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AN

# ORATION

ON THE

# Improvement of Medicine.

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# IMPROVEMENT OF MEDICINE.

PRONOUNCED BEFORE A RESPECTABLE AUDITORY OF CITIZENS, IN THE FEDERAL HALL, IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK; ACCORDING TO APPOINTMENT OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,

*At their Anniversary Meeting, on the 16th January, 1794.*

*By* AMASA DINGLEY, *Physician.*

Ἰητρικὴ τεχνεων μεν πασεων ἐστιν ἐπιφανεστατη.
ΙΠΠΟΚΡΑΤΟΥΣ ΝΟΜΟΣ.

Errores non sunt Artis, sed artificum. NEWTON.

Haud equidem credo, quia sit divinitus illis
Ingenitum, aut rerum fato prudentia major:
Verum, ubi Tempestas et cœli mobilis humor,
Mutavere vias; et Jupiter uvidus Austris,
Densat, erant quæ rara modo; et, quæ densa, relaxat;
Vertuntur species animorum:— P. V. MARO.

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# TO THE PUBLIC.

THE HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE IS THE SUPREME LAW. *Therefore, to the people the following pages are dedicated. To them it belongs to fix the merit of every work, and to appretiate the true character of every citizen; for they are the only legitimate ſource of ſovereignty. If theſe pages contain any thing uſeful or new, the people will approve it, and give credit to the Author for a part of the debt, which, he owes to ſociety. The remainder ſhall be paid hereafter. If, on the contrary, this pamphlet ſhould be found to have no tendency to promote the intereſts of medicine and of truth, the people will reject it; for, their good ſenſe will enable them to judge accurately and determine fairly.*

A. D.

February, 1794.

# An ORATION, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

A SHORT contemplation of the animal œconomy will convince us that life cannot be perpetual, under the present mode of existence : For we quickly perceive, by the law of our nature, we are subjected to changes, disease and death. From the first disease that affected man, the healing art must have taken its origin ; as it is natural to believe that mankind must have been thus early impelled by sickness and pain to seek the remedies that nature afforded for the removal or mitigation of their misery.---It is a pleasing and useful speculation, to trace our art from this embryo state to its present condition of improvement and maturity. In the dawn of medical knowledge, the evolutions of the human mind must have been slow and imperfect. Great distress must have been suffered before many medical facts could have been investigated ; and after all, these must have been the result of individual exertion. But, in the course of revolving time, and by the progress of civilization, the collective energies of men, under the benign influences of freedom and the social compact, are concentred to a point, for accelerating the perfection of the arts and sciences. Among these, if you except agriculture, and the art of teaching children to think accurately and act well, the first in use, and the first in dignity, is the Healing Art, or the Science of Life.---Yours is the happiness "*to associate for the express purposes of promoting social*

*ſocial and profeſſional intercourſe, as a happy means of diſſeminating medical knowledge; of inveſtigating the diſeaſes and remedies peculiar to our country, and thereby to leſſen human miſery; and of giving reſpectability and order to the practice of Phyſic.*"* And, I truſt, it may be added, of collecting, methodiſing and publiſhing medical facts and obſervations for the benefit of this age and of poſterity.

LET it then be the deſign of this diſcourſe, to call your attention to the *Improvement of Medicine*: For this will neceſſarily lead me, conciſely, to point out ſome of the principal objects of the Inſtitution, by which the advantages derivable from this eſtabliſhment will be rendered obvious to the Community; and, to ſhew ſome of the means of making the Inſtitution uſeful to the citizens, and honorable to its members.

THE novelty of the occaſion, as well as the mixed aſpect of medical affairs, ſeemed to require that ſomething ſhould be offered on this ſubject. A ſhort eſſay on ſome therapeutic ſubject, perhaps, would be more acceptable to ſeveral of the members.---But, to adopt this plan, I truſt, will fulfil your deſign in appointing an anniverſary diſcourſe, and at the ſame time, be productive of more general utility.

A DIFFIDENCE of my own abilities, would have forbidden my appearing before you on this occaſion, had I not been confident of enjoying the exerciſe of that candour and generoſity of ſentiment, while an attempt is made to perform the duty you have aſſigned me, which has been ſo often conſpicuous in your ſtated meetings.

THE medical and philoſophical ſocieties in Europe have already done much to promote and accompliſh the excellent

* Vid. Conſtitution and By-Laws of the Society.

lent designs for which you are associated. They have brought us to the gate of the temple of nature; they have drawn aside the veil of ignorance and mysteries; they have invited us to enter and accompany them, as patient inquirers in the investigation of life, health, and disease.---- With the other parts of united America, let us join our Brothers of the old world, in this excellent work of the study of nature. Thus shall we pay a debt that is due to society and mankind, and "learn* to venerate ourselves as men." For, in the great republic of human nature, these societies are what virtuous families are in a single State.

NORTH America is replenished with a rich variety of objects for the improvement of every branch of medicine.----- After we have attended to the geography of our country, one of the first subjects that should arrest our attention, is the effect that is produced on the public health, by the progress of agriculture, and the consequent salutary changes of our climates.

THE changes of temperature, and local situation, that are constantly taking place on this globe, afford subjects for useful medical researches.----It may be permitted to adduce a few facts to illustrate this point.----All the northern and western parts of America, exhibit a good picture of the ancient condition of most of the European climates :----

IN 860, the Mediterranean was covered with ice :

IN 1296, the Baltic was frozen from Gothland to Sweden :

AND in 1423, the ice bore riding from Prussia to Lubeck.

IN

* Pythagoræ aurea carmino. Pythagoras fled from the tyranny of Polycrates in Samos, to Crotona in Italy, where he founded a school of physic: He was the first who joined the study of medicine with that of philosophy. History of Surgery.

In the time of Galen, it was obſerved, that the peach-tree could not flouriſh in Italy, by reaſon of the cold of the winter.†

During theſe periods, moſt of the kingdoms in Europe were overſhadowed by impenetrable foreſts, and the greater part of the people lived by hunting and plunder. But, after a long interval of mental and moral darkneſs, when agriculture, with the other arts, were reſtored, we find no ſatisfactory account of the progreſſive melioration of thoſe climates, by clearing the countries of their foreſts and perfecting agriculture. The ſolution of this problem is left for the Phyſicians of America. To effect this deſirable object, many ingenious experiments and reſearches are neceſſary.‖

It will be uſeful to make methodical regiſters of the thermometer, barometer,§ hydrometer, and ombrometer. This will require a multiplicity of meteorological obſervations; and by experiments with the eudiometer and other chemical inveſtigations, perhaps, it will be found, that the true cauſe of intermitting fevers, and various other diſorders, both epidemic and endemic, is the carbonic acid,

† Vide Dr. Forſter's obſervations during Captain Cooke's voyage round the world, 1772—1775; page 81.—Henry Home's ſketches of the hiſtory of man.—Drs. Arbuthnot and Huxham on air.—Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. 1, 8vo. Lond. 1788; particularly chap. 1 and 2. See the improvements in agriculture, and introduction of fruits into the Weſtern Empire; and chap. 9, climate of Germany and its effects on the natives in the time of Decius.—Dr. Hunter's Georgical Eſſays.

‖ Vide Jefferſon's notes on Virginia.—Captain Carver's Travels.

§ From the hiſtory of the barometer, we know, that the weight of the atmoſphere is greater at one time than another, in the ratio of one tenth of the baroſcopic column of mercury; ſo great a difference cannot but greatly affect us who are ſubject to it, ſeeing it amounts to 3200 lb. Dr. Huxham.

acid, as Bergman ſuppoſes;† or ſome other peculiar gas, or mephitic exhalation, generated by fermentation in our ſwamps and ſtagnant waters. By knowing the nature of the cauſe, we ſhall gain much towards effecting a cure of theſe deſtructive maladies.

THESE inquiries will alſo aſſiſt the Phyſician in explaining and deſcribing endemic and epidemic diſeaſes, as well as the diſeaſes of cattle and all ſorts of animals. And, as the pathology of vegetables is a moſt intereſting ſubject in the materia medica, and in huſbandry and gardening, the farmer will remember that theſe ſtudies will extend to the diſeaſes of his fruit-trees, his wheat, his corn, and all the productions of the farm. Will not the farmer then aſſociate his labours with the phyſician to record uſeful facts on theſe ſubjects? May not theſe ſtudies enable medical men to aſcertain the origin of epidemics with more ſucceſs and certainty than has hitherto been done? Of how much utility this may be to the commercial and political intereſts of our country, need not be mentioned before this enlightened audience.

BUT to effect theſe purpoſes completely, it will be neceſſary to be conſtantly making additions of the beſt modern publications to the Society's Library, which is already an object of conſiderable advantage, eſpecially to the junior members. A Library has been called medicine for the mind: A Medical Library is a common bond of union among Phyſicians, and it renders the acquiſition of knowledge cheap and eaſy.

DR. SIMS, Preſident of the London Medical Society, and an honorary member of this inſtitution, in his obſervations

† Vide Bergman's Phyſical and Chemical Eſſays.

tions on epidemics, ſays, that his Medical Library, which conſiſted of four thouſand volumes, was inadequate to furniſh a ſufficient number of authentic facts, from which an accurate hiſtory of epidemic diſeaſes could be made.* This proves the neceſſity of collecting new facts, at the ſame time that it ſhews the uſefulneſs of a common and well-choſen Library.

THE philoſophy of the Atmoſphere and Winds, ſo far as they influence health, is an important ſubject. Which winds are moſt ſalutary, and which moſt noxious? The effects of Evaporation, Rain and Snow, on health, remain to be explained. Is water held in ſolution in Calorique---is it diſſolved in air? Where do our moſt remarkable winds begin---and where ceaſe to blow? In what ſort of weather, and in which ſeaſons of the year is oxygene gas, or the vital part of the atmoſphere, and hydrogene, or inflammable gas,† ſubject to the greateſt increaſe or diminution? In dry ſeaſons, what becomes of the water taken up by evaporation, and what new combinations take place to produce a condenſation and precipitation of water? In attending to this ſublime Chemiſtry of Nature, ſhould we not carefully obſerve and record electric and magnetic Phænomena? Theſe are inquiries worthy of the attention of a ſociety of Phyſicians. Every inquiry of this

* Vid. Memoirs of the Med. Society of Lond. vol. 1, 1787.

† Mr. CAVENDISH has ſhewn that this gas is at leaſt ten times lighter than common air: Mr. Lavoiſier contends that it is one of the component parts of water, and it is by him called hydrogene. It is ſuppoſed to afford their principal nouriſhment to vegetables, and thence to animals, and is perpetually ariſing from their decompoſition.—This ſource of it in hot climates, and in ſummer months, is ſo great as to exceed eſtimation.—Vid. Dr. Darwin's Botanic Garden.

this kind will contribute to an accumulation of facts for completing an history§ of the atmosphere.

THE rapid improvements in agriculture, and the increasing commerce of these *States*, constantly bring us acquainted with new articles in diet. The comparative effects of all these, as well as those that have been habitual to the people, ought to be carefully noted and explained.

THE diseases that will probably be produced by manufactures in our country, will become an object of the greatest consequence in a political point of view. It is to be expected that new diseases will be discovered; but of those that are now known among the class of citizens, who are employed in the very useful labors of mechanics, there are many that have not yet found a safe and perfect remedy. As it is probable that most of the manufactures of these states will be carried on by means of machinery, for facilitating the operations, rendering the productions better and cheaper, and superseding manual labor; the diseases of all sorts of ingenious artisans * will often put the skill of the physician to the test. In many, the ill effects of a sedentary life will be united with the danger that arises from being exposed to poisonous bodies and vapors necessarily employed in the manipulations and operations of art. The substances, therefore, which occupy the labors of the artist, also become objects highly worthy of the study and observation of the Physician.

THE

§ When we observe phænomena, and collect facts, we form a history. When we discover the nature and relations of phænomena and facts, we acquire a science. When we apply the result of science as rules of conduct, we practise arts.—Vid. Bruce's First Principles of Philosophy.

* The surprising advances of Chemistry and the effects of its application to manufactures; the wonderful combinations of Chemistry and Mechanics, for the reduction of labour—These are the happy means by which bankruptcy has been hitherto averted. The genius of Watt, Wedgewood, and Arkwright, has counteracted the expence and folly of the American War. Jasper Wilson's letter to Rt. Hon. Wm. Pitt.

THE mariner, from the diſtinguiſhed rank that he holds in modern ſociety, and eſpecially in all commercial nations, deſerves great attention from the Phyſician. Several of the diſeaſes of ſeamen, and particularly the ſcurvy, have hitherto baffled medicine. The inveſtigation and cure of their diſeaſes remain, in a great meaſure, for the future labours of medical men. In doing this, many facts may be aſcertained for the explanation of that moſt remarkable property which exiſts in animal bodies of accommodating themſelves to the various conditions of life; ſuch as the changes of climate, heat and cold, diet, action of body and mind, ſleep and watching, the healing of wounds and the re-union of broken bones. To the honor of our country it may be ſaid, that a large proportion of the mariners are well inſtructed, and they have an inquiſitive ſpirit of obſervation. They can furniſh uſeful hints and remarks that ought to be examined, becauſe they may lead to uſeful concluſions.

To inveſtigate the diſeaſes of mankind with ſucceſs, we muſt learn to look up to the heavens, as well as down to the earth. The queſtion reſpecting the effects of ſolar and lunar attraction † on health, remains yet to be ſolved, particularly as theſe effects may influence fevers, hepatic diſeaſes, puerperal medicine, animal ſecretion and excretion, and the diſeaſes of the mind.

VESALIUS, that great, injured name, * was the firſt author of note who adventured to detect the errors of Galen. In his work *De Corporis Humani Fabrica*, firſt publiſhed in 1543, he attempts to prove that the gravity of the fluids

† Dr. Mead, De Imperio Solis et Lunæ.

* Vid. Opera Andreæ Veſalii, and Manning's Phyſiology.

fluids contained in the veins and arteries, exerts no manner of effect within them, ſo far as relates to the principles of hydraulics. There are, however, ſome pathological appearances that favor the ſuppoſition that the effect of the gravity of the fluids is not entirely loſt, in their living and containing veſſels or tubes, particularly in hydropic patients. But, the doctrine of Veſalius has lately been adopted by an ingenious author,* who has rejected, entirely, the mechanical philoſophy from his ſyſtem, after it had long been ingeniouſly defended by Boerhaave and others. There belongs to animal and vegetable bodies, an organization differing eſſentially from all other modifications of matter. And, to this organization there is ſuperadded a quality, called, *irritability, nervous, inherent or contractile Power*, by ſome; *Excitability*, by others, on which the functions of life depend. Therefore all the ſuppoſed analogies, with the innumerable errors thence reſulting, between animate and inanimate bodies, ought to be rejected from rational Medicine. On this ſubject much remains to be done.

It is one of your profeſſed deſigns to eſtabliſh an extenſive chemical muſeum, to contain all the natural productions of this ſtate, that are the objects of medical chemiſtry. This muſt neceſſarily furniſh a large correſpondence with the non-reſident members, who are gentlemen of learning and ingenuity, and being on the places that furniſh theſe productions, much of the honor of perfecting this eſtabliſhment will fall to them.---Our country is rich in articles of Botany,‡ and our

C materia

* Vid. Joannis Brunonis, M. D. Elementa Medicinæ. Sect. cvii. cx. Editio prima.

‡ My highly reſpected friend, Dr. S. L. Mitchill, Profeſſor of Chemiſtry and Botany, in the College of New-York, has favored me with a communication containing the following note on a Botanic Garden; and a tranſlation of Girtanner's Theory of Reſpiration

materia medica might be copiouſly furniſhed in America, from all the three kingdoms of nature. A hiſtory of theſe ſubſtances, ſome of which are contained in the unſettled weſtern territories, is a deſideratum in phyſic; I hope therefore it will not be deemed too enthuſiaſtic to anticipate the happy day when New-York ſhall boaſt of its Pharmacopœia, that ſhall vie with thoſe of Europe, in its account of new and more ſucceſsful remedies, effected by the aſſociated labours of this ſociety.

THE inveſtigation of the American Materia Medica,† would lead us to a better acquaintance with the ſtate of medicine among the Indians; and to a more perfect knowledge

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Reſpiration, (vid. page 22.) which are inſerted on account of their beneficial aſpects on the true intereſts of our country; as well as for a teſtimony of my ſincere reſpect and eſteem for the virtues and talents of that Gentleman:

"*Note on a Botanic Garden.*"

"The Truſtees of Columbia College, have made BOTANY a part of their ſyſtem of public Education; but, although they have conſtituted a Profeſſorſhip, and appointed a Profeſſor, ſtill no proviſion has hitherto been made for a Botanic Garden. This eſtabliſhment is ſo nearly connected with Botany, that the Lectures muſt ever be very lame and defective without it. Nothing but a more full conviction of its importance and utility, is wanting, to ſet on foot ſuch an inſtitution, and to carry it into effect. A *Botanic Garden* is one of the genteeleſt and moſt beautiful of *public improvements*. It comprizes within a ſmall compaſs, *the hiſtory of the vegetable ſpecies of our own country*, and by the introduction of *exotics*, makes us acquainted with the plants of the *moſt diſtant parts of the earth*. By facilitating experiments upon plants at this time, when the theory of nutrition and manures is ſuch an intereſting deſideratum, it may be conſidered as one of the means of affording ſubſtantial help to the labours of the Agricultural Society, and of improving in ſome degree the practice of modern huſbandry. When theſe things are duly conſidered, it can ſcarcely be doubted that Botany will receive a further ſhare of *public patronage*."

† As a ſpecimen of what has been done in this way, ſee Materia Medica Americana, potiſſimum regni vegitabilis. Autore, D. J. David Schoepf. 8vo. Erlangae, 1787.

knowledge of the antiquities of our country. We ſhall have more reaſon to undertake this deſirable work, when we advert to what has been ſaid on the ſubject, by one of the moſt celebrated writers on the Materia Medica, that this or any other age has produced.

PROFESSOR Cullen did not heſitate to aſſert, that, the errors of falſe experience are ſo numerous, that, the writings on the Materia Medica are for the moſt part a compilation of miſtakes and falſhoods. And he adds, that, theſe errors ariſe from the obſtinacy of old profeſſors, and their blind attachment to theory, as well as the vanity of young phyſicians being the authors of obſervations that are haſtily made and dreſſed in the cloſet; and, beſides, many of the operations of nature have been falſely imputed to the effects of medicines pretendedly founded on experience.* So diſtant are they from a true and faithful delineation of nature. †

AFTER theſe facts are mentioned, it will be ſcarcely neceſſary to enumerate the frauds and ſophiſtications of Chemiſtry and Pharmacy.

To avoid error, under all theſe circumſtances, would require the hands of Briareus, together with the eyes of Argus.---And, how can theſe evils be removed, but by explaining the materia medica of our own country?

On this occaſion, it may not be improper to obſerve, that by aboliſhing all *noſtrums*, or *ſecret remedies* in your ſociety, and by making it a ſufficient cauſe of ineligibility to the membership, if any Candidate ſhould hold, uſe or vend any

* See the accurate delineation of true and falſe experience, by Dr. Zimmermann, in his treatiſe on experience in phyſic.

† Vid. Cullen's Treatiſe on the Mat. Med. vol. 1.

any noſtrum, you have, in this particular, vindicated the profeſſion from the imputation of quackery. The toleration and encouragement of this practice, have, with the enchantments of Meſmer's animal magnetiſm, and other popular impoſitions, uniformly been moſt fertile and diſgraceful ſources of empiriciſm.

WITH their government, the French have regenerated their medicine, the annals of which have not been ſtained with blood, like thoſe of their politics; becauſe their war has not been carried on againſt reaſon and truth, but againſt error and tyranny.

FRANCE, in her preſent volcanic ſtate, like fiery Ætna, perhaps, may deſtroy a Pliny, but, ſhe has however, thrown out many precious ſubſtances, that will enrich the world. Among theſe the *Nouveau Plan de Conſtitution, pour la Medecine en France*, † deſerves to be conſidered as one of the firſt good fruits of their political regeneration. From this plan we learn, that the Medical Society at Paris have exerted the moſt active vigilance to oppoſe the dangerous illuſions of ignorance; and the nation have decreed, that for the future, "*No Medicines ſhall be kept ſecret.*"

IT remains among the deſiderata of the healing art, to ſhew the advantages that may reſult to medicine from Electricity; and to determine in what caſes and in what manner this powerful agent may be further employed for the advancement of the health and happineſs of mankind. A ſage of America "invaded the lowering ſky," and was able to arreſt, controul, and bring down from the clouds this omnipreſent ‡ agent in the great operations

† See a tranſlation of this excellent work in the Med. Comment. for 1792, Edinburgh.

‡ Ignis ubique latet, naturam ampleſtitur omnem;
Cuncta parit, renovat, dividit, unit, alit. VOLTAIRE.

operations of nature. To give a triumph and consummation to the art, requires a complete examination and discovery of its action and effects on animal bodies. In doing this, we have reason to hope, that many of the perplexities that have hitherto embarrassed the doctrines of inflammation and animal heat, as well as several other phenomena of the animal economy will be happily solved.

Is electricity an inflammable fluid, subject to a law of elective attraction? If heat be the oscillatory motion of the minute particles of bodies, wherein does animal and vegetable heat differ from that of inanimate or unorganized * bodies? What are the extremes of heat consistent with animal and vegetable life? What degrees of heat are sufficient to destroy animal, vegetable, mineral, and aerial poisons and contagions? The subject of poisons and contagions opens an immense field for the researches of Medical Philosophy.

It still remains to determine the full effects of warm and cool bathing, both partial and general, on animal bodies. The baths lately made in this city and its neighbourhood, afford excellent opportunities for experiments in this subject. What are the combined operations of moisture, under different degrees of temperature, motion and pressure?

It is now well known, if a person should be immerged two feet under water, and the area of his skin be fifteen feet, he would sustain a weight of circumfluent water, pressing on his whole surface, added to that of the air, equal to two thousand two hundred and eighty pounds. How will

* L'Organization, le sentiment, le movement spontané, la vie, n'existent qu'a la surface de la terre, et dans le lieux exposes a la lumiére. Traité de Chymie par M. Lavoisier.

will the circulations, thoracic and abdominal viſcera, perſpiration and the nervous ſyſtem, be affected by theſe circumſtances?

THE ingenious, but unfortunate Stark, by experiments on his own body, found that the perſpiration is almoſt twice as much, during thoſe hours when the body is naked, as it is in an equal ſpace of time, when covered by our ordinary garments :---By the ſame clear and deciſive experiments, it appears, that the perſpiration is not half ſo great for a given number of hours in the night, when in ſleep, as it is for the ſame number of hours in the day, when awake. Theſe diſcoveries have yet had very little influence on the practice of phyſic.

IF we except the diſcovery of the circulation of the blood, and that of the abſorbent ſyſtem, no modern diſcovery is more uſeful than that of the perſpiration. Is not this diſcovery to be perfected by future ſtatical experiments?

WE are conſtantly told, that almoſt all diſeaſes depend on an increaſe or diminution of the perſpiration; and that cold conſtantly checks, and heat increaſes it. Perhaps we ſeldom know when it is checked, or when it is increaſed.---- In connection with this ſubject, will it not be uſeful to attend to the effects of air and earth-bathing on animals.

An inquiry into the cauſes and cure of Cholera Infantum, would be a work of the greateſt utility. Infants are the hope of ſociety.* This diſeaſe deſtroys multitudes every year.---- What are the effects of tea and coffee on infants, received by the medium of the milk of the mothers and nurſes? The Chineſe avoid above all things, the drinking of tea on a faſting ſtomach.§ In this city, the properties of the tea-water,

* Vid. Dr. Gregory's Comparative View, and Dr. Hugh Smith's Letters to Married Women---and Dr. Buchan's Domeſtic Medicine.

§ Vid. Du Halde's Deſcription of the Empire of China.

water, and the waters in the wells of the different parts of the city ſhould be examined, and their effects on health recorded.

How far can the good effects of vegetation† on atmoſpheric air, be reſtored to populous cities, by planting ornamental trees in the ſtreets and public walks, and would this have any influence in preventing or checking epidemics ?

In this country, the comparative effects of cyder, wine, ardent ſpirits, and malt liquors, have not yet been fully aſcertained.

The evils that ariſe from living in Cellars* and other damp places deprived of free ventilation, and the effects of ſtoves on the lungs and on the feet, would furniſh a uſeful ſubject for a medical memoir.

Iron has been found to be preſent in almoſt all organized bodies : And, as it enters into the compoſition of animals, anſwering important purpoſes in their œconomy, and is the moſt valuable of all the metals ; it becomes highly neceſſary for the Phyſician to underſtand its medicinal uſes.---This can only be done by the aid of the new Chemiſtry, which will teach us the nature of the Gaſes, and the laws of elective attraction, which are capable of explaining many of the myſteries of Pathology.

Might not Inoculation be extended to many of the eruptive diſeaſes, with advantage ; and the ferocious nature of the Plague|| if this country ſhould ever be viſited by that calamity, and ſome other malignant epidemics, be rendered much milder, and leſs deſtructive by this practice ? The

† Vid. Prieſtley and Ingenhouz's experiments to ſhew the great power of vegetables to purify the air, in the ſun-ſhine.

* This pernicious practice is one of the peculiar aggravations of the misfortunes of the poorer claſs of citizens in New-York.

|| Vid. Gibbon's Roman Empire, vol. 7, 8vo. ch. xliii. Howard on Priſons and Lazarettos.

THE extremes of luxury and abſtemiouſneſs, the cuſtoms, manners and faſhions of the people and their habitations; the effects of celibacy † on health and political proſperity; the artificial diſeaſes originating in exceſs of refinement; and in a particular manner, the all-conquering power of habit, preſent themſelves to medicine, and demand a large ſhare of her ſtudy and careful attention.

A TRUE account of the effects of burying-grounds in populous cities; an accurate bill of mortality; a general regiſtry of marriages and births; and an account of the number of people who migrate into the United States, and particularly into this city, would be attended with great public advantages. In ſome places this work is begun, by which it appears that many parts of New-England are more remarkable for longevity than any countries in Europe. This work never can be completed but by the united labors of ſocieties of active and ingenious men. May not a future American PRICE want facts to enable him to make calculations on the value of lives, annuities and reverſionary payments? And, may not the future Hiſtorian of America want facts to enable him to explain the *true indoles and characteriſtics of the people of a great Republic, that is to conſiſt of a heterogeneous and mixed maſs of all the nations on earth?*

THE publication of *Brunonis Elementa Medicinæ*, will probably form a new Æra in the annals of the healing art. You will therefore permit me to obſerve, if in the 18th century, a genius has appeared, the light of the medical

† Vid. Gibbon on the effects of the monaſtic life, Roman empire, chap. 37—and the preſent political, moral and phyſical condition of the people of the Weſt-Indies—Southern States of America, and all other countries where the labour is principally done by Slaves.

medical world, to diſſipate the darkneſs of hypotheſis and ſyſtem, by the moſt ſucceſsful application of philoſophy and general principles to THE SCIENCE OF LIVING MATTER; and if this author has been more ſucceſsful in demonſtrating that man is nothing of himſelf, but depends altogether on extraneous cauſes, and that all his dormant energies muſt be wakened into motion by theſe cauſes, before he can exhibit the phænomena of ſenſe, perception, thought, reaſoning and action; then it follows, that Philoſophy, which is the immoveable baſis of this doctrine, muſt be more intimately ſtudied by Phyſicians than formerly. Hence, all the frivolous objections of ſome, againſt this doctrine, that it leads to idleneſs and ſuperficial ſtudy; and all the vain pretenſions of others, that a few months of inattentive reading and a little practice, according to this theory, are ſufficient to make a good Phyſician, fall with their authors to the ground.

THE author of the new theory of Medicine, had a fiery imagination, which, like

"The Poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
"Did glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,"*

and graſped the moſt diſtant analogies of nature. His ſubtle genius did diſcover the nice connections and differences of animal facts and animal functions: And, his profound and luminous judgment, by long and laborious inductions, led him to concluſions, that, in their ultimate practical effect, muſt be the ſource of innumerable evils, or of uncounted bleſſings to mankind. Are theſe concluſions true? Let them be acknowledged. Are they falſe? Let them be confuted. Are they a mixture of truth and error? Let the gold be ſeparated from the droſs.



* Shakeſpeare.

It yet remains, to determine the advantages that may accrue to Medicine, from a faithful relation of unſucceſsful caſes. We learn from the writings of CICERO and JULIUS CÆSAR, not only the virtues, but alſo the defects and errors of theſe perſonages. Phyſicians ought not to be unwilling to publiſh their want of ſucceſs in the adminiſtration of Medicines; for this has hitherto been a department in phyſic which has been much neglected: Though Hippocrates and ſome others who have been greater BENEFACTORS † to mankind than kings and heroes, have given a few laudable examples in this way.

Long has Medicine been traduced as a mere conjectural and experimental art.* In a partial ſenſe, this is true.--- It is alſo true of agriculture and politics: and even ſome of the ſublimer parts of the mathematics, are involved in perplexities that the mind of Newton himſelf could not perfectly remove.

In this age, however, it is acknowledged by all candid and well informed men, that many of the operations of the animal œconomy are as well explained and underſtood, as any phænomenon in natural Philoſophy--- Many facts might be adduced in ſupport of this declaration. It is ſufficient to inſtance the ſubjects of Digeſtion and Reſpiration

† Among the Phyſicians of this claſs in America, Dr. Z. Boylſtone and Dr. Douglaſs have merited a diſtinguiſhed rank. To Dr. Boylſtone and the Rev. Dr. Cotton Mather, America is indebted for the introduction of the practice of inoculating for the Small-Pox, Vid. Mather, Boylſtone and Coleman's Hiſtorical account of the Small-Pox inoculated in New-England. Boſton. 1721—1730.

To Dr. Douglaſs of Boſton, and Dr. C. Colden of New-York, America is indebted for the firſt judicious method of treating the malignant Quinſey, which prevailed in Boſton and ſeveral other parts of America, in 1735 and 1736; and which has ſince that period, ſeveral times prevailed, being attended with great mortality, in this country. Vid. Douglaſs de Angina Ulcuſculoſa.

*. *Ars noſtra conjecturalis eſt—experimentis nitens. Celſus.*

Reſpiration. The former has been almoſt exhauſted by the lucid experiments and by the ingenious and ſucceſsful labours of Stevens, Spallanzani, Hunter, Senebier, and Carminati; and the latter has been happily elucidated by Prieſtley, Crawford, Lavoiſier and Girtanner†.

THE ſtomach and the ſuccus gaſtricus, afford an excellent leſſon of inſtruction. Who would not wiſh to profit by it in all his enquiries? If we imitate the wonderful operations of the organ ſo happily explained by the before-mentioned authors, we ſhall find, that many a bulky volume of hypotheſes will paſs down the *primæ viæ* of our minds, without leaving more than a few ſentences of uſeful truth, to invigorate the mind of the Phyſician in the acquiſition of medical knowledge.

THESE facts will ſoon induce us to believe, that error is the ſole cauſe of the miſery of man. That the detection of error is the diſcovery of truth, is an excellent aphoriſm. A faithful detail of medical errors, properly managed, would have

† "Mr. Girtanner's Theory of reſpiration is briefly this:" "During reſpiration the oxygene-gas of the atmoſphere is decompounded. One part of the oxygene unites with the venous blood and changes its dark colour into a ſcarlet. Another part of the oxygene combines with the carbone which is diſengaged from the venous blood, and forms carbonic acid gas. A third portion of the oxygene connects itſelf with the carbone of the dark coloured mucus, which is ſeparated in the branches of the Trachea in conſiderable quantity; and in like manner turns to carbonic acid gas. A fourth portion of the oxygene, combines with the Hydrogene ſeparated from the venous blood, and conſtitutes the watery exhalation manifeſt in the breath.

"The caloric of the decompounded oxygene gas continues in part with the combined oxygene, and together with it, forms a combination with the venous blood; and hence proceeds the greater quantity of caloric in the arterial than in the venous blood, as Crawford has remarked. Another part of the caloric goes into union with the carbonic acid gas. A third part of it enters into the formation of the Halitus."—The products of reſpiration he enumerates are theſe; 1ſt, a fluid animal oxyde *arterial blood*. 2d, Carbonic acid gas. 3d, water. And 4th, a ſma quantity of uncombined caloric. (Girtanner, *anfangegrunde des antiphlogiſtiſchen chemie, kap.* xxxiv. 260)

have the happieſt effect on practice---It would prevent the miſapplication of talents and time, and ſo facilitate the way to truth. This can no where be done ſo well as in a Medical Society----For, the truths that are diſperſed among various perſons, may be here collected and united into one general maſs of knowledge, which will enlarge the mind, and regulate the judgment of the practitioners, who having regularly received inſtructions from particular teachers, are now to conſider the ARS MEDENDI as their beſt teacher---The variety of facts, that each may ſhew to the other, will prevent partial views, and inſpire comprehenſive conceptions; thus the judicious Phyſician, to whom are committed the deareſt intereſts of ſociety, will be enabled to ſteer his courſe more ſafely between the dangerous extremes of dogmatiſm and empiriciſm. It is very apparent that this practice muſt lead indirectly and ultimately to a great improvement in medicine---The colliſion of mind with mind, ought to ſtrike out ſome light, and we ought to collect the ſcattered rays to a focal point, by which ſome of the darker and more interior receſſes of the temple of medical ſcience might, in a future period, be happily illuminated.

In the preſent ſtate of ſociety, it is difficult to obtain ſubjects for facilitating the ſtudy of Phiſiology and Pathology. The morbid appearances of dead bodies are examined under great embarraſſments---If we unite to demonſtrate to the public the advantages of theſe enquiries, we may hope to obtain the intereſt of the wiſe and prudent part of the citizens in favour of theſe purſuits. Prejudice and feeling are oppoſed, but reaſon may do much to remove theſe obſtacles. The beſt apology that ever could be offered for what has been done in this buſineſs is, that "*men are ſometimes induced to violate the laws of ſociety to ſtudy thoſe of nature.*"--But we ſhould reflect, that the laws of

ſociety

ſociety are a part of the general ſyſtem of nature, and, therefore, they cannot be violated in theſe inſtances with impunity. One of the firſt characters|| in the French Republic, has obſerved with great truth, that, "Reſpect for the remains of men who have been dear to us, is no prejudice; it is an affection inſpired by nature herſelf; who has placed in the receſſes of our hearts, a veneration for every thing that can recal to our remembrance, beings whom friendſhip, or gratitude has rendered ſacred to our feelings. The liberty of offering a ſorrowful homage to their aſhes, is then a precious right, to delicate minds; and the power of chooſing that which their ſenſations dictate, cannot, without injuſtice, be taken away."

On this day it is proper to commemorate ſome of the benefits of the City-Diſpenſary. This Inſtitution has been encouraged and ſupported by the liberal contributions and well-directed charity of the citizens. Since the eſtabliſhment of this medical aſylum for the poor and ſick, more than one thouſand poor patients have been received into its hoſpitable boſom. By a careful examination of the Regiſtry, I am able to lay before you the following ſtatement of facts, viz.

70 are returned on the books, *dead*.

When you conſider the circumſtances of this claſs of citizens, you will all readily acknowledge, that this is a ſmall proportion---

42 have been ſent to the Alms-houſe and Hoſpital.

13 being diſorderly, have been *diſmiſſed*.

75 have been relieved, ſome of their very complicated diſeaſes being incurable.

8 have removed into the country:

And 730 are returned on the journal, *cured*:

Contri-

|| Condorcet.

CONTRIBUTORS to the dispensary! your bounty and charity have poured wine and oil into the wounds of sensibility, and caused the abodes of sickness, pain and misery, to echo with grateful joy. On this day, the blessing of more than 700 persons, many of whom have been ready to perish, comes upon you. Physicians of the Dispensary! have we attended the bed of hopeless, beggared, sharp-pinching poverty, with the same fidelity, as we do the sickly couch of wealth and luxury? If we have done this, to day we participate the divine pleasure, which springs from the consciousness of doing good.

IT is hoped you will not tax me with arrogance, while I endeavour to call your attention, one moment, to the most useful subject of resuscitation.

THE apparatus annexed to the Dispensary for the relief of unfortunate persons, who may suffer suspended respiration, by *drowning*, *lightning*, *suffocation*, *convulsions*, *suicide*, *intense cold*, *mephitic air* and *noxious vapours*; and other causes that produce apparently sudden death, particularly in *the case of still-born infants*, has not yet answered the important uses for which it was intended. Could not this society by uniting their exertions with the managers of the Dispensary, and other benevolent citizens, effect all the excellent designs, that the Humane Societies of our sister States and those of Europe, have most happily achieved?

LET us cast our eyes over the map of New-York: We instantly perceive that no country affords so fine a theatre for the establishment of HUMANE SOCIETIES as this State. On the one side we are presented with a delightful view of the East-River; on the other, the Hudson, covered with the floating wealth of the Farmer and Merchant, appears

appears before us. Northward and Weſtward, we behold the Iroquois, Champlain, Erie and Ontario. In the extenſive and fertile territories between theſe extremes, we obſerve the Mohawk, Senaka and Geneſee; next, the interſecting branches of the Delaware and Suſquehannah, and then the beautiful ponds, canals and ſmaller lakes, appear before us. And may we not anticipate the northern and weſtern inland lock-navigation? All theſe maſſes of water are ſituated in a climate that is expoſed to the moſt ſudden changes, ſtorms and tempeſts; and in the winter, to intenſe cold. Now let us behold the traveller, whelmed beneath the ice, the fragile bridge of his deluſive way! Here let HUMANITY come in aid of life and reſtore the SUFFERER to the boſom of love and gratitude---then will HE wipe the tear of ſorrow from the eye of conjugal and filial affection! For, while all this yielding element furniſhes an ample ſcene of dangerous buſineſs and pleaſure, it forms at the ſame time, "the floating grave," to employ, as the Poet obſerves,

"the reſuſcitating breath
"Of medical benevolence!"

ON this theatre, *contentions and diſputes* ought to be exhibited, that would be *worthy of Phyſicians and uſeful to men*: Here, the genius of Medicine might *contend* with that of the Drama † for the honors of philanthropy. Here *diſputes* on the nature of animal life, and on the beſt methods of rekindling its quenched flame, might be managed in ſuch a manner as to compel all men to acknowledge that Medicine is a moſt uſeful art. When we ſhall have accompliſhed theſe excellent works, we ſhall rejoice

† Referring to a theatrical exhibition, of the Old American Company, for the relief of a number of orphans and widows of the Fiſhermen who were drowned in the North-River, in March and April, 1793.

rejoice as many of our profeſſional brethren have already done :

" Our's is the taſk, the greateſt taſk, to ſave
" Friend, Lover, Parent, from the watery grave;
" To ſnatch from death the victim of deſpair,
" And give the means of penitence and prayer."——

In America we have always enjoyed, what France has lately reſtored to her Citizens, the union of Medicine with Chirurgery, which conſtitutes the Healing Art what it was in the Hippocratic Age. To ſeparate the practice of Phyſic from that of Chirurgery, would be like a diſunion of Light and Fire---Medical Surgery is, therefore, highly intereſting to the Phyſician and to the public---Perhaps, it is reſerved for the Phyſicians of America to diſcover the beſt methods of preventing or ſuperceding many of the ſeverer operations in ſurgery----Too much praiſe cannot be given to the humane, judicious, prompt and dexterous operator. But when will the preſumptuous exerciſe of the bloody ſcalpel and catlin of Radcliffe and Sigault be ſuſpended? When will their vanity, raſhneſs and pertinacity no longer boaſt of what is in reality the greateſt diſgrace of the healing art? How long ſhall human nature be ſtruck with horror, at the detail of their barbarous and ill-judged operations?*

Anatomy is juſtly ſaid to be the eye of all rational Medicine. In like manner, the theory of the human mind, may juſtly be conſidered, as a kind of Anatomy of the Paſſions, Intellect and faculties of Man; which diſcovers all the mental diſeaſes. Contemptible are the reſources of that Phyſician, who is ſolely dependent on Noſology, for the name of a diſeaſe, and on a Pharmacopœia, for a ſpecific remedy.

To

* Vid. Principles of Puerperal Medicine, by John Aitkin, M. D. Wm. Deaſe's Obſervations on Midwifery—and Dr. Hunter's Remarks on the Sigaultian operation.

To the praiſe of this age, the pathology of the mind is conſidered as a ſubject of as much utility to medicine as that of the body. There is but little doubt, but Tetanus, Epilepſia, Hydrophobia, Mania, or Madneſs; Viſaniæ,† or the ſeveral kinds of Inſanity; and even Hyſteria and Hypochondriaſis, with ſome of the diſeaſes of the Moral Faculty, would in ſeveral parts of Europe and America, in 1692, have been ranked under the head of Witchcraft,§ and conſequently, all theſe diſeaſes, with many more, would have been conſidered as capital crimes, in the penal code of that day.

LET the ſober, wiſe and judicious part of the public now determine, how much praiſe is due to Phyſicians for inveſtigating and radically curing many of theſe diſeaſes.

A FEW years ago, it was conſidered as a kind of daring impiety, for a Phyſician to attempt the cure of ſeveral diſeaſes of the mind; particularly thoſe of the moral faculty. But as long as we believe that men have the power of reſiſting inclination, and to weigh the motives of action, we need not fear the conſequences of trying the full effects of medicines that may operate by phyſical neceſſity on man. And, let it be remembered, when Hipparchus undertook to number the ſtars and trace their motions, his attempt was alſo derided as impious; becauſe, it was conſidered as a work that baffled all human labor and obſervation, and could be done only by the Deity.



† Vid. Dr. T. Arnold's Treatiſe on Inſanity, Lunacy and Madneſs.

§ See Hutchinſon's Hiſtory of Maſſachuſetts.—Mr. Caleſ's work on Witchcraft—Mead's Medica Sacra.—Mather's Magnalia.—Caſe of the Demoniacs mentioned in the New-Teſtament, by N. Lardner. Lond. 8vo. 1758, and Gibbon's Roman Empire, chap. xxi.

Mark what followed : The labors of Hipparchus enabled Paul, a Florentine Phyſician,† to make maps and charts, by which he demonſtrated to Columbus the globurality of this Planet. All the events in nature are wonderfully connected together by infinite wiſdom, and conſpire to make one complete and harmonious plan of Providence! Had it not been for what has falſely been called the raſh impiety and enthuſiaſm of Hipparchus, the old world would never have come to the knowledge of America ; and inſtead of aſſociating together, under a free government, to promote the intereſts of humanity, moſt of us who are preſent would, at this moment, have been the vaſſals of ſome European deſpot, as was once the lot of our perſecuted anceſtors.

May it be the diſtinguiſhed fortune of ſome American Phyſicians, to become in the medical world, what Hipparchus and Columbus were in Aſtronomy and Navigation!

To the praiſe of America, there is a native of this country, who, by uniting the three characters of Philoſopher, Patriot and Phyſician, (need I name Dr. Ruſh?) has done much towards inveſtigating, explaining and curing many of the mental diſeaſes. But much ſtill remains to be done.

This is an age of ſcepticiſm : and this is the time to obſerve and explain the effects of ſcepticiſm on health. Neither ſhould the curious and ſurpriſing operations of ſpeculative opinions in religion,§ morals and politics, be overlooked ; for they evidently produce remarkable effects on

† In 1474, he correſponded with Columbus, on the probability of finding India, in the weſt. Life of Columbus, by Ferdinand Columbus.

§ Vid. Hannah Adams's View of Religions. Moſheim's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, and Robertſon's Charles V.

on health and diſeaſe. The ebulitions of enthuſiaſm, with dreams, viſions, trances, and all the illuſions of the ſenſes, particularly ſight and hearing, ſhould likewiſe engage the ſerious and careful attention and ſtudy of medical men. And, while we contemplate the injuſtice and impolicy of the ſlavery of the poor Africans, in our boaſted republican and free governments, ſhall we forget to obſerve the effects of ſlavery on the health, temper, genius and character of the people, who advocate and practiſe this trafic and bondage of man ?

THE doctrine of the aſſociation of ideas is more uſeful to the Phyſician, than to the Profeſſor of any other art. Whoever knows how to avail himſelf of this ſubject in the practice of phyſic, may be ſaid to be in poſſeſſion of a key to unlock many of the apartments of the cabinet of nature. How often, by this taliſmanic charm, may the morbid condition be changed to the healthful! This was the BRAZEN SERPENT and the TALITHA-CUMI of Dr. Willis, when he cured the King of England.

WHILE medicines are adminiſtered to change the diſeaſed action, or to remove the irregular action, to equalize the excitement and to vary its degree, and thus to reſtore health and happineſs; we find ample ſcope for ſcrutiniſing the operations of the mind, when we ſhall often obtain the greateſt advantages in changing the train of ideas

"From grave to gay, from lively to ſevere."

In doing this, may we not hope, that, it is reſerved for the profeſſors of the healing art to unravel all the curious tiſſue of feeling, emotion, paſſion and thought more ſucceſsfully, than has ever yet been done by the unaided light of ſolitary philoſophy.

THE

THE effects of reading Novels and Romances, on the Imagination, appetites and passions, particularly in young people, have not yet been investigated by Physicians. To keep the passions† regular and in temperate balance with each other, is the way to preserve health, and at the same time to promote virtue and happiness. Temperance is the only panacea that Medicine knows. This saved Socrates, Thucidydes and Justinian from the ravages of the plague which depopulated the earth in their days. Hence, the necessity of the professors of health enforcing their instructions of temperance by the eloquence of example. But the time allotted for this discourse does not permit me to go into a regular detail on these subjects.

THUS, Gentlemen, I have endeavored to call your attention *to the improvement of Medicine*, by giving a slight, tho' very imperfect, sketch of the principal objects of your Institution. The advantages are too obvious to need any comment. Many of them are of such a nature, that they never can be effected by individuals, but must depend solely on the united labors of societies of active and ingenious men. Active men, it must be remembered, for all who are not active in these societies, are like negative quantities, which being added to positive, too often make the whole negative.

IN conformity with the design of this Anniversary Meeting, many more particulars might be mentioned, if the time and your patience would permit: Suffice it, to remark, wherever there is organization, spontaneous motion and life, there are the concomitants of Humanity, Disease and Death; and there are the objects to engage the attention and employ the study of the Physician.

ARE

† Vid. The Rev. Dr. Watts' Doctrine of the Passions, and Locke's Essay on Human Understanding.

ARE we convinced of the advantages of uniting our exertions to accomplish the useful purposes which have been mentioned? Opposition of pretended interest and partial views will effect nothing. Union, every thing. Wise men are seldom satisfied with their own opinions, till they are confirmed by the suffrages of the rest of mankind. This is the age in which the mysterious quackery of *Abracadabra* ought to be no more; for Dogmatism can no longer trample on Genius and Merit. Let us, therefore, be amalgamated together. United, we have the hardness and strength of iron, with the ductility and beauty of gold. In discord, we are nothing but a mere rope of sand.

UNDER the Dæmon of Discord, *what advantageth it*† this Society, that Æsculapius and Avicenna should have lived? that, Vesalius and Harvey should have traced the blood thro' all its labyrinths.---That Boerhaave and Van Sweiten should have accumulated all the knowledge of Antiquity and augmented the same, for our use---that Winslow and Morgagni should have demonstrated the geometry of God, in the mechanism of Man---That Haller and Whytt, that Hoffman and Cullen should have written; that Black, Pringle and M'Bride should have experimented; that Priestley should have taught us the uses of air, and Lavoisier those of fire; that Hunter,§ Brown and Galvani, should have penetrated the recesses of Life!— Under the Dominion of Discord, we can achieve excellent works. We can say, each to the other, *let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.*†

AN eloquent foreigner observes, that "union is an irresistable panacea against the evils of pertinacity. It is union that composes the understanding and tranquilizes the affections; she

§ John Hunter. † Holy Bible.

ſhe ſtills the tumult of the paſſions, ſhe ſuperſedes perſonal antipathies, ſhe diſenchants the deluded ſenſes, ſhe diſſipates the clouds by which truth is obſcured, ſhe ſheds the rays of diſtinction on the apoſtle of truth; he preſents her with modeſty, he is received without unfavorable prepoſſeſſions." Let us, then, unite our labours for the common good of Society: Thus ſhall we render this Inſtitution uſeful to the People, and honorable to its Members.

THE patriotic Citizens will give their approbation to an Eſtabliſhment which has the public health for its object. May we not hope, that, the enlightened Legiſlators of a free People will give their ſanction to its Incorporation? All the objects of the Inſtitution can be promoted much better this way than any other. This Society may, hereafter, have a HUNTER,† a FOTHERGILL, a COPELEY, a LETTSOME and a HAWES, who will inſtitute Incentives and Rewards for Genius and Character. She may, in ſome future day, have an Eſtabliſhment for the relief of the Widows and Orphans of her poor or unſucceſsful members.

I AM ſenſible, many objections are urged againſt all ſorts of Incorporations in a free government. But, theſe all ariſe from the effects of the ancient Incorporations being miſapplied to the preſent ſtate of Society. Incorporations, were invented by the Emperors of Germany, in favor of the Peaſantry, when the Barons, or Chieftains, under the feudal ſyſtem, conſpired together, in a formidable Ariſtocracy, againſt the Kings. Then it became the policy of Kings to check the encroachments of the Patricians,

† Wm. Hunter.

cians, or Nobles, on the uſurped and regal power; and artfully to ſtrengthen and increaſe this power, which was ever operating the degradation and miſery of mankind, by giving, as it was then falſely called, privileges to the Plebeians, or Peaſantry, and ſo defending them againſt the equally unjuſt claims of the Barons, in uniting them in the ſupport of Monarchy, which was conſtantly at war with Ariſtocracy. In America, there is no Peaſantry; but in room of it, a collective and united body of Huſbandmen, called THE FREE YEOMANRY. There are more modern Corporations, with peculiar powers, which have ended in monopolies. Theſe, firſt, fattened on the blood and tears of the natives of the Eaſt and Weſt-Indies, and having become enebriated with the ſweat, extorted from the ſlave-wearied limbs of the Sons of Africa, they, afterwards, corrupt Society, with their unjuſtly accumulated wealth, and deſtroy themſelves. In all thoſe periods, the people were oppreſſed by an arbitrary Government, which did nothing relative to Medicine; if, you except the deſpotic decrees of the Parliament of Paris, reſpecting antimony; and the diſgraceful edict of Charles V. to regulate Veneſection.

INCORPORATIONS may be reformed, as well as any other political inſtitutions. May it be a part of modern policy to eſtabliſh certain incorporations, under ſuch conditions, as will check the violence of democracy; and tend, by promoting uſeful knowledge, to the ſupport, perhaps, to the perpetuity, of elective, free and well-balanced governments.

THE wiſeſt phyſician† of antiquity obſerved, that the Aſiatics were leſs warlike and more effeminate than the Europeans.

† Hippocrates de aere, locis et aquis.

Europeans. This he attributed, in part, to their climate, but principally, to the form and adminiſtration of their governments, which were all deſpotic and ſubject to the arbitrary will of their kings. We have the happineſs to live under a free government. At this time we ſcarce need recur to Longinus to be informed, that, '*Liberty is formed to nurſe the ſentiments of great geniuſes, to inſpire them with hope; to puſh forward the propenſity of conteſt one with another, and the generous emulation of being the firſt in rank.*' Our government, then, muſt produce great effects, not only on the genius, but alſo on the health of the people. The former will enable Phyſicians to obſerve with accuracy, and future ages will expect that their duty ſhould have impelled them to record with fidelity, THE EFFECTS OF FREE GOVERNMENTS ON THE HEALTH OF THE CITIZENS.

FREEDOM! all-hallowed name! Thou friend of man! at thought of thee, our hearts are warmed with thy celeſtial fire! Already do we behold a hoſt of thy heaven-deſcended offspring:

When Bacon, "from the gloom
Of cloiſtered monks, and jargon-teaching ſchools
Led forth the true Philoſophy, there long
Held in the chain of words and forms
And definitions void,"—

thy victorious benignant hand guided his illumined mind: When he marked out the limits of human knowledge, thou didſt inſpire him. When Newton, greateſt ſage! calculated, thou waſt with him. When Baile became the advocate-general of Philoſophers, then didſt thou give a ſubtlety and inſpire a confidence unknown to man before. When Locke made all the mental world his own, thy friendly genius guided him through all the deep reſearch,

and

and pointed the way to truth. In Milton, immortal name! thou didſt teach mankind that diſobedience to the will of Heaven is the true cauſe of all the tyranny and miſery in nature. When Clarke and Butler, by moral demonſtration, proved to bewildered men the truth of that religion, firſt taught in Judea, by Jeſus of Nazareth, which carries in its divine boſom, peace on earth and good will to men; thou didſt diſpel the darkneſs of ſuperſtition. When Raleigh, Ridley, Sidney, Ruſſell and Hamden expired, in ſealing the truth with their precious blood, thou, O FREEDOM! didſt conſecrate their names, in the ſacred temples of Virtue, Honor and Fame.

In thy venerable Rouſſeau, thou haſt pourtrayed all thy charms; by his eloquence haſt thou delineated the beauty and power of truth; and by his ſtrength and courage, didſt thou ſubſtantiate thy choiceſt bleſſings. In thy own Voltaire, thy benediction to all mankind was God and Liberty. In him didſt thou avenge the cauſe of humanity and deliver Europe from the yoke of the ancient deſpotiſm of Aſia: In him didſt thou give to truth the ſacred impreſſions of genius; and by his ſtrong arm didſt thou ſhake the diſgraceful remains of feudal and gothic vaſſalage. When Monteſquieu and Beccaria reſtored to humanity, her long loſt charms, thy friendly ſpirit did direct them.

Priestley, illuſtrious ſage! The fruitleſs effort to ſave a ſinking realm is his crime: The greatneſs of his virtues and his ſufferings prove the deſpotiſm and misfortunes of that nation, whoſe hiſtory his future fame will adorn. He, O FREEDOM! hath fought, ſucceſsfully fought, under thy holy banners, and broken the fetters of reaſon. By him, haſt thou confounded the blind partizans of antiquity, and demoliſhed the antique pillars of the temple of ſuperſtition. But, in Britain ſhall it be ſaid, that, Erſkine his

friend, and the friend of Paine, can no longer defend the palladium of Liberty ; and that he having become the chriſtian victim of the riotous triumph of mad hierarchical bigotry, ſuch as would have diſgraced the reign of Dioclesian or Nero, muſt flee his native land. Welcome, thrice welcome, to this weſtern world : thou bringeſt with thee all the treaſures of knowledge of all ancient and modern time. Come and animate the Americans with the amiable example of thy virtues.†

WHEN Mirabeau, Condorcet, and that bright phalanx of patriots and heroes, arrayed, in the divine panoply of reaſon, waged ſucceſsful war againſt the many-headed monſter, Tyranny, thou, O FREEDOM ! didſt nerve their mighty arm with more than herculean ſtrength.

THESE are the men whoſe fame will live forever : Theſe are the benefactors of mankind : their glory will embrace all the future generations of men. Who can ſtop the progreſs of their works ! What can check the progreſs of truth ! As ſoon might man ſtretch forth his feeble arm and ſay to yon bright orb of day, retire and ceaſe to ſhine.

BUT, what ſhall we ſay of the Legiſlators and Heroes of America ? Theſe all uttered their voices, ſtrong as reaſon and ſublime as heaven, ſaying, *Let America be free, and America was free.* Under the auſpices of that freedom, in this Hall, are we now aſſembled.

PHYSICIANS !

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† This was written after Dr. Prieſtley had informed ſeveral of his friends in America of his intention of leaving England, on account of civil and religious perſecution, and fleeing to America, the aſylum of thoſe who flee from the Tyrants of the old world.

PHYSICIANS! you are convened on one of the moſt important occaſions that can excite the attention of the wiſe and virtuous part of mankind. Your profeſſion is to be the diſciples of nature. Your object is to be the mitigation and cure of diſeaſes. And, your ruling principle is to be active benevolence, by which you are to become the counſellors, the friends and the benefactors of mankind. Let us therefore make this day a ſolemn Jubilee, ſacred to the memory of all thoſe *who have improved the healing-art*, and promoted the intereſts of humanity in the world.

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