

JAMES ATKINSON AND HIS MEDICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY*

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LET no man think he would be buying a dull book if Dame Fortune should smile upon him and throw in his way that most remarkable of all medical bibliographies, which James Atkinson compiled under the index letters A and B. He got no farther in the alphabet. In fact I do not think he ever had any intention of attempting more. He made his string of authors and titles serve as a frame for some of the most amusing comments ever made apropos of the dry-as-dust authors he considered. He says of himself and his writings:

I am not the sort of fellow to undertake to write a sentimental journey; and, therefore, wanting better amusement, and through mere incident, I stumbled upon the dry, dusty, tedious, accursed, hateful, bibliography. It may, perchance, mollify duller than ordinary hours. It may kill time more circuitously, than in a direct manslaughtering way. And in a degree, which, if enforced, would kill the devil. But of profit, it is seldom productive. Should only one reader, even a destitute Unitarian, upon the occasion, honour my pages with his patience; this patience may inform him, and to his cost he would learn, how much or how little of this virtue may be required to effect

*Published in 1834.

the smallest impression upon a legitimate rock of literary granite: in distinction, to the task of his patience, in wading through the alluvium of my nonsense. And yet unless his instrument or perforator be smeared with a drop or two of the balsam of nonsense, he may labour through his days, and labour through his nights, but will never drill through the impenetrable medium of a dense and dolorous cloud of bibliography. He must at length be contented in concluding with me that bibliography is a doleful ditty. Or as Lambinet has it, "on ne peut se dissimuler que le plupart des ouvrages bibliographiques ne soient d'une sécheresse soporifique," (snort and echo) *soporifique!*

He was a great fellow, a friend of Sterne (whose style he has unconsciously imitated) and I imagine a thoroughly delightful man whom I have taken so to heart on short acquaintance that I shall find it hard work to return the volume which I should like to place next to my "Tristram Shandy" and my "Sentimental Journey." Perhaps some day Dame Fortune may smile upon me.

Why this work has never been reprinted is a mystery to me. Dr. Osler said it was the most fascinating book on the subject ever written. I know of no book more amusing, excepting always "Tristram Shandy." If you

like Sterne you will like Atkinson; if you do not like Sterne you will not like Atkinson. As I like Sterne immensely I would undertake the task of editing a new edition could an enterprising publisher be found. Trimmed of the bibliographic references and with some omissions in the text, the book would not be unwieldy and I believe its publishing would be fraught with little danger of financial loss.

Atkinson was the son of a physician of York. He himself was the most successful practitioner there for a score of years and from the title page of his book we learn that he was "Surgeon of H.R.H., the late Duke of York; Senior Surgeon to the York County Hospital, and the York Dispensary." Later Atkinson is mentioned in *Notes and Queries*¹ and in Dibbins' "Bibliographical Tour."

Of his life we know little though doubtless considerable biographical material could be unearthed in York. He was respectable and respected and when he died in 1839 the *York Herald* spoke of him in glowing terms which might have served as a recommendation to St. Peter as it were. Part of this reads as follows: "Ever prominent with his aid at every benevolent institution, he possessed the blessing of the poor and afflicted whilst among them, and will live in their grateful remembrance beyond the grave." He was Vice-President of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, an enthusiastic member of the Musical Society and possessed a fine talent for drawing. No less than eight portraits by him hang in the National Portrait Gallery.

Atkinson had a curiously facile gift of expression and as one reads his work old friends turn up again. The very first sentence in the Preface was a favorite saying of Osler. Let me quote part of the Preface:

There is not perhaps any man so good a judge of the difficulty of writing a book, as an actual author. He soon discovers how many qualifications are necessary, how much science is required, and which are the points of most difficult

¹ Ser. 5, x, 474.

access. He soon finds out his own deficiencies; and, as regards his powers, that some difficulties may be insurmountable. That essay, which sometimes originates in study and amusement gets insensibly into growth, and is perpetuated. For, having been undertaken in the spirit of an inquirer, it is frequently carried on in the capacity of a student. This student, however, soon assumes the master, and pronounces his decisions on critical subjects, as authoritatively as if all learning and languages were at his fingers ends. . . .

In this sense Bibliomania, in lieu of preserving the use of books, has deprived us of them. Even the little giant Dib- (I dare not draw him at length), can scarcely prevent it. How many vagabond heirs to libraries have sold their books by the pound weight (though not sterling), to the grocer or pastry-cook. So lamentable to behold! a slushy cook subjecting poor Pliny, in his best condition, again to be burned to ashes, in singeing a pig! and beneath him the divine Homer (ah che gusto!) blazing in the dripping pan, and singeing a goose! Yet he is there, crackling with fire, his wonted fire; which this adept and greasy cook cannot for her life extinguish. Let us then, as we are often desired, just again deplore the fate of the Alexandrian Library in the stews, the literary devastations of the Goths and Vandals, the horrible sacrileges of the French Revolution; of that very nation, where books and bibliography are now in splendour. And also, of those places, where all the fine libraries have been sacked and ransacked, where beautiful editions have been polluted and destroyed, in nocturnal orgies. . . .

Meditating on these sad obstructions to the propagation of literature, may we not therefore at least hold praiseworthy any attempt, from any man, to restore, if possible, the spirit and well being even of a monotonous bibliography?

For the endless imperfections of my work, I have a feeble excuse. It is a corseless exuvium, irregularly collected, by bits and scraps of leisure and pleasure, from the indispensable occupations of a medical man; who, like some others, is in the actual enjoyment of all the horrors and irritations of three separate professional departments. . . .

The reader must not, in common mercy, call upon me to decypher all the enigmatical letters, and initials, in this book. He must make allow-

ance for the critiques I have delivered. They are too free, too flippant, too loose. I am afraid their counter-parts will be too strict, too prudential, too tight. But, being (*nescio quo fato*) an admirer of the wildness and play of animals in a state of nature (not as in *museo nostro*, like skeletons), I doubt that I have exhibited, in my own pages, too much also of the frolics and gambols of a native folly. I pray you, gentlest of all gentle readers, to forgive me; and if there unfortunately be a magazine of fulminating powder in the criticising cells of your *os petrosum*, don't use a percussion lock or hair trigger; don't let it burst suddenly upon me; for I am of a nervous, quiet, and peaceable, though ridiculous nature; and far advanced in life. And you will have no credit in killing so harmless a creature.

But, independent of my various errata, omissions, and mis-interpretations (all of which, however, I shall palm upon the printer) what excuse can I offer, or what plea can I make, for having, firstly, plucked other authors of their most brilliant and gaudy feathers: and secondly, for strutting about with them, in alto relieve, as my own? Still farther, what amends can I venture, for that sad lack of gravity (no, not of decorum) which here and there, and everywhere, is so apparent in the most serious pages?

I must request an *avant propos*, and once for all the reader to observe, that, lest he should get suddenly bogged in the mire of my expressions and absurdities, I shall (as is done in other disagreeable, difficult, and dirty roads) desire the traveller "to take off and put on," as he has seen on a mile post. To take off when the road becomes ridiculous and precipitous; and to put on when it is steady and accessible. So that it will take off all blame from me, should he put on when he is advised to take off; and all blame must be put on him, if he does put on, when he should take off. And let him now observe, that, by take off, I intend him to take his eyes off the page; and, by put on, I advise him to replace them. To avoid repetition, however, of this notice, I must require of him, when he perceives the morality of my pages, or jet of terms, to be rather equivocal; to scance through his fingers only at them, like a good and virtuous young woman, criticising and over-hawling a rake.

Finally, I know there are men who wilfully pervert all meaning. So that, by take off, a

man would affect to understand, that he was instantly to take off, full gallop up the hill; and by put on, to stick spurs into his horse as if the deuce drove him down it. To this, testy traveller, I have nothing to say; I only wish to apprise the reader, that if he choose to read my non-sense, with his eyes and fingers open, he must be a greater fool, if possible, than the author who wrote it.

Nor do I affect to assert, that my work is at all calculated for *Somnambules* in Bibliography.

The book of which I write and from which I shall quote extensively is a single volume, not too large to be held easily and can be read in two evenings, if perforce it must be done so rapidly. Such a method with such a book is much like drinking a bottle of Scotch liqueur at two sittings, rather too stimulating but one would do it were it to be taken away the third night, at least we unregenerate ones who scoff at Volstead would. The book has a motto: "Take me for better, for worse; for richer, for poorer," and is dedicated "To all idle medical students in Great Britain." Then follows the word "Sit" and a drawing of that part of the skeleton known as the sacrum. This puzzled me until I remembered what an inveterate punster our author was. In his short article, "Bibliographical References," included in the volume at hand, he says:

For my part, although my sacrum and crista Ilei are no harder, or become more cartilaginated by book-incubation and study than my neighbors, yet I have known the time when a very thin old black-lettered book has made my dull bones ache most confoundly; and after all, to very little purpose, and much less entertainment. And I should, out of mere curiosity, like much (in due, very due, time) to possess Mr. Dibdin's *Ossa Ischii*, for my museum, as a vermin specimen of a literary incubator. By this sort of industry, however, we are taught to understand, that the duties of a critic, even to a competent sitter, are not so easily accomplished as "le moyen de faire éclore"; or, by hatching fresh eggs in a graduated oven.

Is it not delightful? I should like to have a portrait of the fellow to see what manner of

man he was. Of this subject of portraits he says in his conclusion:

Having accomplished an imperfect, dry, and verbose Bibliography; it occurred to me, during the progress, that an illustration of Authors by their Portraits, as is frequently done, might be an useful and pleasing addition.

In consequence, I have, for many years, collected Portraits of Medical Authors generally. And I have felt great satisfaction and instruction in confronting their works, their lives, and their faces. Caste of features, of thought, and expression, sometimes, though rarely, coincide. Whenever, however, it does happen, the coincidence and gratification are synonymous. Occasionally, also, as an amusement, I have sketched brief notices of the Medical and Literary History of those authors, after the example of other Biographers. So that when prosing over the heavy drag of some of those writers, and their editions, a mere glance at their portraits has occasionally awakened and delighted me: discovering, possibly, in their countenances traces of intellect which I did not see before, nor otherwise should have seen. Therefore I invite the student to follow me in this mode of interpretation; to collect and to arrange; to contemplate the man specifically in his mind; and that same man in his portrait.

Whether I may be induced, in future, for the advantage of the young collector, to publish, after the manner of Granger, a partial catalogue of the different heads and portraits I possess; their respective eras; the number and variety of the same; and the names of the painters and engravers, as far as I know, may depend on circumstances. For I own; that frequently I am out of love with everything I undertake. And am not unapt, by virtue of long living, to fall into that despondency and unchristian-like opinion; that the world is a naughty jade not worth serving!

Atkinson starts off with Aristotle and then goes on alphabetically through the A's and B's. Of course one does not turn to Atkinson for scientific bibliography, which others have done much better; one goes to him to be amused, for witty chitchat about those authors and their works included under A and B and others that are not ordinarily thus classified. For he gives a list of "a few respectable authors on theory

and physiology, indiscriminately noticed," which comprises about a hundred names, some well known, some familiar only to medical bibliomaniacs.

With Aristotle we shall tarry only long enough to snatch a couple of quotations; the first concerning a typographical error in one of the editions:

In one of the proof sheets, by a *lusus naturae* (I fear) the printer's devil, to show off his Latin, as the dying spark and refuse of a free school, and as a trick upon the compositor, had slyly exchanged the word *castigationes* into *castrationes*, the extremity of wit and wickedness; but what a difference to poor Averroës.

Combien d' éditions annoncées plusieurs fois par les bibliographes, qui se copient trop souvent sans examen, seroient reconnues fausses, si l'on remontait aux 'premiers auteurs qui les ont citées! Malheureusement comme on n' ont pas toujours à portée de faire les vérifications nécessaires pour découvrir la source de l'erreur, il est quelque fois impossible de s'en préserver. (Brunet.)

Some idea of Atkinson's sense of humor can be gained by his comments upon himself as a linguist, and on the Greek language. In his preface what he says of the German language, of which he professed ignorance, would have satisfied even the most exacting American during the late war.

Of Asclepiades, of Prusa in Bithynia, who, it appears, lived about 120 B.C., he says:

For an account of this particular author consult Coelius Aurelianus, and Celsus. There were several others of like name mentioned by Galen. He was, by report, a wild erratic, vagabond son of physic, but a talented man. Fragments of his works and genius are recorded by the above authors. He derided, and lived without physic, I mean, without taking it, to the age of eighty. Wonderful!

In some respects I doubt, Avicenna had chosen him for a pattern. He prescribed wine for himself, and for his patients, something to excess. Pliny relates that he died from a fall.

Of him says the comical poet:

Wherefore to cure all his bruises and knocks,
He was used to drink *vinum* orthodox;
And one day did it so effectually,
He dislocated his epistrophe.

Atkinson must have been a collector of considerable ability even if his taste ran largely to several of the early printers. He pokes fun at the collectors who never read their books, a goodly crew even today.

I am sorry to observe that in my Aldus' edition, of 1518, the book-worm has taken care not to indulge much, either in sleep or dreams. For he has made some very intrusive perforations. And I wonder, in what part of this book-worm's head, the most ingenious philosophers, the Craniologist, would affect to look for the organ of destructiveness. If all collectors of books were not more to blame than the book-worm, the worm would never have been there. Of all creatures, he is the most peaceable and retired. And nothing in life he detests so much, or is so fatal to him, as having a dust kicked up in an old library.

Anent the "Deipnosophistae" of Athenaeus he writes most entertainingly:

But as these Books related to the names, objects, and articles of diet, and to the art of cookery, is it not most probable, that they were written by a physician? Haller's inference here, however, must not be forgotten, that Athenaeus "etiam si non medicus fuerit, maxime diaeticorum legi debet."

Pray did not Hippocrates, Galen, Avicenna, Averroës, Avenzoar, Oribasius, Ægineta, etc. etc. all write on these matters? But, rhetoricians, poets, and philosophers in general, are wretched judges of eating and drinking. Poor things! they usually have no practice. And one alderman (*cominus gladio*) in this respect will out eat, or eat out, men of all professions.

When however we are informed, that such stars as Galen of Pergamus, and Daphnus Ephesius, *moribus sacer*, were invited to an intellectual feast, where the solar rays of Grecian grace are reflected through the prism of Grecian eloquence, we may be allowed to cast a longing and retrospective eye upon the sparkling coruscations of their festive wit. And when these, again, are refracted through the various Greek editions of Aldus and Valde-
rus, and assume the Roman garb under the translations of Natalis, Berdrotti, Casaubon, Schweighaeuser, and the classic union of Latin verse and prose, we may absolutely fancy

ourselves at the Anacreontic board of these enchanting Deipnosophists. Let us not be fastidious, as to the correspondency, or dates, of the respective guests. Whether before, or after, new style; suffice, it was the honey-moon of human perception.

And this high flight of Deipnosophia may well account for the abashing modesty which prevented translations of this work. It will, at the same time, diminish our surprise that Stephanus Niger, and Lazaro Bayfius (the former in his observations "De nimio vitae luxu," and the latter, "De vasculis") should have distilled off the ethereal spirit of Athenaeus's flagons, to embellish or give flavour to their own.

Although the dainties of the human sensorium were the attributes of the banquet of wisdom, yet the work expressly includes the objects of cookery and of epicurism. And calipash and calipee were the established dishes, from which arose the exhalations of fun and fancy.

Among the delicious treats of the table, Athenaeus had no occasion to refrain from the luxury of feasting on frogs. They were sometimes so plenteously showered down in rains, "ut domus ac viae omnes implerentur"; so that at length, to avoid them, the natives "de regione eadem aufugere decreverunt." Athenaeus was convinced of the fact, "novi Deum praeterea multis in locis piscibus," also, "pluisse." Fishes and Frogs are cousins german.

These natives endeavoured, *primis diebus*, on the arrival of the frogs, "domus claudentes," to catch them in a trap, and as far as they were able, to keep killing; or to kill them, until there was killed "frog, and frog all."

Now this brings on a retort of conscience. The R. T. Frog. Dib. (piano, piano!) has anathematized some of our ancient books in the York Minster Library, as having been destroyed, not by the worm, not by damp, not for want of being read, not by order of the Dean and Chapter, not by Time, that arrant old swindler, but by the rats! A positive revival on his part of an old family-feud; and of the memorable challenge of Captain Rat: "Turn out, ye frogs, that have a soul to die!" (Homer.)

To the work of Apicius Coelius, "De re coquinaria," we owe some comments on diet and cookery, regarded by the ancients as beneath the dignity of the most learned:

The family-name of Apicius *pro quovis guloso occurrit*, synonymous with alderman or doctor; which, when attached to the term *magnus*, as *magnus* alderman or doctor, implies a gorgeous man, or great concoctor. Casaubon, in his "Animadversiones in Athenaeum"² observes, "tres Romae tulit Apicios, gulae studio omnes infames."

The first is supposed to have lived in the time of Pompey and Sylla; the second under Augustus and Tiberius. He was *nepotum omnium altissimus gurges*, i.e., the Quin of his day. The third, or the Oyster Apicius, our author, under Trajan. So that the one, by his great gout, gave the family a relish for eating; the second, who is said by Suidas (though denied by Fabricius) to have composed a book, "De Gulæ irritamentis," thus provided a receptacle for food: the other taught how to prepare and cook it. We may ask, by the bye, how can men who excel in any point be considered as *infames*?

There is described, however, another Marcus Apicius, the younger, who inherited (like the rest of the family) "ad omne luxus ingenium mirum," a dead hand at it; and was also, *altissimus gurges*. So that one and all were, in taste, superlative. And Gul. Budaeus, writing "De Asse et partibus ejus"³ which must not be ignorantly rendered into "an old ass, and his relatives," informs us, that "Phoenicopteri linguam praecipuè saporis esse Apicius docuit." He also, copying Pliny, repeats, "nepotum omnium altissimus gurges, cum sestertium millies in culinam congesisset."

In this work, which was printed in *aedibus Ascensianis* at Paris, a short narration may be consulted of the excesses of the Apicii. And these observations, though commonplace, may not be out of place.

If however we combine the festive feats of the metropolitan church of York, Archbishop Neville in the chair, and those of the civic state of York, our present Lord Mayor (Lord bless him) out of it, I think we could run the Apicii for the Claret stakes, neck and neck, over the course of Knavesmire. And I have always considered it, as very unfair treatment of the Apicii, that they should be so stigmatized and censured for a passion, which is very natural, and very delicious, and very nourishing, and

very exhilarating, nay very composing, and very lasting. For, in it there is no fasting, but all feasting. 'Tis pleasing, without teasing; and, at the worse, produces only a wee exanthematous wheezing.

Why has man a stomach given to him of a certain capacity, if it were not to be filled, and to enable him to grow merry and fat. *Dic quaeso*, answer me that?

Albinus Torinus in the edition, from Basle, in 1541, by no means gives a flattering description of the state of the Codex of Apicius, "in eundem semilacerum et squalore obsitum Apicii codicem," as, "vix nomen divinâsse." Consult also, without punning on these matters, Lampreydeus and Heliogobblus, as the Alpha and Omega of feasting wit; the first a boiling dish, the other a roaster.

It is surprising how little comment such a writer as Atkinson allows, I will not say needs. How many have ever heard that the tube now known as the Eustachian tube was mentioned by Alcmaeon some five hundred years before Christ?

If this author was the disciple of Pythagoras, in the 35th age of the world or about 497 years before Christ, as is reported; it well becomes me to beg pardon of his Manes, for not having already introduced him.

He is mentioned as being the first Veterinary Surgeon, who wrote on the anatomy of animals. And was possibly a relation of the famous Milo, of Croton, who could bear a bull (I don't say bull and bear, *ne quid nimis!*) upon his shoulders. Milo might have been the apprentice of Alcmaeon; and now and then, *pro re nata*, in the way of his profession, have had occasion to carry a sick bull into the surgery to his master. Let us here observe, in a parenthesis, how surprisingly one trifling incident of history may clear up another, "and the sons of Alcmaeon shall never repine."

Goelicke makes a question, whether, in consequence of the observation of Alcmaeon, that goats breathed through a passage from the palate to the ears, (and has not man, a more modest animal than the goat, the same?) the Eustachian tube might have been known to him. Assuredly, if Alcmaeon knew that goats did breathe in that way, he knew there was a passage. And as he had not given it a name,

² *Lib.* I, p. 22.

³ *Lib.* IV, p. 15.

Eustachius chose so to do, after himself, i.e. the Eustachian Tube.

Was there not the *via Appia*, in Italy, and several other *viae*, named after their then respective masters or constructors? Nor was it a matter of course, that not any of these *viae* should have existed before there was a name affixed to them. But Plagiarism does not at all appear to have formed any part of the character of Eustachius.

Eustachius had a much broader passage for his fame, than the *iter a palato ad aures*.

Have you ever been shocked at seeing the pages of some rare book being used to light fires or for baser purposes? This always irritated Atkinson, again and again he has his fling at it. Our old friend Aëtius of Amida serves as nail to hang one of them on:

This book "Tetrabiblos," is an excerpt from the writings of the ancient authors. And has been divided, by after writers, into sixteen books. The surgical subjects, in Cornarius's edition, commence with fourteenth book, or sermon; or the "Tetrabibli quarti, Sermonis secundi, page 739. Cornarius's edition concludes with an account *de ponderibus et mensuris*. So that eventually we perceive, he had adjudged everything by weight and measure; in which he has deserved, at least, as much merit as a grocer. And this is no small feat, in our days, for an author to perform.

By sermon is to be understood a book, of which the work comprised sixteen; or four Tetrabibles, each Tetrabile of four of these sermons, books, or discourses, and each discourse of so many chapters.

Now there are too many tea-tray bibles in our days; which makes them worth nothing. Every old washerwoman has her bit of butter sent to her, from the huckster's shop, wrapt up in one of the leaves. And I have occasionally seen them, like so many *muscae volitantes* in the turbid humours of a diseased eye, scudding about in all directions, or swimming down the channel of a common sewer.

Oh, we Bibliomaniacs! Oh, the subscriptions!

Of the charlatan side of Aëtius he is most amusing. The following exorcisms have been used by all medical bibliographers. Kurt Sprengel gives them in his article

and I rather imagine the subsequent writers have borrowed from him or his plagiarists. No one gives a more readable account. If he could charm tonsils today he would make a fortune until the throat men had him hung:

Quackery is so pleasing, so natural, and recondite a passion, that we may sometimes excuse it. Aëtius occasionally mounted this hobby, and gave us some comical instructions. He recommends very categorical cures; if, perchance, flies or other light matters are blown into the eye, he orders us to close the clear eye and open the other, "they may come out," if not, *digito exime*, indeed, short and sweet!

Now, in searching old books, I am sometimes like a swallow; very content in skimming the surface to catch a few flies, it was in such a flight that I discovered this wonderful secret, or the "digito exime."

Having, therefore, nearly concluded the grave part of Aëtius's practice of physic, we shall proceed to the lighter parts.

Jocularare tibi videtur
et sane bene
dum nihil habemus majus
calamo ludimus.

Aëtius was probably a Christian; this by the bye should have come before. His incantations, like exorcism, in driving out the evil spirit, from one possessed, were curious. "Ad educationem eorum quae in Tonsillas devorata sunt," what a hungry patient! "Statim te ad aegrum desidentem converte, ipsumque tibi attendere jube: ac dic, Egredere os, si tamen os, aut quicquid tandem existis. Quemadmodum . . . us ex sepulcro Lazarum eduxit; et quem admodum Jonam (poor Jonas, a very great ass indeed) ex ceto," a whale; very like a whale! "Atque apprehenso aegri gutture, (don't choak him) dic: Blasius martyr (a blazing fib) et Servus . . . ti dicit, aut ascende, aut descende," will you up, or will you down? The best Blasius I apprehend to be a good probang, but, Reader, is all this possible? What a pity for his fame's sake, that this man's faith had no larger mountains to move, than the Tonsils, *parturiunt montes*, what a loss of power!

According to our bibliographer the first man to write on smallpox was Aaron Alexandrinus:

AARON, ALEXANDRINUS, (Circa, 1622⁴) Was he so named from his beard? Of course a Jew. He is stated about the twenty-second year of the seventh century under the reign of the Emperor Heraclius.

He wrote a volume or Pandectae in thirty books, in Syriac, though belonging to the Greeks. But if Pan be deck'd ever so, he cannot be disguised. He still must have hair on; and is at best but a satyr. A satyr, though Syriac.

Haly Abbas blames and bemoistens Aaron with the acid tartaric of criticism, for the negligence of his writings.

It is to me, therefore, very doubtful, whether if Haly Abbas had met with brother Aaron, he might not, for this negligence, and as a demonstration, have placed his *pes cr(i)ticus in prima sede*; or, in the seat of honour of Mr. Aaron. What pretty work there would have been among these jealous warm climate authors, if the speedy virtues of the prussic acid had then been known to them. Dead in a moment!

Atkinson says he is a devout papist. I do not know. In speaking of Hugo Atratus of York, he says: "Even now it is to be hoped the reader will not suppose that I am introducing an author (though it looks very like it) because he was what I am, and is vulgarly denominated a Papist." He pokes a little well directed fun at some of the jarring sects. What a sly hand he was! Read the following:

Another ms., "Avicennae oratio ad Deum Creatorem." To perform this homage well we should cast an eye upwards. There is ample divinity in the aspect of the heavens. Happy is the man who has the double vision of a finite, and of an everlasting life. It should serve him to set at nought the passing shadow of the former, and to establish himself on the never failing substance of the latter. It is but an easy concession of intellect, that the vast Being who creates a world should also accomplish its preservation. And, when we perceive, *primo intuitu*, that this magnificent Creator has left the canopy of heaven open to all creatures, what can induce us to parcel it out into various religions, sects, and departments? Is there no natural claim upwards for the Jew, Turk, or

⁴This date is that given by Atkinson but should be 622.

Infidel? That there was redemption for man from the earliest ages no doubt; but if the road to heaven be really strewed with flowers, the beauty of Christianity becomes admirable.

The first paragraph on Constantine, the African, expresses the same opinion. As we read on we wonder if his wife was a great talker. I leave it to your imagination.

There are many of his codices in the royal library, at Paris; in the Ashmolean, and in Caius College, Cambridge. Perhaps we may like him better for being a Christian physician. I wish the Christians would be more interested in convincing the world, that they are not surpassed in morals by most of the tribes named savages! I am rather titubating in my opinion upon this subject.

Africanus was a famous linguist; and so are many ladies we may say; and in such numbers, as makes it no rarity. But still a man who has the Arabian tongue, the Chaldean, Persian, Egyptian, Indian, Latin, Greek, perhaps French and English, at his fingers' ends (not meaning merely the dictionaries), may in some measure balance the merit of the volubility of these ladies in this accomplishment. Of this I judge not.

Constantinus, as Eloy observes, attached himself principally to Hippocrates, Galen, and Haly Abbas; but, like others, he could not die contented without having written a "Libellus de Urinis"; which may be found in a codex in the royal library, at Paris, if any lady or gentleman wishes to consult it. There is likewise another book on a still more interesting, though a pa pa subject. I shall not name it.

The work of Albateric who about the year 1070 translated the entire Galenic canon into Arabic, gives an opportunity for some comments on the effect of climate on writing and of that tiresome jade, Fame, whom so many follow fitfully only to be jilted when it comes to the final test. Better none of her. What will it matter a hundred or a thousand years from now?

Never do I read of an Arabian, or of an Arabic translation, but I am transported into that land of physicians, philosophers, and alchymists, in which fancy and the luxuries of the human

mind appear so particularly to vegetate. Not common even, must be the soil, which shall be produced, from one man, a complete translation of the works of Galen.

The Arabian Nights Entertainments (so congenial to fiction and fancy) we might expect from a cheering sun in gracious land. But grave aphorisms on disease and death, their details and miseries, were scarce to be contemplated from the splendid views of Arabian alchymy.

When we peruse attentively the works of many of those men, who grace the early ages, as well as those of the 15th century, we must be struck with the magnificence of their literary exploits and labours. It may well convince us, that the advancement of learning creeps on like a snail, by slow and painful progress; and many an industrious traveller passes wearily over the ground, without the happiness of being able to leave the slightest trace behind him. Trace like a wave, of which no trace returns!

How miserable must be the remainder of that man's life, who has worn down his best days in vain attempts at rising; and when death is approaching, finds the doors of fame barred to him! Where shall be his consolation? "quae enim potest in vita esse jucunditas, cum dies et noctes cogitandum sit, jam jamque esse moriendum." (Cic. Tusc.)

If the divine Cicero emblazoned with everlasting fame, could be susceptible of such a rigor, *que deviendra pauvre moi?*

There must have been some peculiar quality of the air of York to have produced such genial wits as Sterne and Atkinson, not to mention others: the quality of mind is so similar. Some have ascribed the gay lightheartedness of the Parisians to emanations from the limestone, or whatever it is, on which Paris is built. I have always thought that the radiant activity of the place was due to the quality of the food and drink and now that savants are solemnly discussing the radioactivity of foods, why not? But I must leave this fascinating subject and get back to my author.

Concerning Haly Abbas, the Persian, I give a somewhat long quotation, but it is in my humble opinion worth it:

The work styled *Almaleki* contains twenty books; it was translated from Arabic into Latin by Stephanus, of Antioch, a student of philosophy, and illustrated by Michael di Capella, in the year 1127. It has been attributed to Isaacum Israelitum, and is sometimes taken for, and confounded with, this last author's work, "Pantechion." These works have been supposed to be identified in one person. I don't apprehend, however, that Isaac, a name so common to the Jew, would have had any likelihood of being godfathered on the Persian. The work deserves the character affixed to it, of excellent.

The edition of Jacobymi, Lugd. 1523, is a very good one. Haller used this edition, and it is one which I have. It affects *totius Medicinae*, in two parts: the *Theoricae pars* consisting of 135 leaves, double columns, in ten books, black or Gothic letter, with the *expositio terminorum Arabicorum*. The books are full of practice and prescriptions; the title page is neat, and wrought with the facsimiles or portraits (no doubt) of Hippocrates, Haly, and Galen; all three are poring over their books, and apparently in a very brown study, almost approaching to black. There are two young and winning women looking up at them, seemingly petitioning them to come down. Judging by the cut of their gowns, and their dialect, they are French women, (strange!) one is singing out "Allez, Allez," the other "A bas, A bas." Devils incarnate!

This is an odd concatenation. Why were the women placed there, who were they, what were they? Was it merely a (very unjustifiable) piece of wit, or malice, in the printer only, or the printer and his devil, there to place them? Why should there be only two ladies below stairs, when above there were three gentlemen. Were Hippocrates, Galen, or Haly Abbas, likely to bother themselves with women? Under these difficulties I must again submit the case to the learned reader. (In my own private opinion it was malice prepense.)

The theoretical part of the book contains an inquiry into various subjects, as, of humours and complexions, being somewhat on the model of Galen, *de usu partium*. On the figure and proportion of the body; on temperaments; on the aptitude of parts, as spleen, liver, bladder, uterus; on the theory of fever; of particular actions, as laughing, or sneezing; on pulses; on the affections of the head, as phrenitis,

and lethargies; on fluxes, and secretions; on regimen; on baths, natural, and non-natural; and on *varia variorum*. There is, however, a curious chapter, which at least may amuse us, viz. *de sani corporis signis et servis emendis*.

The most particular attention required to be paid to all circumstances affecting mind and body of a servant, whom you are about to buy or hire, at once gives us an idea of the abject state of slavery, in which they were in those days, in that country, as well as in the West Indies. It assures us also, that servants then also stood statutes, (and Statues?) once a year, to be hired in public places, as they now do; as *egratia, in vico nostro*, named Pavement, York.

Mercy upon us! if such an one as W. W., M. P., will be forced nilliwilly; or were to be forced to come through York, and pass through Pavement, *sole glorioso*, on that day; or come through it by accident; what pretty rumpus there would be the next week in the House of Commons. These servants were to be examined from top to toe. "Tam tunc (says Dr. Haly) autem a Capite incipe (that is from top), et ejus diligenter habitudines vide et agnosce, et ad ea quae subsunt et sequuntur descende membra, et sic usque ad inferiora (that is to toe, or presently will be) sin. ordinis membrorum consequentia; donec ad pedes (one would think a do nec, was a long way from *pedes*) perveneris, et intelliges," etc. So that you are to examine the natural complexion and health of the servant, "et inquiritur ab eo utrum quid insit vitii nec ne." The hirer should be able to judge of the complexion by the colour of the skin; that it be not too black, nor too white, nor too much saturnine.

He or she must next reckon on the just captation of body and parts. That the servants be neither too fat, nor too lean; and that neither epilepsy, nor any such falling propensity, belongs to them. The buyer or hirer must pay most particular attention to the appearance of the skin; and with this view, it is necessary, "loco claro intueri ne forte sit in ea morphea alba, aut lepra aut sarpedo Petigo," etc. In fact, and if so, there must have been a stripping room.

Then we must proceed to the individual members, or, *de speculatione membrorum*, beginning with the head, in which there should not be any offensive little creatures. Any alopecia, (a lop, *quid?*) or (as in mine I doubt) any mag-

gots; and, in going downwards, or to extremities, you must *saepius manum appone et palpa* (an papa) to feel if all be right or wrong.

Quoques inveneris super, and (on other occasions) *infra umbilicum usque*; and, in progression, *dehinc etiam testiculos cujusmodi sint inquirere*. Is not this taking the bull by the horns? Now we may as well tarry here to make one homely observation. How could any modest man, or much less how could any modest spinster, or any of the venerable *corps diplomatique* of old maids, who wanted to hire a man, or any female servant (even with Haly's authority), have ventured in open day, in open statutes, and in a public street, to absolve all these necessary services, where would be their *tactus eruditus*? How could a master or mistress investigate the viscera of a servant, after this method; "precipe supinum jacere (oh dear) et caput ejus plano positu sit, et manus ipsius tamque ad pedes extende et genua ipsius (avaunt) parum subleva et tange sub planum ventris (in the Pavement), ejus a loco oris stomachi et his quae sub hypochondrisis ejus sunt," but I will not pass the Rubicon, *prob pudor*, no!

Therefore, after some other such pieces of information, and after advising us to be sure not to hire a bandy-legg'd lady or gentleman (if lady's maid, or valet, were wanted) Haly dismisses this part of his subject; and perhaps this specimen may induce, I hope, at least the graver part of the medical community, to consult farther this useful work.

Averroës of Cordova comes in for a small quotation which has been marked in the borrowed edition on my desk, doubtless by the owner whom I fail to name. I am afraid the censor might object if I translated it, but I forget they do not censor medical books and the flood of pornographic literature masquerading as sociology is remarkable. Last summer I sat next to a well-known writer at one of those luncheons given weekly by certain clubs, suspiciously like uplift organizations, which now abound in this peaceful land. I started a story about alcohol and other things. "I beg your pardon," said my neighbor. "In these meetings we never mention alcohol or women, but," he added smilingly, "we can discuss sociol-

ogy, go on with your story." Oh the delightful hypocrisy! Most of them do not see it and the others grin. But to get back to the story, it is a good one:

The edition of 1542, of the Colliget, may be more barbarous than some of its contents; for in "De Sanitatis Functionibus," of the former edition, this author appears equally good tempered, as credulous, which is a quality ill adapted, and seldom seen, in a parish officer of the present day. "Porro Matrona quaedam e regione aedium nostrarum habitabat, juravit nobis vel conceptis verbis, cum balneum intrasset, in quo improbi quidem homines antea dum lavarent, semen genitale profudissent, statim concepisse: quod etsi incredibile videretur, fecit nihilominus vitae ilius anteaetae integra atque inculcata castimonia, ut fidem verbis suis adhiberem."⁵

Who shall now answer that Tristram Shandy had not consulted this passage, before he had adventured to recommend the philosophical experiment, "par moyen d'un petit tuyeau."

What a rumble the name of Albertus (*magnus*) Bolstalius has. The good Bishop of Ratisbone wrote a number of books but only one remains of interest, and that because it deals with a subject which is perennial. The "Libellus de secretis mulierum" and its author come in for some comment. Just before is a remark, "I hope this editor did not suffer by the flames which injured the church." He goes on:

And much more may we hope they did not violate the *rue des belles femmes*, not far off, but, with leave, just one word before we go any farther. Is it not obvious, that the great Albertus, the bishop (as no doubt he attended properly to the press) must have spent a great portion of his time, in conning over the impressions, *De Secretis Mulierum*. In a Roman Catholic Bishop, it is inexcusable, in a Protestant bad enough. But *e contra*, had he finished his career by writing on the moral virtues, in lieu of the virtues of plants, he would have ended more prettily. But, *perge viator!*

Several tracts or codices of this author are to be found in the Bodleian library; in the collection of Caius College, Cambridge; and New

⁵ Vide ed. 1537.

College, Oxford. I hope the hint will not set all the fellows of colleges in looking after them. But twenty-one folio volumes, of Mr. Jammy (I am sorry to remark it, as he is my name-sake) in barbarous Latin, are quite enough for the amusement of the patient reader; and enough is as good as a feast.

These twenty-one folio volumes, of my name-sake, are composed and formed chiefly from the works of Albertus. The profession of medicine, and of anatomy, are more especially alluded to and implicated in the above subjects; thus, "De Homine,"⁶ "De Formatione Hominis,"⁷ "De Animalibus,"⁸ "De Vita et Morte, De Motibus Animalium, De Juventute et Senectute"⁹ "De Nutrimto et Nutribili,"¹⁰ "De Secretis Mulierum libellus." The least said is soonest mended. In fact, he is a minor Aristotle, "Scripsit pene infinita opuscula. Qui et omnia opera Aristotelis commentatus est." Schedelius.

In our days the whole bench of bishops would scarcely have time to write half so much, tied down as they now are; i.e. when in town, to attend, by necessity, the drawing rooms, lest they should have their gowns taken over their shoulders; or, when in the country, are obliged, through *morùm encomia*, to give public days at their palaces. I take it for granted, it must have been the usage of old times, and in which the bishop of Ratisbone or Albertus, as he was an elegant man, might and did cut a figure. Alack, how I have heard my dear Father (*sit sacrum*) descant with his highest energies (and these he had) upon the blandishments and conviviality of Drummond, then gracing the mitre of York.

At his festive board of urbanity divine, was champagne wit, and champagne wine; the oxygen of which, however, he could restrain, as by a magic wand, within the due longitude and latitude of the Holy Land.

Albertus, at best, in many instances, was but an Amateur anatomist, contented to play upon the surface without approfonding the secrets; but as he was decidedly a great Man, some attention is due to the notice of his works, and to him. As far, however, as *petits*, and very poor *jeux d'esprit* have gone, I have probably familiarised too much with a bishop; and I may have improperly taken that, for which so to do,

⁶ Lib. 1.

⁷ Lib. 1.

⁸ Lib. xx vel xxvi.

⁹ Lib. 1.

¹⁰ Lib. 1.

he might not have given me, a dispensation. The fanning of my wings, however, has chiefly played over his work, "De Secretis"; as any thing I doubt but the sublime for me; but yet, I shall be in a sad story, if it should turn out, as it appears to be, a contested matter, whether Albertus was the author of the book, "De Secretis Mulierum."

It would also appear, that Albertus was not so well versed in the true and private history of the stars, as he was of the garters; for, in affecting to elucidate the influence of these stars, he seems quite planet-struck with nonsense and superstition, and to out-Aristotle Aristotle in absurd inferences.

Whereas, in describing the effects of hysteria, as a consequence of sympathy of the uterus, he not only very classically describes the pathology of the parts, but recommends a practice (I doubt become too popular since that day), in regard to the cure of the complaint; but as "Illum periisse duco, cui quidem periit pudor," I shall forbear the repetition.

Of that patron saint of lovers of good brandy, the first distiller, or at any rate the first to publish the use of Aqua Vitae, Arnold of Villanova ought in these dry days be given his due. His biographers always fail: they go off on a tangent missing much that should receive favorable comment. I shall have to try some day to remedy all this. Atkinson, no better than the rest in this direction but much more amusing, makes some comments in the style of Sterne. But first hear what he has to say of the "Regimen sanitatis." By the way Hoeber has recently reprinted the Harington Translation of this with an introduction by Dr. Francis R. Packard and Lieut. Col. Fielding H. Garrison.

We must not mistake or identify the work "De Regimine Salernitano," with the one, "Regimen Sanitatis." The Schola Salernitana was restored by Jean de Milan, about the year 1100. The former was the production of the Salernitan Doctors, edited in verse, and was written as a book of maxims of health, for the then King of England.

The "Regimen Sanitatis," of Villa Nova, was, no doubt in my mind, a work of his own, in which there was a spice or rivalry with the

other (not to say of vanity) being upon the same subject. What Villa Nova wrote on the "Regimen Salernitanum," was only a commentary; what was written by him on the other score was, I presume, an original composition. They are, however, both included in one volume, in my possession, of the date of 1497, printed at Bergomensis, by Bonetus Locatelli, at the expense of the spirited Octavian Scotus.

The "Regimen Sanitatis," of Villa Nova, was evidently posterior to the former; both from its date, and from the insertion at the head, of the motto or lines to which I have above alluded; which motto I have specified to have been taken from the "Schola Salernitana."

The "Regimen Sanitatis" begins thus, "Anglicorum regi conscripsit Scola Solennis, ad regimen vitae praesens hoc medicinale. Si vis," etc. It may here be observed, that the author or authors of the "Schola Salernitana" are not known; or, whether it was the work of one man, or of a body of men. In a codex of this work, stiled by Zach. Silvius, Tulloviano, the following is written: "Explicat (lege explicit) Tract, qui dicitur Flores Medicinae, compilatus in studio Solerii a Magist. Joan de Mediolana instructi Medicinalis Doctore egregio, completioni cujus concordarunt omnes Magistri illius studii. Tiraboschi."

Arnoldus, de Villa Nova, was what is usually stiled "rather a comical fellow." He could not be content with his proper profession, but must undertake to dogmatize (I do not mean to go a hunting) and to write on theology. But in 1317, he was called to account, and his works and errors were condemned by order of the brother preachers at Tarragona; he was hence obliged to quit Paris (who would not quit such a place?) and, being sent on an embassy, to Pope Clement the Fifth, he was unluckily drowned at sea.

The Pope ordered *De Profundis's* for him (too shallow resources I doubt, considering the depth of water) and much regretted the privation of a work which Arnoldus had always promised him. He inserted this into his Pontifical letter, of the 19th of May, 1312; endeavouring by this means to recover it, if in existence; but sorry I am to record, that neither was the Pope's Pontifical letter able to produce the work; nor, the *De Profundis's* to bring Nova *de novo*, to dry land; so both were lost. No dry joke, at any rate, unless to his brotherhood.

The poor author had been condemned by his brethren (Cannibals) on nineteen different articles, and if they had it in their power, say on the thirty-nine; one of which was, for foretelling that the world would be at an end in thirteen hundred and thirty-three. They were, therefore, thirteen hundred and thirty-three times obliged to him, for allowing such rascals time to prepare themselves; and the remaining articles (nine of which are in the Castilian language, and five in Latin, as seen in a ms. in my edition), were all alike condemned by them; and of course without benefit of clergy; nay, even Pope Innocent the Second (don't suppose he was only the second innocent Pope, for they are all innocent), in 1539, by no means thought Villa Nova's works so innocent, as to allow his clergy to read them; but mark ye now, they stole a sly peep at them whenever they could, for he was a tasty Villa, in his descriptions which, *ad Morbos Mulierum spectant*; and Monks are mortal men. Nova, however, *non obstante*, was, *pro Haeretico*, to the black dog *damnatus*, which, as an anathema, is a serious business.

SOLILOQUY. It is to be feared, and must be owned no doubt, that in many *opera*, where Abbots and their *Similes* grace the pages, there exists, in their language, a degree of pruriency (like an *esprit du corps*) which should not be evinced, either in the titles of such books, by the Abbots, or in the subjects. In this work, among others, we have instances; for who should expect in so chaste a title as "De ornatu Mulierum" (into the contents of which, the vanity of the sex might reasonably induce them to inquire) to find a recipe from Villa Nova, "ut desiderium et dulcedo augeatur," which has nothing to do with eating or drinking, or dress; or *encore un coup* (shocking) *ad virgam erigendam*.

Simple Villa Nova! what occasion for any of his admonitions; could he suppose they did not understand the rights of man. Why not leave the expedient to the genius and resources of the ladies; they all knew full well, that there is no steering the best rigged man of war in a storm, without command of the steerage; and they never affect to strike fire out of a cheese paring.

The holy Abbot could not have edited this last recipe for his own use, as it was quite out of his way; and the fancy dress maker, who was at liberty to read it as a printed book, printed

under the auspices of a Cardinal's Cap, would as little have suspected to have stumbled upon so gross an indecency. From it, therefore, I shall calmly beg leave to draw this important inference, in favour of modern pudicity, that we medical men are now much more chaste than our forefathers.

The apothecaries of the present day suppose, that the physicians often give them trouble enough, even at twelve o'clock at night, to compound their fancied farragos; but let these apothecaries, or pot carriers, look over Arnoldus' antidotariums, and they will learn to live cheerful and contented under the present recipe, rocal slavery, such as it may be.

Arnoldus should have been christened *De Nomine novo*. He has some dashing terms, as "Rosarum Philosophorum," "Novum Lumen," "Sigillum et flos Medicinae," etc., which others have equally remarked. Never mind, every man to his humours. He was a very useful practitioner.

Of Rhazes, whom he includes in the A's by using the name Almanson, he has but little comment. I must, however, quote a few lines:

This author, in reality, was Abubeter Rhazes, a Mahometan, of famous celebrity. He lived, according to report, one hundred and twenty years; began his medical tricks at thirty, turned quack or empiricus for forty years, and a rational being or physician, for forty more, so that he was eighty years practising physic, before he came to his senses; his medical senses. He flourished (and it may well be deemed flourishing) according to some, *Anno Christi* 1070, according to Justus, 1085, under Henry the fourth, Emperor; and according to Moreau, he lived in the time of Almanson Rex Cordubensis, 966; therefore the *causa efficiens* of the writing of this book, "fuit Rasis Zaccharie filius precepto Regis Almansonis filli Isaias vel Isias; et sic patet quod sit nomen auctoris."

The book, in reality, is a kind of *Regimen Sanitatis*, for King Almanson, written by command on his Majesty. Whether it was a *Regimen Sanitatis*, or of Necrosis to the King, I dare not answer, but when we shall have read on a little farther, we may judge.

In fact, a mere repetition and recital of various medicines and applications, as tedious as endless. But we must not, in conscience, pass by the encomium of Lindenus, on the contents

of the edition of Rhazes, of 1544. I have this edition of Rhazes, which I value the more as it has this inscription in it, "A present from my friend. Mr. P. Pott, Oct. 23d, 1785, Dr. P." (David Pitcairne) How trifles please children! Booksellers know this well. . . .

In this obvious sense and knowledge of disease by symptoms, how much I have to regret being deprived of the advantage of attending, as medical man, the corporation and aldermen of York. How? by being gagged and choaked, and stopped in my growth, by the act of supremacy. This, this nasty thing, so abhorrent to my religion, alone prevented my being raised above the chamberlain's honourable office; which (honourable as Apis in Egypt could be; by the bye, is Apis a water God?) cost me seven pounds; nay, robbed me of a sinecure medical practice, practice which would never have required or troubled me when their members dined at their own expense; but only upon sessions or feast days, and even then, at a sufficient early hour in the evening, to have enabled me to apply the sovereign remedy, an emetic, my infallible antidote; and then again, to have gone securely to bed.

Of another character he gives some quaint comment. He also becomes a prophet, a true one, as the late war has amply proved. The Sir Humphry Davys of our day have indeed frightened all Christendom:

How much more solemn for a physician is the name of Ricardus Anglicus, than plain Dick English. Had he been here I durst not have said this; perhaps my shoulders might have had a taste of his cat-o'-nine-tails, or *correctorium*, a few times round his *theatrum chemicum*. Pretty amusement no doubt for a bye stander; but by my sympathy, I think I feel it now. Oh sympathy, sympathy, Man's sad tormentor!

Poor Richard must needs have a touch at this uric acid; but the juggling art of chemistry now is so delightfully improved, that the tricks pass as quick as lightning. And we make one chemical fox draw another from its earth. No acid for a moment can resist its alkali, thus, one wave in the ocean lashing against another, produces, with brilliance, chemically or metaphorically, phosphoric light. Well might cunning monks of old make such a fool of St.

Januarius. If Sir Humphrey Davy were to turn monk, he soon might hum and frighten all Christendom.

Even now it is to be hoped the reader will not suppose that I am introducing an author (though it looks very like it) because he was what I am, and is vulgarly denominated a Papist.

AFFEYTAT, FORTUNIUS. (*Venet. 1549*), *Liber de Hermaphroditis*, no accounting for taste! When nature commits an Hermaphroditas, does she intend practising upon herself or us? It is difficult to say, whether she wishes to take up a loop, or to let one down. No matter, if she has only a loop hole to creep out. This game may be pretty diversion for Nature, but to a spectator it has an ugly look. *Vide* Monster. If the Philosopher does not understand the above simile, an Old Wife will.

All lovers of Sterne will be glad to know that Atkinson commented on Albosius. But enough, if you know your Tristram Shandy well no comment is needed.

The report of this author depends on no light material. This *portentosum Lithopaedium* was (a petrified child) *in utero per 28 annos contentum*. Nothing living or less obdurate could so long have been retained or content in the situation. It is, however, some comfort to be assured, that the poor mother of this fossil mass must have been at least in a tolerable quiescent state with such incumbrances, for so many years. And this author is moreover worth mentioning, if it be only on account of the curious mistake, which Burton in his remarks attaches to Smellie. "The seventeenth author, collected as you tell us, is *Lithopaedis Senensis*, which instead of being an author, is only the drawing of a petrified child." It may be seen in the account published by Albosius; and at the end of Cordaeus's works in Spachius. To this (a very possible mistake) I have elsewhere adverted. It was a blunder in Smellie, which might have happened to any less blundering man; and, as far as a *jeu d'esprit*, or a retort courteous from Burton, is very allowable; for if Smellie chose to play at bowls with Burton, from this very stone he might expect a rubber. The fact of the child, may be truly numbered as one of the sportings of nature. Nature seems frequently to make use of children in this way,

as play things. A child made of stone, or converted into stone; a child with two heads; a child conjured into a boy's belly; a pig-snouted child; a squeaking child, without brains, therefore without soul or sentiment, yet a squeaking child (which I have seen and I have heard, 'pon my honour) are remarkable pretty play things for these sportings of nature. And which, no doubt, are as easily produced by her manufacturers, as a ready modeller in wax can manipulate his *facetiae* and varieties.

There are some monsters: as monstrous gluttons; who would have wished to have doubled themselves, or to have become bifid, if it were only to be double fed, or bifed. Did not the celebrated Quin make some such supplicating prayer, I ask?

On the subject of borrowing from other authors which has inspired such expressions of opinion as the magnificent "Illustrations from Sterne" by John Ferriar, Atkinson says under the heading of Albertinus Hannibal:

Eloy observes, that Senac has made some use of this work. And pray for what end was it written? We must all plagiarize from each other, or little will be made out, in so intricate an art as medicine. When a writer affects to despise the works of others, and ventures to produce his own as valuable and original, we may be assured that, in this instance at least, he is an original fool at any rate. I well remember being formerly much disgusted with this affection in a very great man; in a man whose talents stood in no need of such a despicable resource to announce them.

"De motu cordis," by that remarkable scholar Thomas Aquinas, whom the church threatened and finally canonized, leads to a slight digression on religious matters, a very "Shandyean" one you will agree.

Always something pretty from our popish saints! But why need we affect to identify them. In your religion, reader, you probably don't preterd to canonize. I cannot suppose you have not fit objects; one man is hailed as a saint, when the next deems a lunatic, *tot Homines quot Sententiae*. Whenever I am present at a general election, for instance, notwithstanding the emblazoned claims to virtue and devotedness, I

always fancy there is more of madness than mitigation in the promises. How comes it? Is England the chief asylum for maniacs? or, are politics the curse and disgrace of the nation? Verily, verily, I think so. I had some thoughts of placing our Saint Thomas at the head of my catalogue, but I recollected, we have your Saints Oliver and Henry already. *Ne quid nimis!* They might not have suited; for on their side I take it, "Melior est tuta pax, quam sperata victoria."

"Lie still if you are wise,
You'll be d--d if you rise."

(*Vide* Westminster Abbey.)

But in religious matters I must affect nothing, for I am no Unitarian, no Biarian, no Trinitarian, no *in unum* Congregarian, no Methodist or Ranter, no Protestant: except that I protest merely to be, a (*bon*) Roman Catholic, as the best Catholicon going. For *sic itur* (I am told) *ad astra*, and who travels safer? Nay I will not even condescend to be a free thinker, though I doubt a free writer. My own free wit I fear (like too much common salt), when in full dose will make you sick; but when I wish to give any for a cure; to be administer'd pure; I steal, or borrow, or run atic. Since, however, every thing now is "No popery," to what a miserable existence are we poor Papists doomed! Hard is the fate of him, whose preservation and every other ration seems to depend upon his chylification. Whose class even as an animal can scarcely be identified. He is obliged, from the temperate laws of his religion, to be continually varying his dietetic circumstances. He is not, strictly speaking, a carnivorous animal, although he be man, and as man should be; because he is often interdicted eating meat. He is not a high-bred, but a hybrid Christian. If he be allowed *permissu superiorum* to eat this meat (rarely venison), once a week, the next, he dares scarcely chew the cud, or if none be there to chew, be downright starves. Now, there might be some prospect of a blissful year for him, were there luckily a leap year of Lent, or rather a leap over lent year; but no, the vermin papist is like the horse in a mill, or like the maggot in a deaf nut, who works incessantly, and in vain, round the dark concave of a melancholy pabulumless circle, neither with beginning nor end, sad emblem of Eternity!

The Papist's stomach, like Papin's digester, must produce something from almost nothing, or he dies a martyr. And not only is he subject to the direst want of sustenance, but to the unceasing taunts of all other sectaries. And bitter is the joke, when an unfeeling latitudinarian comes behind him during Lent, and rubs a beef steak over his longing lips, without suffering it to abide there, villainous sarcasm! For my own part, I have ever been, on the one hand (as a noted bigot) a victim to this practical wit; although I hate such wit. On the other, branded by my own party, for want of faith, as an heretic. It would almost make a man to hope, and be contented to die, a good fat Jew, in preference to living as a half starved Christian.

Of Æpinus and his book on the similarity of electricity and magnetism Atkinson has little to say, but it presents an opportunity for a long digression on the subject of electricity. The following paragraph immediately recalls Dr. George Crile:

To draw into resemblance the affinity; I would compare the brain itself to the cylinder of an electrical machine. External objects I compare to the atmosphere, from whence animal fire is collected; in the same manner as the fire is from the atmosphere or the electric. The soul I compare to the rubber, which being set in motion, by the wheel of external objects, throws the fire or ideas it collects upon the brain. The brain discharges it upon the nerves, its conductors; and the muscles and other parts become electrified bodies. . . .

Does not life, where ordinary parts are wanting, retire to, or reside in others, actually existent. And is not this a proof, that the same principle of life or soul, can perform its duties and accomplish its faculties in, and from, any part wherein animal life does exist? But, however, be it as it may, reader, don't let us quarrel about it; I'll assure you that it is very immaterial to me, whether you allow me my material man or not; convinced, however, I am, that without material, there is no man. If you form his life, intellect, or soul, out of nothing, I have been taught to believe, that *ex nihilo nihil fit*; or, as my Master in arithmetic was wont to say, in allusion to my brains, from nothing comes, nothing, Sir!

Of John Aikin, that most delightful of medical biographers, he says:

Aikin is a delightful author; clear, neat, and sensible writing. From both of these I have borrowed in many instances; and any man may be happy so to borrow; for we seldom shall find more admirable specimens of judgment, learning, selection, and assiduity, than in these two surprising men. That part of Aikin's works, viz., "Biographical Memoirs of Medicine in Great Britain," which particularly falls in with the cold-blooded apathy of my author-hunting folly, is characterized in its source, as of a much more pleasant and instructing nature, than mine can be. For it professes to draw its gleams and treasures, "since the revival of literature only"; and does not affect to derive them, as I have occasionally done, from obscure and ancient records.

Seeing therefore how agreeable and instructing a work Aikin's has proved, it might have been a lesson to me. It might have induced me to shut up the few dark and dismal dens, and lurking holes, into which I have occasionally ventured for my information. But there must be a balance in nature; and if every biographer were to write as entertaining and alluring works as Aikin, the dull dogs and prowlers of science would have little left to feed on as Pabulum.

A good example of the rapier-like thrusts which Atkinson could deal is his comment on J. Steph Adam, with its defense of punning:

From the solitary specimen of this Adam's anatomical study, he appears to have had a greater predilection for farriery than physic. Indeed, unless he had cut up his wife, or one of his family, where were there any other human subjects, from whence he could anatomize, at least according to law. May we not also infer, from this instance, that the anatomy which he had learned from his ancestors proved that there had been Bucks or *Cervi* in Paradise. Surely not of this hard-hearted *ossa cordis* sort! But the Buck, as I have hinted before, even there had his mistress, A dam.

Is there not a defence for punning? Much recondite learning is to be squeezed out of the enigmatous or punning envelope of men's language and expressions. It is a double entendre-

ship of science! The number of select characters who have espoused the trick of punning or of *jeux de mots*, when *artisement introduits*, may be adducted in defence, or even semi-approval of this venial sin. It may be considered as a retrograde sort of wit. "You are always letting puns," an old clergyman said to Sterne, "it deserves punishment." "That," replied Sterne, "is as the pun is meant." The old fellow thought he was coming sterne upon him.

For pure whimsicality Atkinson was nearly as good as the inimitable Sterne. Witness the following:

McADAM, The *Doctor Viarum*, or Road Doctor. This appellation is not synonymous with "make" Adam, as we shall see below; for, Adam *primus* had no father.

The present McAdam is a hardened character, and must not be forgotten. He is famous at this day for making hard, and mending soft, turnpike roads.

He could not have learn'd this art from his ancestors, as they resided in a garden, and never went but once (post haste) out of it! Before that period they walked on turf, or fortunately, had gone on velvet, until Satan was the ruin of them. But he may have acquired it from the Romans, whose military roads were much on this construction.

ANECDOTE: Being one of the commissioners for a turnpike road, near York, we were letting the toll and repairing of the road to the best bidder. Each candidate brought some pretensions of skill in the art of road making; one of them (a rough subject) was asked, if he was acquainted with the new mode of McAdam? McAdam! why gentlemen, he replied, I made roads before Adam was born! (A laugh,) pray laugh; which at once certified two points: 1st, that there were roads before Adam was born; and 2nd, that Adam really might have had a father and mother. But if Adam, as we are informed, was actually the first man, he could not have had a father; and, if he had no father, there was no occasion for a mother; and, if the first Adam was a black, this rough fellow of ours told a black lie of him; for he never was born. Question: Must there not also have been a white Adam? For, notwithstanding the garbled accounts of naturalists; from a black a black must come. Pie-balls are a family of their own. And we men who are white, according to our

parish registers, cannot now be produced without fathers. Indeed the law obliges us to have fathers. Then only think, Black Adam might have snapped his fingers at the parish!

Ballonius is one of the notable B's. He was an astute observer, a man of parts. His best work according to Haller is the "Epidemicorum et Ephemeridum." Ballonius was the first to describe whooping-cough in 1578 and the first to use the term rheumatism. His works were published posthumously and include a dictionary of medical terms. He revived the Hippocratic idea of "epidemic constitution," foreshadowing as Garrison says, the teachings which did so much to make Sydenham famous. Atkinson says little of him but he makes some personal notes of unusual interest.

In favour of the Labyrinthus, Kestner gives us Patin's opinion at full length, which has some weight. "Il est excellent pour tout médecin qui veut raisonner et faire son métier avec science et autorité. Je vous prie de l'indiquer a votre fils aîné (which is one reason why I copy it here, that my son may see it) a fin qu'il s'en serve, et qu'il le lise soigneusement et la porte dans son pochette (how unlucky, the medical dandies wear no pockets in our days) comme un *veni mecum* ou plutôt, comme un petit trésor de belle science, et de bonne méthode."

Patin generally told the truth *bardiment*, except *de temps en temps*; as when the shade of a Prince passed by. Notwithstanding the great concern for his son, and care of his education; should we have conceived it to have turned to no better account, than to have produced a man; a most learned man! who could not keep his hands from picking and stealing. But suffice to observe; he was a Collector. Not on the high road, but in private. In other words he was an Antiquary. "Poeta nascitur non fit." All Collectors steal naturally! They cannot help it. *Caveant Antiquarii*, beware of Antiquaries.

Thank Heaven, in our York Cabinet, we have an honest appendage, a little bell, a *tintinnaculus*; which strikes the alarm, whenever an Antiquary approaches. It goes off by a secret spring. We have never lost anything since it was used; it has done well by us.

We observe that the works of Ballonius were edited frequently by Thevart, who was his

nephew, by his wife's side, and afterwards became the heir to his manuscripts. An account of such of them as were prepared and left ready for the press, was in Thevart's library. The reader may refer to them in Mangetus, where there is a very copious and complimentary account of the general life of Ballonius. He considers him as an author thus, "Stylus illi floridus, limatus, nitidus, dictio compta et elegans, circumcisa potius quam diffuse"; which reminds me, that I ought to apologize to the student for being myself so diffuse a plagiarist on this occasion. But where an author is on all sides praised and recommended as particularly useful, to him we may be allowed to sacrifice rather deeply.

It is to me (advanced in years as I now am) of very little consequence what books shall survive me: or who but my son shall procure them. Ere long probably the *terebræ occula* of the wood-worms will take as many liberties with my person, as the *Dermestes* and *Blattæ* have already done with some of my books and preparations. And attendant upon the time I consume in reading them, and the follies of the flowing pen, I have the excuse of long usage, and of an exuberance of *con amore*, which, right or wrong, fastens to me, even in my lucubrations. The gentlemen of the lamp oil and night-cap, no doubt, will trim me prettily for this *vile amore*.

How suggestive the following paragraph of the writings of Henry L. Mencken, the critic and essayist! If I saw it apart from the context I should almost name him as the author, as it is a theme on which he has written often. It is apropos of Robert Boyle's "Paradoxa Hydrostatica":

There is a paradox which always strikes me in natural philosophy; and which I do not see among these paradoxes: Why has woman, the weaker of the sexes, intellectually and physically always the advantage over man? She is not a bubble and swims at the top. Paradox second: has Boyle in this second paradox burst the bubble? Let us know: bar the bubble.

Of the forgotten Burrhus, who wrote among other things about wine which turned into vinegar, Atkinson gives the following "Shandyean" introduction to some quotations:

I produce this man as (like myself) one of the hobby-horse writers; who, when he gets once mounted upon his subject, be it fish or flesh, right or wrong, is not to be stopped. He starts with the "Epistola de cerebrovanae variae," one-fourth of which he at once resolves and dissolves, *praeter speciem*, into fat: fat! Do brains of gross feeders all turn into fat? no wonder at their wisdom. *Ex Cerebro enim balaenarum spermaceti optimum eructari*. Very like a whale, though true. In such prolific manner he continues to give a sketch, and to delineate the physical adaptation of parts, and the infusion of soul.

One of the writers who imitated the style started by the unappreciated John Mayow is Barberius, who wrote a book entitled "Spiritus nitro aëri operationes in microcosmo," which recalls somewhat Mayow's "De sal nitro." Atkinson says:

From this charm, he spells up the fermentation and digestion of food; and from such gross matter creates and sublimes at once the animal spirits. How progressive is the intellect of man, and how consequent are the deductions and inflections of philosophy! Barberius forms a body, and from the body a soul. The stomach his receiver, the pabulum his coagule, the animal chemistry his nitrous spirit; from this spirit a vapour, from vapour the invisible ether, or sublimation, into soul!

Is this process of Barberius an actual creation, or the fiction of creation? Mayow had gone before him. Will it not be all as one to us, "one hundred years hence?" And yet theory is a delightful and flowery path.

A few of the pithy sayings may be grouped together here with little or no comment on their context:

Genius sometimes travels by a slow coach, as well as a quick one. The quick coach is occasionally overturned, and leaves the traveller helpless upon the road. "Chi va piano, va lontano." . . .

Bencius was deemed an *eruditissimus homo*, although branded as a Charlatan by Conringius. How so? What constitutes a Charlatan in Medicine? A half concocted man; who, by puffing, advertising, false pretences, undue applications for business, impudence and falsehood, attempts unduly to cut the grass under the feet

of his colleagues. Have you seen such an one? Yes. What, in your town? Yes. Quacks in all towns. . . .

This author, Bottonus, resided at his native town of Padua, and must have had some brains. He is said to have died very rich, nay immensely rich. He had many fine houses over his head; but did not trust to the old adage:

When Land and Money are gone and spent,
Then learning is super-excellent.

Had we not therefore better appropriate the reverse to him, thus:

When Learning fine is gone and spent,
Then, Money is most excellent! . . .

We Roman Catholics are much obliged to Mr. Bzovius, as producing for us characters "Sanctorum, professione Medicorum"; that is, of the medical tribe: which no other medical tribe can produce. Even Harry VIII, that great defender of the faith and monster of a saint, could not have done half so much; nay for his favourite old Butts, had he wished it. There is then, some comfort for us Papists; seeing, that amidst all the abuse and persecutions we are obliged to endure, yet, we may be canonized, in despite of our betters, And by Jove, as times now appear to be going, perhaps, as appointed Constables in the Parish of all Souls. . . .

The history is of the Prussian who let a knife slip into his throat, and swallowed it. He recovered after it had been cut out of his stomach. This will set my mind much at rest, when I occasionally go to a dinner party. The greediness of some men, who are dining (but not at their own expense) makes me sometimes tremble lest the same accident should happen to them. It may remain, however, a surgical question, whether the knife, if let alone, might not have cut out its own way, at less cost and less jeopardy.

Of the "Pleuropneumonia" of Baronio:

How this work must have made the grand Phlebotomist's and Lanceoto-mist's fingers itch. Oh! *la sainte saignée!*

What sort of a mind Bruno had, and how stored, his works must tell. To judge of him by the portrait which I have (*horribili visû*) he had by no means a sweet-bread pancreatic face, but was apparently the ugliest Doctor in

Christendom. The painter must have had a pique against him; for any painter may, if he chooses, bedaub over even an Adonis most wretchedly. O that we had made ourselves, what a handsome fellow I would have been!

Every dog hath his day; so had Bartlet. I shall venture my opinion in cases where farmers are on the jury. They always prefer the cheapest treatment and the cheapest Doctor. I cannot call them fools, because fools and their money are soon parted.

The subject of collecting portraits of medical men is one of importance and in it Atkinson took considerable interest. In his conclusion¹¹ [already quoted in this article] he expresses his views on the subject.

And now that we must take leave of this dear old York friend, I feel as if I knew him intimately. The two quotations following close the last article of his book and the volume respectively:

It will behoove me, in common, to apply a passage, extracted from the sixth Book of the Epistles of Saint Ambrose, "For you shall rarely find a man who is not deceived by his own writings."

But a man's book is to him either like a legitimate or natural child: for however heterogeneous the constituting materials may be, or have been; the parent usually clings to his offspring for better or for worse, from natural affection: and retains to the last a selfishness of respect for it, which nature also dictates and he adopts.

The little essay on "Bibliographical References" is a refreshing piece of writing which I think worthy of reprinting in full:

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

From the relative Histories of Bibliographia and Bibliomania, which occasionally have run *pari passu* through this recital; a few of the acknowledged advantages and mysteries of dupism, even in medical books, may be attended to with advantage by the student.

And I must put the reader on his guard, as I may sometimes have deceived him typographically, in regard to these books, *exempli gratiâ*, where *editio princeps* is attached; he may not always find that I have adhered, perhaps, to the strict letter of the law; which should bind

¹¹ *Vide* p. 203.

such a cyphering to the first and precise edition from an ancient ms. Such notice may occasionally refer only to the *Ed. Pr.* of a town; no uncommon occurrence in the printing of a book. And, perhaps, I may, from ignorance or neglect, not have noticed such a case. Therefore, I would advise the student, for whom alone I write, to keep a strict and correcting eye over me.

In his book-buying, or investigating career, he should have in mind these observations, to which every bibliographer alludes; lest in some instances he should lose, or sell, or not purchase valuable editions. It is an art of itself, which is not easily sought into, or acquired; but which, if so acquired, may stand both his pleasure and profit, in very great stead, in a very long, or a short life.

Bibliographers inform us, that Greek editions in capital letters, or *litteris majusculis* (so called), must not be thrown away if met with. Nor must the student fail (if he can afford it) of buying them, if tolerably reasonable, as their value is certain. Books of British production in black letter, of an early date, in his own profession, must not be carelessly committed *ad focos*.

Books with false titles and title pages, exist amongst medical books, as well as amongst others. Of this the student must be aware: and, unless as a matter of curiosity, are worth nothing.

Editions of 1400, or early in 1500, whether the student can read, can understand them or not (especially if he be assured that they are medical books) must not be sent by him to the shops, where old books are bought; or exchanged without a caveat.

From the few cautions above, and from others, which, being extremely good and amusing, Horne, Dibdin, *et similes* will supply; he might learn to avoid the stumbling-block, over which blockheads usually stumble.

Many difficulties present themselves, not always amenable to every intellect, in the development of literary incidents. A man may perceive these, without being deep in the mystery. For instance, it is not easy to understand clearly, the titles which are marked by abbreviations, or designated by initials; and especially, as they occur chiefly in early printed books. For these books may have been almost forgotten, in a parallel and indefinite line of time. And if there be not some succeeding commentator, how is an enigma, such as L.M.N., to be satisfactorily made out? I have frequently laboured

much in mind and body, to enucleate the Gordian knot of initials; and with little success. And when I perceive that even men, the most highly-qualified by classical and extraneous literature, such as Dibdin and other bibliographers, are occasionally free to acknowledge this difficulty, I sit down, if not in comfort, at least in acquiescence. For I frequently find, that almost all these authors who have transcribed and repeated such enigmatical initials (like myself) have given them again sole and naked, in *statu quo*, as they found them.

It is a very arduous, and not always an attainable, point, to become acquainted with all the editions of a book, and to know or decide which of them is the best. An investigator must frequently either borrow something from others; must take for granted, or confine himself for months, to the reading of an original of one author and his work; or confess, that, as a critic, he had affixed his signature to the work, rather prematurely.

If the student, for instance, be dabbling a little with Averroës' Commentaries only, and fancies that in his inferences he may have followed his author pretty successfully; and has accorded generally with him in his elucidations, but yet is given to understand that Ambrosius, of Nola, e.g. can confute them; in what state of physical force will the student's sensorium be left, when he has waded only through sixteen fresh books of logic, and thirty of physics; in which Ambrosius has ingeniously contrived to compress his proofs of the inaccuracies of Averroës? Can he after all satisfy the criticism of the scholar, whether all these books and conclusions of Ambrosius are good, bad, of indifferent?

How did Fabricius feel when he had completed, only, the one hundred pages of his second volume, in ascertaining and enumerating merely the remains of Aristotle? But how would he have felt, had he, as a scholar, been obliged on scholastic duty, to comprise or detail, and in scrupulous detail, the respective subjects of all Aristotle's works? I doubt not that for a short while, his literary stomach would have been somewhat tartar-emetised upon the occasion. And setting aside also, Hippocrates, Galen, Avicenna, Albucasis, or, the twenty-one folio volumes of Jammy's barbarous Latin, which he has formed or composed, alone from the works of Albertus: or even, the mere examination of all the editions of Aristotle and his commentators.

There is besides, amongst others, no small author, named Haller (the very sight of whose magnificent works produces Cephalalgia) who would also take somewhat of the crusading spirit of bibliography out of us; and convince us, that a man may in some measure be excused for not affecting to have read over more than once, the books which he may venture to criticise; or at least to identify.

For my part, although my sacrum and crista Ilei, are no harder, or become more cartilaginated by book-incubation and study than my neighbours, yet I have known the time when a very thin old black-lettered book has made my dull bones ache most confoundly; and after all, to very little purpose, and much less entertainment. And I should, out of mere curiosity, like much (in due, very due, time) to possess Mr. Dibdin's *Ossa Ischii*, for my museum, as a vermin specimen of a literary incubator. By this sort of industry, however, we are taught to understand, that the duties of a critic, even to a competent sitter, are not so easily accomplished as "*le moyen de faire èclorre*"; or, by hatching fresh eggs in a graduated oven. By proper inquiries, an aspirant may make out, the great points in such cases, how to store his mind, refine his taste, and improve his judgment. For a man may employ himself in reading the whole of his life, and may raise a mountain of literature, which, if suffered to waste its fragrance in the desert air, or to accompany him into the grave, as ashes to ashes, and dust to dust, will have had no better effect in society, than to have occupied the place of a more useful creature. Whereas, by offering a sketch of his fancy, or by embodying his mind through the medium of the press, the merit of his experience will be felt; or his errors be corrected. But should an instance of rare mind be fortunately developed by accident, or an exquisite trait of fancy be delineated, such a loss would have proved irreparable.

On this ground a man may almost be excused for pushing even his crudities into public; as I have done mine: or may be forgiven, if, in the contemplation of his profession, or in the prurities of his taste, by venturing to publish, he may give a lucky cast of the die to private lucubrations.

In the evolution of my stinted catalogue, in the order of editions, their merit or type, how they may have been rated or executed, will

fall little upon my shoulders, as I have before explained; because, I have usually consulted, and generally built upon, the information of other authorities. The distinction and identification of such questions, more properly belong to the history of literature, or of printing. I have endeavoured merely to notice some of the editions; occasionally to attach a few remarks, to which my short preface alludes. These may probably have been suggested by other authors, or by chance exhibited by myself. It is too laborious a process, and too hazardous an undertaking, to grasp a foil, seriously to defend the one or the other. And, I must observe, that where I have deceived others, I have myself been deceived; and, to produce such literary items and circumstances, in strict accordance, and in the extreme of accuracy, would require an extent of time and of perseverance, not to be expected from the life of man. Mine is, therefore, to be considered, in one word, or two letters, as a very limited and special bibliography, of a few authors in my own profession. It is on a scale only commensurate with stinted hours of relaxation. What blockhead but myself, would have chosen such a subject for relaxation? Had I attempted to write pretty sonnets to a mistress, or doleful ditties to a wife, or lies of any kind, they might have been amusing; or possibly, had my intellect been matured in a happier clime, had it inhaled some of the sweet sopors, or imbibed any of the delicious affluxes of the divine authors, my effusions might have been more grateful to my readers. But these I resign to poets, or maniacs. And a man whose hours of pastime have been smothered in old types and musty catalogues, may well excuse the public, if they place him in the original catalogue of original fools. Should the reader prefer a dry scanning nomenclature, he may be content with part of mine, and leave the wild-fire of the work to consume itself. But we are told by chemists, that azote is passed off by the kidney; bile by the liver; and carbon by respiration; whilst choler and spleen are vented by the tongue; and, let me add, human patience by human bibliography. Perhaps the edifying seniors of the profession (one of whom I am) may apprehend, that it were more becoming in a man of my age (past forty) to knit the brow of gravity in his history more than I have done. But when they shall recollect, that the best chronologists have certified, that Methuselah

was only weaned at the age of sixty: a longer ebb and flow of natural spirits than usual may be granted to some men, for the exercise of their learning, or facetiae. Playfulness is an attribute of youth; and he who is caught playing, may be presumed to be young. The kitten is scarcely midwived into day before she plays; she is frisky at the year's end, but ere long is tributary to the laws of nature; she maddens downwards, and at last, like some of us old doctors, is turned into a Tabby, or into a cruel old cat.

I have nothing now to add but my appendicula, my cauda, my finale, my tail.

Every monkey has not a tail, or caudal portion. Therefore, according to modern theory, there must have been a failure in the small branch of my coccigeal or sacral artery. And it may aptly apply "There is a tale to tell of thee," although thou left not a tail behind thee.

I have been sporting, in this ephemeral, this puerile, this senile, this A.B. two-letter life; and mingling most absurdly, false glimmerings of light and spirits, with heavier masses of graver science. I have attempted combination incompatible with nature; until the deep responses of offended conscience start back upon me, and beg for quarter.

My attempt must prove to be, like that of the foetal circulation in the A.B. months of its first existence. I have been obliged, in my own defence, to cut and delve a shorter biographical route, a "canalis venosus et arteriosus." By which I might practice a nearer way, at least my way, to an extended medical bibliography. I allude to that expanse of subject, which nothing but detailed records and ample space can supply.

Bibliography, to be perfect, will require, that all the vessels of the extremities of science shall send their tributary streams to the heart, before it can dispense its benefits at large.

To this end it appeared to me advisable, to expatiate occasionally somewhat upon our subject, by collecting materials, nearly ad hoc tempus; and arranging them quoad vires, under

separate heads of authors. This, if seriously contemplated, and gravely done, might lead to a more than imagined degree of perfection.

Unworthily as I may have fulfilled these two grave edicts, another person perchance may take it up, and supply my deficiencies. And if (as old writers occasionally express) the marrow of my short industry, he collected from my bones, it may possibly, at any rate, afford a grain, though of meagre nutriment, to bibliography.

Every man has his humour, and he acts "par son humeur, ou de son sentiment." God apportioned our intellect, *sua sponte*. Thoughts arise, we know not how. Such as they are, we must use. It is, however, possible, by attention, to improve them. I am not the sort of fellow, to undertake to write a sentimental journey; and, therefore, wanting better amusement, and through mere incident, I stumbled upon the dry, dusty, tedious, accursed, hateful, bibliography. It may, perchance, mollify duller than ordinary hours. It may kill time more circuitously, than in a direct manslaughtering way. And in a degree, which, if enforced, would kill the devil. But of profit, it is seldom productive. Should only one reader, even a destitute Unitarian, upon the occasion, honour my pages with his patience; this patience may inform him, and to his cost he would learn, how much or how little of this virtue may be required to effect the smallest impression upon a legitimate rock of literary granite: in distinction, to the task of his patience, in wading through the alluvium of my nonsense. And yet unless his instrument or perforator be smeared with a drop or two of the balsam of nonsense, he may labour through his days, and labour through his nights, but will never drill through the impenetrable medium of a dense and dolorous cloud of bibliography. He must at length be contented in concluding with me that bibliography is a doleful ditty. Or as Lambinet has it, "on ne peut se dissimuler que le plupart des ouvrages bibliographiques ne soient d'une sécheresse soporifique," (snort and echo) soporifique!