

A DISSERTATION
ON THE
PROGRESS OF MEDICAL SCIENCE, &c.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

IN discharging the duty of this anniversary, I shall endeavour to delineate, as far as the occasion will allow, the progress of medical science, in the commonwealth of Massachusetts.

FROM a consideration of the early attention of our venerable ancestors, to the promotion of literature ; the establishment of Harvard* university in 1638 ; and the various records and traditions of that enterprising period, it is not easy to explain our ignorance of the earliest physicians. But we may safely remark, that indigence is unfavourable to accurate investigation ; that a wilderness is not adapted to the improvement of a conjectural art ; and that professional eminence is the result of experience.

* John Harvard died at Charlestown, 1638.

THE general state of medicine at that time was limited and hypothetical, for the circulation of the blood by Harvey, and the course of aliment to nutrition by Pecquet and Asellius were but just discovered ; a careful observance of the nature, symptoms and cure of diseases by Sydenham, had scarcely commenced, and the medical establishments, which are now celebrated, were unknown. But a regular intercourse with the parent country, occasional immigrations from European schools, and a progressive introduction of approved authors, afforded our predecessors the best means of instruction their situation would admit of ; and by their assiduity we are favoured with a regular succession of talents and acquirements, which have kept pace with the cultivation of science, and the refinements of polished society.

S. Thatcher THE first medical publication in this state, was a paper in 1677, entitled, A brief guide in the small pox and measles, by Thomas Thatcher,* a clergyman and physician, who is spoken of as the best scholar of his time.

THERE is a letter, about a good management, under the distemper of the measles, without a date, or the author's name ; it was probably written as early as the preceding ; but whatever were its merits, we can view it in no other light, than as an ancient curiosity. †

* Died 1678, aged 58.

† See files Mass. Hist. Society.

THE introduction of variolous inoculation in Boston, by the influence and patronage of Cotton Mather, a celebrated divine, was a subject of much speculation; whilst the discourses and opinions of the clergy applauded or condemned it in a moral or religious view,* the controversies of the physicians were not more distinguished for candour and fair argument, than by a spirit of rivalry and ill nature. Many newspaper publications were anonymous; † but an open opposer was Lawrence Dalhound, a Frenchman, who had seen cases in Italy, Flanders, and Spain, and was supported by William Douglass and Joseph Marrison. ‡

ZABDIEL BOYLSTON, of whom we may boast as the earliest inoculator for small pox in the British dominions, studied with John Cutler, an eminent practitioner. His experiments commenced with his son in 1720, and in a year he extended the disease to 247 persons, of whom but six died. During this period 39 others were successfully attended by Roby, and Thompson, in Cambridge and Roxbury. Resisting with intrepidity and perseverance the influence of

* The clergy of Massachusetts were defenders of inoculation, and the subjects of much abuse by its opposers. See observations, by Benjamin Colman, 1721. Also a vindication of the ministers of Boston, by some of their people, 1722.

A sermon, against the dangerous and sinful practice of inoculation, preached in London, in July, 1722, by Edmund Massey, was reprinted in Boston. The conduct of some of the medical faculty, who exerted their whole force to annihilate it, was violent and outrageous.

† See New England Courant, 1721—'22. This paper was rendered famous, by the juvenile essays of Benj. Franklin, who died 1790, aged 85.

‡ See appendix to Boylston. p. 52.

*Dr J Boylston was General
to the Major Generals, and
Mr Boylston —*

superstition, and the exertions of interested assailants, Boylston conquered the strongest prejudices, and lived to witness the extensive effect of his philanthropy. He published in 1721, from the philosophical transactions in Great Britain, an account of inoculation, by Timonius of Constantinople, and Pylarinus, a Venetian consul in Smyrna. He visited London in 1725, received flattering attentions from distinguished characters, and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society. In 1726 he published an historical account of inoculated small pox in New England. His subsequent communications and correspondence are sufficient evidence of his literary qualifications.

Douglass WILLIAM DOUGLASS, a native of Scotland, and a skilful physician, but a man of strong prejudices, accustomed to estimate the merits of others by his personal friendship for them, arrived at Boston in 1720.* He was the author of essays respecting the small pox in 1722 and 1730; also of several historical and political performances. In 1736 he published a treatise on an eruptive miliary fever with angina ulcusculosa,† which has been mentioned with approbation, and quoted in subsequent dissertations on cynanche maligna.

A PAMPHLET was published in 1742, on the method of practice in the small pox in 1730, by Na-

* Died 1752, aged 57.

† This disease commenced in Kingston in 1735. The number of deaths in the country averaged one in four cases, and in Boston but one in thirty-five. See Douglass p. 3.

thaniel Williams,* a pupil of James Oliver, a learned physician, taught by Ludowick, a German, the most celebrated chemist that had ever been in America.† Williams was in extensive practice thirty-seven years, and is represented as an able instructor of youth, a useful preacher, and most valuable citizen.

WE are told that the art of healing was originally reduced to order by the officers of the church, and that many of our earliest divines, in imitation of the ancient priests of Egypt, Greece and Rome, were practitioners in medicine, by which they were enabled more effectually to promote their spiritual avocations; ‡ among these was Leonard Hoar, who went to England in 1653, took the degree of doctor in medicine, and afterward preached at Wenstead. He returned to this country in 1762, was elected president of the university, and sustained that office about three years.§

THERE is a tract on pharmacy, written in 1732, *Harvard* by Thomas Harward, a clergyman, and there are various statements in periodical publications, and disputes in newspapers, of little consequence at this period, which with those recited, are all the medical writings in Massachusetts, we are able to discover in more than a century and an half.

* Died 1737. aged 63.

† See preface to Williams, by Thos. Prince.

‡ See Magnalia, by C. Mather, book iii. p. 151.

§ Died 1675, aged 45.

THOUGH the works of Hippocrates, Galen, Stahl, and others, were not unknown, those of Sydenham and his followers, were principally studied by our oldest practitioners, till the time of Boerhaave, whose invaluable labours commenced in 1701, which, with the commentaries of Van Swieten, the practical writings of Whyte, Mead, Brooks, and Huxham; the the physiology of Haller; the anatomy of Cowper, Keil, Douglass, Cheselden, Munroe, and Winslow; the surgery of Heister, Sharp, Le Dran, and Pott; the midwifery of Smellie and Hunter; and the materia medica of Lewis, were in general use at our political separation from the British empire.*

OUR earliest evidence of a medical establishment, is an hospital at Rainford's island in the harbour of Boston, belonging to the commonwealth, which for upwards of an hundred years, has been appropriated to the reception of mariners and others, with contagious sickness. It is now under the direction of the board of health, and is principally occupied in the summer months, when vessels are subject to quarantine.

INOCULATING hospitals, which are said to have been the first in the state, were opened in the vicinity of Boston in 1764, at Point Shirley, by William Barnet, from New Jersey; and at Castle William, by Samuel Geltson from Nantucket; at these Sylvester Gardner, Nathaniel Perkins, Miles Whit-

* There were many other valuable medical books in use during this period, but those are named, which are supposed to have been most generally known.

worth, James Lloyd, Joseph Warren, Benjamin Church, and Joseph Gardner, attended.* A few years afterward, they were succeeded by one in the neighbourhood of Marblehead, under the direction of Hall Jackson, from Portsmouth.

THE appearance of small pox in Cambridge, in 1775, rendered accommodations necessary, to prevent its extension; and Isaac Rand,† a respected practitioner of Charlestown, who studied with Thomas Greaves, and was reputed to have been better acquainted with the disease than any of his cotemporaries, was the physician. In 1776 William Aspinwall and Lemuel Hayward, prepared conveniences at Brookline, the natal and the burying place of Boylston,‡ for private inoculation, and attended two classes; Rand and Hayward then associated, and the number inoculated in twelve months, by the above named gentlemen, exceeded two thousand. The reputation and success of this institution led to similar establishments, at different periods, in various places; but an hospital was continued at that town by Aspinwall, till variolous inoculation was superseded.

To enhance the superior advantages of a late discovery, it is stated as the opinion of Dimsdale, a celebrated small pox inoculator, that this mode of communicating it has been more detrimental than beneficial to society; and its ravages in populous cities

* See Boston Gazette, and Post Boy 1764.

† Died 1790, aged 71.

‡ Born in Brookline in 1684, and died at his patrimonial estate in 1766, aged 83.

are adduced to corroborate the remark. If this is a correct opinion from his extensive information, or from the effect of a constant promiscuous* inoculation, can it be applied to this section of our country, from the observations and experience of distinguished practitioners.† Whilst we gratefully acknowledge the success of every improvement, let us respect the exertions of those who have gone before us, in the alleviation of human misery.

THE first information of physicians in an associated capacity, is in the preface to Douglass, which is addressed to a medical society in Boston; but there are no particulars respecting it. A gentleman lately deceased,‡ whose memory included a retrospect of sixty years, and who knew the author, had no recollection of its existence. It was probably temporary, for conference and consultation on a distressing epidemic§ which prevailed at that time.

AN association of under graduates, denominated the anatomical society, existed at the university in 1771, and was instituted previous to that time. They held private meetings for a discussion of me-

* The small pox has never been constantly in Massachusetts, as in most of the other states, and in Europe.

† The small pox prevailed in Boston in 1676, 1689, 1702, 1721, 1730, 1752, 1764, 1776, and 1792, at which times, it has commonly extended either generally or partially to towns in the vicinity. It appears, that by natural small pox, one in six has died, and by inoculation, but one in two hundred.

See Historical Collections. Waterhouse on Kine Pox, 1810. p. 4. 27. Miller's Retrospect, vol. I. p. 287.

‡ James Lloyd.

§ Cynanche Maligna.

dical and physiological questions, and were in possession of a skeleton ; but their demonstrations were confined to the dissection of appropriate animals, as the examination of a human body, was then an extraordinary occurrence, with our most inquisitive anatomists.

IN 1774, attempts were made by a combination of medical students to obtain a more accurate knowledge of anatomy, than could be afforded by books and engravings ; but their progress was greatly retarded, by the danger of discovery, which at that period, might have been fatal to their future usefulness.

THERE have been several instances of candidates for practice, resorting to the European schools to complete their medical education, which was doubtless a public benefit. Sixteen of the sons of Harvard, have received professional degrees in the universities of foreign countries, and four at Philadelphia.*

OBSTETRICK attendance, except in the most difficult cases, was seldom by male practitioners, till within the last sixty years ; but this part of the profession is now principally conducted by physicians. James Lloyd,† a pupil of William Clark, an eminent physician of this metropolis ; attended the instructions and saw the practice of Warner, Sharp, Smellie, and Hunter of London in 1753. He returned the following year, and has the credit of introducing the practice of amputation with the double

* See note A. at the end of the dissertation. † Died 1810, aged 82.

incision, and of being the earliest systematic practitioner in midwifery in this section of the United States.

THOUGH some individuals, have been celebrated in particular branches of practice, there are no established distinctions, as in other countries; the utility of which, has been considered problematical.

THE American revolution opened a new field for medical investigation, and the formation of an army, collecting the faculty from every part of the country, promoted a social intercourse. Joseph Warren, a most conspicuous character at that eventful period, was proposed as physician general, but preferring a more active, hazardous employment, he accepted a major general's commission, and in a few days, sealed his principles with his blood.* Benjamin Church,† an esteemed practitioner, and a pupil of Joseph Pyncheon, was appointed Director of the Hospitals, but being charged with a treacherous correspondence with the British, was superseded by John Morgan,‡ professor of medicine in the college of Philadelphia.

THE prudence and sagacity of Washington, which are as easily traced in the archives of science, as in the cabinet or the field, instituted the first medical examinations in this state of candidates for practice.§

* Slain on the heights of Charlestown, June 17, 1775, aged 35.

† Sailed for the West Indies in 1776, and lost at sea.

‡ Died 1789.

§ The surgeons and mates of the army were examined by persons appointed by the commander in chief.

The establishment of military hospitals, afforded extensive opportunities for observations and experiments; important operations in surgery were rendered familiar; whilst the diseases and casualties of camps were constantly occurring. Anatomy was greatly improved by a frequent inspection without fear of detection of the organs of the human body; physiology was more accurately comprehended, and a laudable spirit of inquiry, was assiduously cultivated.*

A branch of the hospital was continued at Boston, with peculiar advantages to students in medicine. In 1780 the first course of anatomical lectures in this Commonwealth, with dissections and demonstrations, was delivered by John Warren, surgeon of that establishment; they were repeated the following year, and students of the university were permitted to attend.

THOUGH the alma mater of Massachusetts, is the parent of many literary institutions† her eldest domestic offspring is the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, incorporated in 1780. Of the original number of this learned association ten‡ were of the medical faculty, and a proper proportion, has successively been added. Their charter, among

* See note B.

† The first College, and the first printing press in America, were at Cambridge. The attention of our first settlers, to literature and the arts, was gradually extended through New England, and to the other colonies. See Miller, Vol. 2. p. 332.

‡ David Cobb, E. A. Holyoke, Eben. Hunt, Charles Jarvis, Joseph Orne, Theodore Parsons, Oliver Prescott, Micajah Sawyer, John Barnard, and Cotton Tufts.

*Leit.
in Boston
1780.*

other provisions for an advancement of science and the useful arts, expressly requires the promotion and encouragement of medical discoveries; and the communications in their memoirs* evince, that this branch of useful knowledge, has not escaped their attention and patronage.

THE Massachusetts Medical Society was established in 1781, with power to elect officers, examine and licence candidates for practice, hold estate, and perpetuate its existence as a body corporate forever. This auspicious event, which was effected by an application to the legislature, of thirty one distinguished physicians,† from various parts of the state, may be considered as the most interesting era in our history. Though a systematic mode of instruction had begun to dawn, and a liberal spirit of enquiry was gradually advancing, the peculiar benefits of regular meetings for personal improvement, and a diffusion of medical knowledge, must be obvious to cursory observers; whilst the conduct and decisions of the general court corroborate the remark, that a termination of civil commotion, is favourable to science and the arts.

IN June 1782, after several preparatory meetings, by-laws were enacted, a common seal‡ was adopted, the society organized, and Edward A. Holyoke chosen president; the fellows were enjoined to com-

* Published 1785. 1790. 1804. 1809.

† See note C.

‡ A figure of Esculapius in his proper habit, pointing to a wounded hart, nipping the herb proper for his cure. Motto "natura duce."

municate important cases, and the faculty at large invited to a familiar correspondence; circular letters were sent to similar societies in our own, and in foreign countries, which were respectfully reciprocated. By judicious elections, the society was gradually increased, and its utility extended.*

IN 1785, corresponding and advising committees† were appointed for the different counties; in several of which,‡ associations were formed, for professional conversation, reading dissertations, and communicating useful cases, which were afterward transmitted to the committees.

IN 1789 the society was authorized to point out and describe such a mode of medical instruction, as might be deemed requisite for candidates, previous to examination.§ It was then determined that every pupil should have a competent knowledge of Greek, Latin, the principles of geometry, and experimental philosophy; and that the period of instruction should in no case be less than three years, with attendance on the practice of a respectable physician.|| Publications are made triennially of authors to be studied, by which the most valuable modern productions are extensively circulated.¶ The censors** meet for examining and licensing candidates once in four

* See note D.

† See note E.

‡ Middlesex, Worcester, Bristol, and Kennebeck.

§ See act of the G. Court, Feb. 10.

|| No candidate can be admitted to an examination after June 4, 1813, unless he has studied with, and attended the practice of a fellow or honorary member, of the society. By Laws, p. 18, 19.

¶ See note F.

** See note G.

*of this Law
has not been
strictly followed
as I have
of many
Laws have
been avoided
as members
of the
Society
what
never been
any other
than I have
to show
Laws
and now
I hope as
of course*

months. The first licentiate was admitted in 1782, since which eighty others have received letters testimonial of their qualifications to practice.*

By an act of the legislature in 1803, the state of the society was essentially changed.† The number of fellows, originally limited to seventy, may embrace all respectable practitioners in physic and surgery, resident in the state, who, in the election of counsellors, can vote by proxy. The present number is two hundred and four,‡ exclusive of honorary members. An annual meeting is holden in June, to receive a report of the counsellors for the preceding year; revise and amend the by laws; elect counsellors; read and consider communications; attend to a discourse, which must be placed on the files of the society; and transact any other business, conducive to the welfare of the institution, or the interests of medical science.

THE number of counsellors, whose former duty was only to prepare business for the society, is greatly increased.§ They supersede the county committees, and their authority extends to elect fellows, and honorary members; appoint the officers of the corporation; receive, examine, and answer letters and communications; establish subordinate societies, with censors if they think proper; and perform other services, as required by the by laws. They meet three times in a year, and submit their records and proceedings to the society at the annual meeting.

* See note H.

‡ See note I.

† March 8. See Act.

§ See note K.

District societies report to the counsellors all cases of importance, and are subject to the regulations of the society.*

IN 1790, the first number of medical papers, containing a selection of important communications, was published; but for the want of funds,† a second did not appear till 1806. A third was printed in 1808, completing the first volume; which, with a fourth number, being the first part of the second volume in 1809, has been largely distributed, and contain a useful variety of theoretical and practical observations. There are ample materials for further publication, which will probably appear by the next anniversary.

A PHARMACOPŒIA‡ of the society, prepared by James Jackson and John Collins Warren, was published in 1808. The plan of the Edingburgh college was pursued in this valuable work, which being designed to introduce the modern nomenclature, establish uniformity in the preparation of medicines, and in the prescriptions of physicians, was readily adopted, and is in general use. The American New Dispensatory, just published by James Thacher, was

* The district societies are in Boston, comprehending Brookline, Cambridge, Charlestown, Dorchester, Malden, Medford, and Roxbury. Also in the counties of Essex, Worcester, Berkshire, Lincoln, and Cumberland. The Worcester district has censors, viz. Oliver Fiske, Jona. Osgood, Thomas Babbit, Abraham Haskell, and Austin Flint.

† The expenses of the society are defrayed by an annual tax on the fellows, and by a moderate assessment on licentiates.

‡ This was designed as a standard work, for the United States, and circular letters were sent to the different medical institutions previous to its publication.

submitted to a committee* of the society, in whose report it is represented as a judicious performance.

THE discourses† are by Isaac Rand, in 1804, on on phthisis pulmonalis, and the warm bath—John Warren, in 1805, on the use and effect of mercury—Joshua Fisher, in 1806, on narcotic substances—Thomas Welsh, in 1807, on heat and cold, as agents on the human body—John Brooks, in 1808, on pulmonic inflammation—and Aaron Dexter, in 1809, on diseases of the joints.

AT the late meetings of the counsellors, committees‡ were appointed, to make inquiry relating to a spotted fever, so called, then prevailing in the county of Worcester ; and circular letters were sent to the physicians in that quarter, whose reports to the society, and publications in the gazettes, with the observations and minute dissections in this town, and its vicinity, have furnished an accurate history, § and the modes of treatment, in this formidable disease. ||

* John Warren, Aaron Dexter, Josiah Bartlett.

† Those by Rand and Fisher are published.

‡ Feb. 4. Oliver Fiske, Austin Flint, Wm. Payne.—March 27, Thomas Welsh, James Jackson, John C. Warren.

§ See Worcester and Boston papers, March, April, May, 1810, and files of the Medical Society.

Since the reading of this discourse, a minute and interesting report of the committee is published.

See Med. Communications, Vol. II. p. 111.

|| It is generally agreed, that this disorder, which excited much alarm, is not contagious. It is the opinion of accurate observers, that though uncommon it is not new ; and that it bears a great resemblance to typhus gravior, with a peculiar affection of the brain.

THE public estimation of this society is sufficiently manifested in the constant patronage of government, whose recent liberality in the grant of a township of land* to extend its usefulness, demands our most respectful acknowledgements.

THE important medical school at Harvard University, hastened in its progress by the salutary effects of the anatomical lectures at Boston, was founded on a generous bequest, in 1770, by Ezekiel Hersey; whose laudable example was imitated by his widow, and also by Abner Hersey, John Cummings, and William Erving.†

THE institution provides a regular system of instruction, with demonstrations and experiments. The use of the college library is allowed to medical students; who, having read two years with a reputable practitioner, and attended two courses of lectures in the respective branches, may at the expiration of another year, by passing a public examination, and delivering and defending a dissertation, receive the degree of bachelor in medicine. But such as have not enjoyed a college education, must evince an acquaintance with Latin, experimental philosophy, and mathematics. Bachelors of seven years standing, who have been that time in practice, may receive a doctor's degree, after a public examina-

* See Resolve Feb. 10, 1810.

† The sum bequeathed by these persons, three of whom were physicians, was 4000 pounds. Ezekiel Hersey died 1770, aged 60; Abner Hersey in 1786, aged 68; and John Cummings in 1788, aged 61. William Erving, who was an officer in the British army, died in 1791, aged 56.

*Med.
School
Harvard*

tion by the professors ; but they must deliver and defend, a Latin and an English dissertation on medical subjects.

1483
organic
IN 1783, John Warren was installed professor of anatomy and surgery ; Benjamin Waterhouse, of the theory and practice of physic ; and Aaron Dexter, of chemistry and materia medica. In 1809, John Collins Warren and John Gorham, were respectively inaugurated, adjunct professors of anatomy and chemistry.

THE anatomical museum is enriched by the liberality of John Nickols, a counsellor at law in England, with a valuable collection of natural preparations, by his father, who is numbered with those celebrated anatomists, that introduced the art of injection ; also of Elias H. Derby, of Salem, with curious imitations in wax, from a nunnery in Italy. The chemical laboratory is fully competent to the purposes of instruction.

THE lectures which commence in October have been continued without interruption. Medical honours are conferred at the public commencements ; of which, from the formation of the institution, forty-five have received the degree of bachelor, and thirty the degree of doctor in medicine.* The dissertations which have been published on these occasions, are by Peter de Sales la Terriere, in 1789, on the puerperal fever ; William Pearson, in 1789, on mixed fever ; William Dix, in 1795, on dropsy ;

* See note L.

Frederick May, in 1795, on the lock jaw; John Fleet, in 1795, on surgical operations; Samuel Brown, in 1797, on the malignant bilious fever; William Ingalls, in 1801, on the bursal abscess; and James Jackson, in 1809, on the Brunonian system.

A COURSE of lectures on natural history, occasionally interspersed with remarks on mineralogy, has been delivered annually, from 1788, by Benjamin Waterhouse, at which the students in medicine were permitted to attend. In 1806, William D. Peck was inducted as professor in that department; and the establishment of a botanic garden at Cambridge, will, by a cultivation of foreign and indigenous articles, enrich the materia medica, and improve pharmacy.*

IN 1800, a valuable collection of medical and anatomical works and engravings, were presented to the university by Ward Nicholas Boylston, with permanent arrangements for its enlargement. The number of books at this time exceeds four hundred, the use of which is extended to the fellows of the Medical Society, residing within ten miles of Cambridge. He also in 1803 established† an annual complimentary premium, to the authors of the best performances, on such medical, anatomical, physiological, or

* A subscription of \$30,000 was made, and two townships of eastern land were granted, for the purchase of land, and other expenses of this establishment. It is under the inspection of the professor of natural history, and a board of trustees, of whom the president of the Medical Society is ex officio a member.

† See bond to the college, Jan. 20, 1803.

Prize Questions
X (22 ans) July 1825 over one thousand

chemical subjects, as are proposed by a committee,* appointed by the president and fellows of the university. The approved dissertations† are, on cholera infantum, and on dysentery, by James Mann, in 1804 and 1806—On mortification, on the the structure and physiology of the skin, and on biliary concretions, by George Cheyne Shattuck, in 1806 and 1807—On cancer, and the best mode of extirpation, by Daniel Newcomb, in 1808, whose premature death is justly lamented—On cynanche maligna, and on phthisis pulmonalis, by Jacob Bigelow, in 1809—And on complaints in the breasts of nursing women, by Thomas Sewall, in 1809 : For each of which premiums were adjudged, agreeable to the design of the founder,‡ which is well adapted to inspire a laudable emulation, and improve the medical profession.

WILLINGLY would I offer a grateful tribute of respect to this distinguished patron, and liberal benefactor ; but as many others, by whose talents and exertions the boundaries of medical science have been successfully extended, and to whom I am in-

* The committee are Lemuel Hayward, John Warren, Thomas Welsh, Aaron Dexter, John Brooks, Josiah Bartlett, William Spooner, John Fleet, and James Jackson. The persons who have served are, Edward A. Holyoke, James Lloyd, Cotton Tufts, Samuel Danforth, Isaac Rand, Joshua Fisher, Benjamin Waterhouse, and William Eustis.

† The dissertations on cholera, by Mann ; and the three by Shattuck, are published.

‡ The premiums are adjudged without a knowledge of the author. Every dissertation has a device or motto, with a corresponding sealed letter, containing the author's name ; and those only are opened, which are successful.

debted for materials in the present sketch, are still alive, I must leave the pleasing duty to a future, we hope a far distant occasion, and an abler eulogist ; nor will I wound the delicacy of some who hear me, by commending the patriotism and valour, or recognizing the civil distinctions, of our cotemporaries in the healing art.

AT the commencement of the medical institution, a question arose, respecting its interference with the charter rights of the Medical Society. On one side it was supposed, that positive legal power to examine and license candidates for practice, implied an exclusive right ; on the other, that the acknowledged privileges and usages of universities, were sufficient authority to qualify students, and confer professional degrees. Repeated conferences were held by committees of the society, with the corporation and professors of the college, which terminated satisfactorily. A diploma from the university, or letters testimonial from the society, are alike considered as entitling practitioners of three years' standing to fellowship ; and all bachelors, or licentiates, in medicine, may claim* the use of the society's library.

THERE were published, in 1786, the first part of a synopsis of a course of lectures on the theory and practice of medicine ; in 1792, a discourse on the rise, progress and present state of medicine ; in 1804, a lecture on the evil tendency of tobacco, and the pernicious effects of ardent and vinous spirits on

* See act of the General Court, March 8, 1803.

young persons, by Benjamin Waterhouse ; in 1803, a pamphlet on the use of the vitriolic acid, in ulcerated sore throat, by Thomas Bulfinch ;* and in 1799, a volume on the plague and yellow fever, by James Tytler,† a native of Scotland, who is spoken of as a man of extensive erudition, but imprudent. He immigrated to this country in 1796, and resided in obscurity at Salem.

IT has been remarked that more professional knowledge is at this time attainable in a single season, than was known to Hippocrates, Galen, and their successors till the beginning of the eighteenth century. A case of fistula in ano, now considered as a simple disease, and often cured by our youngest practitioners, was in 1686, nearly 70 years after the settlement of Massachusetts, so formidable and dangerous, that Felix a surgeon, and Fagon a consulting physician, were rewarded with forty thousand dollars, for a successful operation on Lewis the fourteenth of France, in consequence of which a national thanksgiving was religiously observed.‡

AT this period also, the royal touch was considered as the only cure in scrofula. In May, 1682, notice was given in a London gazette, that as the weather was growing warm, his majesty would not touch any more for the king's evil, till after Michaelmas ; and in 1687, an indigent citizen of New Hampshire, having tried every other means without

* Died 1804, aged 73.

† Drowned 1804, aged 59.

‡ See Ramsay's Review, 1800. p. 10. 12.

effect, petitioned the Legislature for aid to transport him to England, for that efficacious remedy.*

THE Massachusetts Humane Society, which had been founded five years, upon the plan of similar associations in Europe,† was incorporated in 1791, for the purposes of restoring suspended animation, preserving human life, and alleviating its miseries. The number of members, which at that time was 189, has increased to 587 ; of whom many are of the medical faculty, whose professional attendance is rendered gratis, in promoting the immediate views of the institution. It is governed by a president‡ and board of trustees. Public discourses, all of which are published, are delivered at the annual meetings of the society, and the physicians who have officiated on these occasions are, Benjamin Waterhouse, in 1790 ; John Bartlett, in 1792 ; John Brooks, in 1795 ; John Fleet, in 1797 ; Isaac Hurd, in 1799 ; John C. Howard, in 1804 ; and Thomas Danforth, in 1808 ; these, with the alternate performances of the clergy, are correct specimens of talents and piety.

IN 1799, a complimentary premium was offered by the trustees, for the best communication relating to yellow fever in the United States, which, in 1800, was adjudged to Samuel Brown, who died soon after, leaving an honourable testimony§ of early acquirements and industry.

* See Belknap's Hist. Appendix, Vol. I. p. 81.

† The first institution of this kind was at Amsterdam, in 1767.

‡ The president is John Warren.

§ See treatise on yellow fever, 1800.

DISCREET and concise directions for the recovery of persons apparently dead, from drowning, strangling, suffocation, electricity, or the use of poisons ; judicious rewards to such as have jeopardized their lives for the preservation of others ; and furnishing convenient shelters, on our sea coast, for ship wrecked mariners, have extensively diffused the benefits of this benevolent institution.

THE Merrimack Humane Society at Newburyport, instituted for the same purposes, was incorporated in 1804.*

THE celebrated discovery of vaccination by Edward Jenner, a physician of Berkley in Great Britain, was transmitted to this state in 1799. His observations were succeeded by the comments of George Pearson, and a series of experiments, by William Woodville, the former a physician of St. George's, and the latter of the small pox hospitals, in London. A Boston newspaper† furnishes our earliest information on this subject, by Benjamin Waterhouse, who in 1800, 1802, and 1810 published historical and practical treatises on the kine pock, in which his indefatigable exertions for its extension, to every portion of our country,‡ are minutely detailed. In July 1800, he procured matter from Bristol in England, with which his son was the first person inoculated in the United States. From him several others were

* The president is Micajah Sawyer.

† See Columbian Centinel, March 12, 1799, by Benjamin Russell, who has inserted many subsequent communications, relating to vaccination.

‡ See Part II. 1802, p. 37.

vaccinated, some of whom were tested by variolous infection*. This laudable experiment, raised the credit of a discovery, which like every other novelty, was strenuously advocated by some, but disregarded by others.

IN the following September, James Jackson, who had attended vaccination with Woodville, brought matter from London, which did not retain its efficacy, but he was soon after supplied by Thomas Manning, who obtained it from Europe. Additional publications appeared, and the subject was carefully examined. Early in 1801 the medical society directed an application to the vaccine institution in England for matter, † and the most respectable practitioners, convinced of its prophylactic efficacy, engaged in its propagation.

ABOUT this time the small pox became general in Marblehead, ‡ by mistaking a variolous for a vaccine patient, and was attended with serious consequences. A committee of the medical society was appointed to visit that place, and collect facts, but two of the members could not attend at the time proposed, and a communication from the physicians, rendered a second attempt unnecessary. § This business connected with other circumstances, produced a misunderstanding between Benjamin Waterhouse, who was one of the committee, and the society, which

* See Waterhouse on Kine Pock, 1800. p. 18. 25, 1810. p. 22.

† See Records Med. Soc.

‡ A sea port town, 5660 inhabitants.

§ See Council Records Med. Soc.

occasioned an appeal to the public,* but without essential advantages.

IN 1802 a most satisfactory experiment was conducted by the board of health,† of the metropolis, whose unremitting exertions for the prevention of contagious diseases, with salutary regulations to preserve cleanliness, and accommodate the citizens, entitle them to commendation. Nineteen persons were vaccinated at the health office, and passed through the disease, after which they were repeatedly inoculated with small pox, and exposed to its contagion for twenty days, without receiving it. An official account of this transaction was submitted to the public.‡

A vaccine institution was formed in 1803, by the junior physicians of Boston, for gratuitous inoculation of the indigent, and was continued whilst patients presented themselves to receive it.

IN 1808 a committee§ was appointed by the counsellors of the medical society, to obtain further evidence of this disease as a preventive of small pox, and report the best method of conducting the practice. A copious and interesting statement was made to the society, at the annual meeting, which is pub-

* See Columbian Centinel, Ap. 19, June 18, 1806. There are various controversies in the newspapers, upon medical subjects, which are not particularly noticed, from a belief, that their tendency is rather to amuse the public, than benefit the parties, or dignify the profession.

† Thomas Welsh is physician to the board, and has sustained that office eleven years.

‡ See note M.

§ John Warren, Aaron Dexter, James Jackson, John C. Warren.

lished in their communications.* In 1809 the fellows were specially enjoined to discover if the disorder exists in the cows of this country, and several instances are related to establish the fact.†

THE town of Milton was the first in a corporate capacity to extend the benefits of vaccination to its inhabitants. Three hundred and thirty-seven persons, of all ages and conditions, more than a fourth of the population, were inoculated in a short period, by Amos Holbrook; twelve of whom were afterward tested with small pox. The proceedings are minutely detailed, by a committee who superintended the business.‡ About this time fifteen hundred were vaccinated on a similar plan, at New Bedford,§ under the direction of Benjamin Waterhouse.

AT the last session of the General Court,|| the respective towns in the state were directed to appoint committees, to superintend, and were authorized to raise monies annually, to defray the expenses of vaccination, which if properly conducted, will essentially conduce to the public welfare, as many individuals must eventually suffer by the uncertain and injudicious practice of inoculating each other,¶ without the judgment of experienced practitioners.

* Vol. I. Appendix to No. 2. part I.

† See Files of Med. Society.

‡ See Pamphlet, Nov. 1809.

§ See New Bedford Mercury, Oct. 1809. This town has 3300 inhabitants.

|| See Act, Mar. 10, 1810.

¶ The writer has frequently examined cases of this kind, which he supposed to be spurious.

THE Marine Hospital* of the United States, established at Charlestown in 1803, was opened at Fort Independence in 1799, and is supported by a monthly assessment on seamen. Its object is the reception of sick or disabled officers and sailors, in the service of the public or of merchants.† This important accommodation is well adapted for an observance of the diseases of foreign climates, and the casualties to which this valuable class of society are peculiarly liable.

THE Boston Alms House,‡ from the nature of its establishment, and the condition of its inhabitants, may be justly considered as combining, with the kind offices of humanity to meritorious objects, and exemplary reproof to idleness and vice, an improvement of the healing art. The annual appointment of a physician of approved acquirements, affords an extensive acquaintance with the complaints of venerable age, respected indigence, intemperance, and unguarded seduction; whilst gratuitous consultations, in important cases, are an honourable source of instruction to candidates for practice. Clinical lectures were delivered at this place in 1809, by James Jackson, which, with those on anatomy and surgery, by John C. Warren, and on chemistry, by John Gorham, at their respective apartments in this

* The surgeon is David Townsend. His predecessors were Benjamin Waterhouse in 1808, Charles Jarvis in 1804, and Thomas Welsh in 1799. See note N.

† See Act of Congress, July 16, 1798.

‡ Thomas J. Parker is Physician. See note O.

metropolis, will if liberally encouraged, afford distinguished advantages to students in medicine.

PROPOSALS were made about two years ago, for the delivery of anatomical lectures, at Fryburg in the district of Maine, by Alexander Ramsay, a native of Scotland, and for medical lectures at Plymouth, by James Thacher ; but we have no information of their success.

THERE are many institutions in our sea ports, and other populous towns, evincive of a laudable attention to the cause of benevolence, particularly the Boston Dispensary, incorporated in 1801, and conducted by a board of managers. Physicians* are appointed to attend indigent persons at their own houses, who are also supplied with medicines and refreshments at the expense of the corporation.

AT the State Prison,† erected in Charlestown in 1803, is an appropriate medical establishment, which affords an acquaintance with the diseases peculiar to such institutions ; and the beneficial effect, of changes in the human body, from excess and idleness, to temperance and labour.

THE bathing houses in Boston, Salem, and else where, are so highly important in the prevention and cure of diseases, that we may justly recommend their extension ; and the advantages of such establishments, have been so ably delineated on a former oc-

* Consulting Physicians elected 1809, James Lloyd, and Isaac Rand. Visiting Physicians, Asa Bullard, Cyrus Perkins, and Horace Bean.

† The Physician is Josiah Bartlett. See note P.

casion,* as to render additional observations superfluous.

To combine, as far as possible, the various means of instruction, and unite the faculty in so laudable a design, is a most important object. At our last annual meeting a committee† was appointed, to devise any means in their power for the establishment or promotion of a medical school in the metropolis. The numerous advantages of a familiar intercourse, and of the mutual professional labours, of a populous city are obvious ; I shall therefore only remark, that the procurement of a suitable building for the accommodation of the society, and of teachers in the different branches, with the united exertions of the medical professors of the university, the censors of this society, the physicians of our public institutions, and of individuals in their respective employments, would open a field for instruction and improvement, enabling the commonwealth of Massachusetts, notwithstanding the imbecility of her infancy, to maintain a vigorous manhood, and with the most distinguished of her sister states, to progress in honourable age, advancing the healing art.

ABOUT forty years have elapsed, since the celebrated works of Cullen, founded on the hypothesis

* See discourse by Isaac Rand, 1804. Economical bathing places may be prepared at distilleries, by apartments near the worm tubs ; from the lower and upper parts of which (the former furnishing cold, and the latter hot water) tubes may lead to the bathing tubs. An accommodation of this kind, prepared by Aaron Putnam, formerly a practitioner in medicine, is at the distillery of Matthew Bridge in Charlestown.

† John Warren, Joshua Fisher, John Brooks, Josiah Bartlett, Aaron Dexter.

of Hoffman, a cotemporary of Boerhaave, were introduced, and extensively circulated; and though succeeded by the ingenious theories of Brown, Darwin, and Rush, they still retain an important rank in our schools of medicine. To enumerate the valuable practical productions of others, or display the talents and industry, successfully exerted within that period, in cultivating and improving the various branches of our profession, would exceed the limits of a single dissertation. I can only name the Bells and Cooper, in anatomy, physiology, and surgery; Denman and Hamilton, in obstetricks; Priestly and Davy, in chemistry; Aikin and Murray, in materia medica; and must refer you to the valuable libraries of the university, the Massachusetts medical society, the district societies, and the associated physicians of Boston.* These, with professional books belonging to the Academy of Arts and Sciences, the historical society instituted in 1791 for the collection and preservation of useful information, the Athæneum established in 1807, an instructive resort for the scholar or philosopher, and with the extensive collections of distinguished practitioners, in every part of the state, afford an unlimited supply of medical literature, from the most remote antiquity to the present time.

TWENTY-SEVEN foreign medical works have been reprinted in Massachusetts,* sixteen of which

* The physicians of Boston, have a code of regulations, for their conduct to each other, which is worthy of imitation. See Boston medical police, March, 1808.


* See note Q.

were either in whole, or in connection with others, by Isaiah Thomas ; who remarks, that the United states have afforded editions of most of the medical writings that have a currency in this country.

FROM about the middle of the seventeenth century, there are many of our medical faculty, in addition to those whom I have had occasion to mention, respectfully noticed by biographical writers,* and in the gazettes† of their respective times. With an intention to particularize, I attempted a review of obituary notices ; but though the task was too arduous for my necessary avocations, and too delicate for a just discrimination, I discovered in every period the names of eminent physicians and surgeons, who were highly honoured, as philosophers, civilians, magistrates, orators, and warriors. Animated by their example, may we assiduously improve our more extensive privileges, and by a grateful recollection of their labours and perseverance, may we and our successors venerate their memories, and imitate their virtues.

* See Biographical and Historical Dictionaries, by John Eliot, and by William Allen ; which are of great value to inquirers for the distinguished characters of our country.

† See files of newspapers, at the Hist. Society.

 The note page 19, respecting the Pharmacopœia, is incorrect, and should read thus :

After its publication, a copy was sent to the different Medical Societies, with a circular letter, requesting them to examine the work, consider in what respects it needed alterations or amendments, and expressing a desire that some means might be devised, to establish a standard work for the United States.