'Till---as some long-lost *Stream* renews its *Source*,
 Which under-ground pursu'd its mazy *Course*—
Science, again, to happier *Climes* restor'd,
 Unveil'd her *Charms*---and was again ador'd.

THE fable *Night* of *Ignorance* withdrawn,
 From bless'd *Arabia* broke the chearful *Dawn*;
 Of *Med'cine*, lo! the long uncultur'd *Field*
 Began to *smile*, and a new *Harvest* yield;
 On *Afric's* settled, and *Iberia's* Shore,
 The *Saracens* reviv'd the *Art* once more:
 But *Galen's* Errors chose the wholesome *Soil*,
 Obstruct its *Progress*---and confound their *Toil*.

NEXT *Chymistry*, which long in *Embrio* lay,
 Started new *Lights*---and smooth'd the thorny *Way*;

Not,

Not, as of Old, to * *Alchemy* confin'd,
 Nor knew t' *enrich*, alone, but *blefs* Mankind.
 Long had she learnt t' extract the shining *Ore*,
 But *Med'cine* now confess'd her *healing Pow'r*.
 A new *Creation* open'd to the *View*,
 And old *Discov'ries* were confirm'd by new.

SEE by his *Fires* the sooty *Artist* sweat,
 To pass th' eternal *Bound* by *Nature* set!
 Mis-led by *Aristotle's* dazzling *Light*,
 For † *Transmutation* labours Day and Night!
 In quest of *Mountains* of imagin'd *Wealth*,
 His *Fortune* ruin—and destroy his *Health*—

* ALCHYMY, as contra-distinguish'd by some Writers from *Chymistry*, consisted in refining Metals, and extracting them from their *Ores*.— This Art, older than the *Flood*, is ascrib'd to *Tubal Cain*—Gen. iv. 22.— It is but of late that *Chymistry* has been applied to the Preparations of Medicines, and extended to *Plants*, *Animals*, *Minerals*, &c.— *Paracelsus* and *Van Helmont* carried it to such a length, as to render *Medicine* almost wholly *Chymical*.—

† ACCORDING to *Aristotle*, *Epicurus*, &c. *Gold* and *Sand* are at bottom but one and the *same Matter*.— The *Chymists* thought they had found out that *Salt*—*Sulphur*— and *Mercury*— with a few other *Ingredients*, (about which they are not as yet agreed) were the immediate *Elements* of all *Bodies*; but that there was in reality a *primitive Matter* which took all sorts of *Forms*— that consequently, nothing remain'd to be done, but to work upon that *primitive Matter*, to present it with fit *Moulds*, and to give it a certain *Turn* to have *Gold*— *Jewels*— and the *Elixir Salutis*.— This *Study* has been well defin'd to be — *Ars sine Arte, cujus Principium est mentiri, medium laborare, & Finis mendicare*.—

From *Motion, Matter*, taught that all Things grew,
 What cannot *Motion*, giv'n to *Matter*, do?
 Vain *Reas'ner!* the fantastick Search give o'er,
 Or first—go—analyze the painted *Flow'r*—
 If long intent to sep'rate and compound—
 To pay thy *Toil* a *gen'ral Flow'r* be found,
 The *Grand Elixir* Thou mayst hope to boast,
 Nor find, in search of *Gold*, thy *Labour lost*.

THE *Triumph*, still, is o'er *Effects* alone,
 Nor were *Diseases* in their *Causes* known,
 Till first *Immortal Harvey* led the way,
 And pointed where their secret *Sources* lay;
 All that the *Wise* had *sketch'd* in distant *Thought*,
 The Godlike *Harvey* saw—and *prov'd*—and *taught*—
 While *others*, dubious, *hint* the *Blood* to *flow*,
 'Twas his, * *alone*, to trace the *Manner*, *how*,
 And in what *Time*, its rapid *Journey* done,
 Fresh from the *Heart*, again its *Race* is run.

Hence

* THE *Circulation* of the *Blood* has been generally allow'd to have been found out in the Year 1628, by *Harvey*, a Physician of our own Country; tho' there are several who dispute that *Honour* with him, such as *Vander Linden*, in *Holland*—*Realdus Columbus*, of *Cremona*; and *Andreas Cæsalpinus*, at *Venice*.—This Notion has, indeed, been *occasionally*, and slightly treated by *Them*, as an *Hypothesis*, but never *demonstrated* till *Harvey's Time*.

Hence *Physic*, to no slavish *Seçt* confin'd,
 Gave all her Bigot-Systems to the Wind :
 To nobler *Heights* her tow'ring *Head* she rears ;
 The growing Labour of Three Thousand Years !
 The *Queen* of *Science* rival *Nations* great,
 And lay their fairest *Trophies* at her *Feet* :
 The * *Tubes*--the *Glands*--*These* foremost to explain
 The *Muscles*, *These* expound--and *Those* the *Brain*.—
 While others pore thro' *Microscopic Glass*,
 And see the † *Lymph* thro' subtle *Strainers* pass—
 From *Sense*, not wild *Hypothesis*, deduce
 The *Structure* of each *Vessel*--and its *Use*.
 ‡ *Mechanic* and *Botanic* Science join
 Their wond'rous *Aids* to make the *Art Divine* ;

From

* THESE several Discoveries in *Anatomy* are owing to *Wharton*---*Willis*---*Brown*, and others, since *Harvey's* Time.---

† MALPHIGI was the first Discoverer of the *Lymphatic Vessels*, which, according to *Dr. Arbuthnot*, are one hundred times finer than a *Hair*---He died *Anno* 1694.---

‡ MEDICINE, by late Improvements in *Philosophy*, is become all *Mechanical*, and *Corpuscular* ; instead of *Galen's Qualities* and *Degrees*, every thing is now reduc'd to *Mechanical Affections* ; to the *Figures*, *Bulks*, *Gravities*, &c. of the component *Particles*, and to the great *Principle of Attraction*.---

From *East* to *West*, hence *Physic* boasts her *Sway* —
And darts on all a more propitious *Ray* ;
But fix'd her *Throne* in fair *Britannia's Isle*,
To whom she owes a *Harvey* — and a * *Boyle*.

* THE Honourable Mr. *Boyle* rescued *Chymistry* from the *Censures* it had long lain under from the *Enthusiasm* of *Helmont* and *Paracelsus*, and has shewn of what infinite *Use* it is to *Philosophy* and *Medicine*, when kept within its proper *Bounds*.—He first discover'd, or, at least, brought the *Pneumatic Engine* to *Perfection*, which soon demonstrated the *Absurdity* of that common Notion, that *Nature* abhorr'd a *Vacuum*.—Since he has shewn us the true *Origin* of *Qualities* in *Bodies*, nobody has dar'd to advance the Chimærical Notion of *Substantial Forms*.—By the Help of *these*, and other valuable *Discoveries*, many *others* have been made since his *Death*, and many more, probably, will be; and his *Reputation* rather increase than diminish in future *Ages*.—He died *Anno* 1691.—

N.B. IF it should be ask'd why I have made no honourable Mention of the *Royal Society*— I have This to answer—That the *Subject* has been too copiously and elegantly treated by † *another Hand*, for me to add any thing but my *Wishes* for their *Prosperity*.

† SPRAT'S History of the Royal Society.

F I N I S.

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