

to develop cholera among us? We have not yet had a case, but we have had many of cholera morbus, dysentery, and bilious diarrhoea, during the last two months.

In connection with the subject of vaccination, I will mention that I have hit upon a mode of preserving vaccine virus that promises well. I have tried many different ways to keep the virus, but with unsatisfactory success, until I made trial of the ethereal solution of gun cotton, as follows, viz., a little raw cotton (cotton wool) was tightly wound around a recent scab, and immersed in the solution an instant, and withdrawn and allowed to dry thoroughly (which required but a few minutes). The immersion was repeated some ten or twelve times, when a very firm and impermeable case around the scab was produced, without injury to the virus. The above experiment was made January 1, 1849. On the 5th inst., the case was opened, and a minute particle of the scab was inserted in the arm, and produced the true vaccine disease.

How long virus can be kept in this way, remains to be proved. I have no doubt it can be kept as long as the convenience of any physician will require. I should perhaps mention that it would be well to keep it in a tightly corked phial and from the light, as was done in this experiment.

Very respectfully,

Harvard, Sept. 17, 1849.

E. A. HOLMAN.

SKETCHES OF EMINENT LIVING PHYSICIANS.—NO. XII.

J. REDMAN COXE, M.D., LATE PROFESSOR OF MATERIA MEDICA AND PHARMACY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

"With us there was a *Doctour of Phisike*.

In all this world, ne was ther non him like
To speke of Phisike, and of Surgerie :
Wel knew he the Old Esculapius,
And Dioscorides and eke Rufus :
Old Hippocrates—Hali and Gallien :
Seraphim—Rasis, and Avicen :
Averrois—Damascene, and Constantin :
Bernard—and Gatisden and Gilbertin :"

"O powers of man! How vain your glory nipped
E'en in its height of verdure, if an age
Less bright succeed not. Cimabue thought
To lord it over painting's field : and now
The cry is Giotto's, and his name eclipsed.
Thus hath one Guido from the other snatched
The letter'd prize, and he perhaps is born
Who shall drive either from their rest. The noise
Of worldly fame is but a blast of wind
That blows from diverse points and shifts its name,
Shifting the point it blows from."

CATO was standing in the gallery of the Academy of Natural Sciences, in Philadelphia, and admiring the hundreds of intelligent foreheads facing the venerable chairman, Dr. Knight, of New Haven. The long Hall, with gallery upon gallery, case upon case, and recess frame work, filled with the wonders of animate and inanimate nature, were around him. There stood the majestic king of birds, the ostrich, with

several large eggs by him ; here the skeleton of the mastodon, the king of animals, presiding in quiet and solemn dignity, over the large meeting ; and around were lions grinning over conquered serpents, horrid tigers and hyenas almost in the act of howling, and monkeys, from the great baboon to the most insignificant of the Simia. Great *lithographs* of the Saurians (schistose deposits, with the organic remains of these animals in them) lined the walls, surmounted by portraits of some of the most distinguished naturalists. Heaven itself threw a broad but mellow light on the scene, for the whole roof is one crystal floor, pouring light upon this immense collection. In the midst of the hum and subdued noise of the congregated medical world, it was announced to the Chair and meeting that a venerable disciple of Æsculapius was in the ante-chamber. On a motion being put, and passed, a Committee was appointed to wait upon him and invite him to take a seat in the American Medical Association. The Committee retired, and all was quiet. After a few moments a door opened at the lower end of the Hall, and the Committee re-appeared, escorting between them, one, who well represented the venerable appearance of the Father of Medicine. As if by magic, that whole assemblage rose, with uncovered heads, while the venerable patriarch passed through the throng, up to the President's platform, and meekly stood by the officers of the meeting. His snowy locks hanging gracefully down, his head slightly bowed—the words of Dante appeared appropriate.

"I saw an old man standing by my side,
Alone, so worthy of reverence in his look,
That ne'er from son to father was more owed."

A few trembling words, thanking his medical sons (who had congregated from one end to the other of this vast republic) for their kindness, while a pellucid tear trickled down his furrowed cheek, and he sat down.

Reader, that man was JOHN REDMAN COXE ! The majority, probably, of those present (a thing which can never happen again to any other man) had been his pupils, and many of them seemed scarcely less aged than himself ; a beautiful tribute to real learning, and one that warmed the heart of Cato more towards the noble profession of his choice than any thing which he had ever witnessed.

Dr. Coxe possesses one of the largest and most valuable private libraries in the United States, numbering, it is said, in all, about 15,000 vols. Always a great antiquarian book-worm, he has for a half century been collecting, both in this country and in Europe, old and valuable books on medicine, theology, and other subjects. Cato thinks that Dr. C. could not better dispose of this immense library—particularly the medical portion of it—than to bequeath it, under proper regulations, as the foundation of a great *medical library* to be established in Philadelphia ; where the medical profession, in making their pilgrimages to this the *medical Mecca* of America, might consult the best and most valued ancient and modern works in medicine and the collateral sciences. "Coxe's Medical Library"—as the "Harveyian" or "Hunterian" museums of England—would then be resorted to, as are those great repositories of books and specimens. It is to be hoped that our venerable friend will thus

bless, in parting with the world, the profession of his youth and mature manhood ; and leave the world a monument which will for ages perpetuate his memory and elevate the medical profession in the new world. Harvey's foundation in London has no doubt had much to do with the perpetuation of his fame, and establishment of his claims, as discoverer of the circulation.

Dr. Coxe, it is supposed, has never attended to a very extensive practice in Philadelphia, but has preferred attending to his pen, and his duties as a public instructor. As the first introducer of the great Jennerian discovery, vaccination ; as the inventor of an important remedy in croup, and other infantile diseases, Coxe's hive syrup ; as the editor, for many years, of the Dispensatory ; and as a public teacher of one of the most practical branches of medicine, he has swayed an immense influence over the medical profession in the United States. Never having enjoyed a very robust *physical* health, and always fully occupied with the *learning* of the profession, he has preferred to follow the more elevated and more quiet occupations of writer and teacher. His family influence was sufficient, in early life, to give him a place in the Board of Trustees in the University ; his grandfather, Dr. Rodman, having long presided over the deliberations of that body. A student of the distinguished Dr. Benjamin Rush, he early found himself the successor of Dr. Waterhouse in the chair of chemistry in this school. This chair he filled for many years, and was succeeded by the well-known Dr. Robert Hare. It is said, that as a lecturer on chemistry he was more happy in explaining his experiments than in making them ; and it was hinted that the paucity of apparatus, and his lamentations over that which was broken or destroyed, were occasioned by a disposition too penurious to afford the necessary outlay for the branch which he taught. This defect was amply compensated by the liberality of his distinguished successor, whose apparatus demanded that a vessel should be chartered for its transfer to Washington, where it is now deposited in the Smithsonian Institute. It was, however, in the chair of materia medica that Dr. Coxe long flourished and declined.

He suggested to the Trustees the propriety of establishing a course of lectures purely pharmaceutical, to which druggists and apothecaries should be admitted, and they acceded to the suggestion. Dr. Coxe thereafter lectured on materia medica and pharmacy, until a sufficient number of druggists had been educated to form an association, called the "Philadelphia College of Pharmacy." This institution is now in a flourishing condition, and has already accomplished great good, in elevating the character of the dispensing druggist and apothecary. Its Journal is well known both in Europe and America. Dr. Coxe may with justice be considered the founder of a more elevated pharmacy in the United States. It is true that medicine and pharmacy have changed much since that time ; this, however, does not detract from his influence on the *then* condition of the profession.

As a teacher of materia medica and therapeutics, he was distinguished as a humorist, and combated, with the vigor of a giant, the theories of his friend and colleague, Dr. Chapman, which were out and out, solid-

ism. The old gentleman has now the satisfaction, in the evening of his days, of seeing the whole profession more ultra in humoralism than he had ever been, and the theories of his opponents swept away "like the morning cloud and the early dew." His style of lecturing was an energetic conversational one, reading largely from notes, and continually combating some error of the past, or of the present, particularly the latter. In this, he was generally successful, on account of his vast erudition and close acquaintance with ancient medical literature. Whether from this superior knowledge, or from a reverence for the *truly* learned of the ancients, or from the disposition to cavil at all generally admitted facts, we know not, but, Dr. Coxe preferred Galen to Hippocrates, considered Harvey an impostor, and averred that the whole *materia medica* might with advantage be condensed into nine articles.

When Cato came on to the stage of action, Dr. Coxe was not considered *the* popular professor of the school; but Cato always felt a great partiality for the learning of Prof. Coxe, amusing himself by taking notes in latin as the words fell from the old gentleman's lips; and although he did not obtain from Prof. C. a very accurate knowledge of the *materia medica* as taught in modern times, yet he considered himself fully compensated by the variety and amount of a kind of learning which could only be obtained through vast research over many volumes.

Early in this century, Dr. Coxe projected and edited a journal, called the "Medical Museum," which will always remain a monument of his industry and a point of reference for some of the best essays of the great medical luminaries of the day.

Personally, Dr. Coxe is about five feet six and a half inches high; a good sized head, covered with hair, now snowy white, growing rather low over the forehead, and brushed back; eyes black and piercing; a nose nearly of the Grecian contour; a good sized mouth, made somewhat irregular by the projection of several front teeth; with long arms, flat breast, very thin and delicate in appearance; his dress, a black hat rather broader brimmed than the fashion, frock coat, white cravat, black vest and pantaloons, a well polished shoe, and a silver-headed cane. His light and active step might deceive one into an idea of his youth, had not time so blanched his hair, wrinkled his phiz, placed the *annulis senilis* upon his eye, and corrugated the skin, and enlarged the veins of his hands. His voice, never very strong, has almost the shrill pitch of a boy, especially when excited while lecturing.

"A visage sterne, and milde, where both did growe,
Vire to contemne, in vertue to rejoyce;
Amid great Stormes, whom grace assured so
To live upright, and smile at Fortune's choyce.

* * * * *

A hart, where dreade was neer so imprest,
To hide the thought, that might the trowth auance,
In neyther fortune lost, nor yet repress,
To swel in welth, or yield vnto mischance."

CATO.