

and comments are made on the mortality produced by the English games, while inquiries at forty-six high schools in Germany showed that no fatal accident had occurred in any game. One of the most constant lesions in Association football is inflammation of the præpatellar bursa caused by the energetic contractions of the quadriceps femoris. Allowing for the occasional brutality of the game, football is considered exercise as much mental as physical. Swimming is strongly advocated in the summer, though the authors think the expense a hindrance towards its universal adoption.

Rowing is another sport which has been imported from England. The first rowing club was founded in Hamburg in 1836, and since then similar clubs have been started in all the chief towns.

No educational system should be considered complete without a flower and vegetable garden adjoining the school, in which the children should be instructed in elementary botany, the lessons of course varying according to the age of the child.

The supply of air and light in the class rooms is fully discussed, and occupies a large part of the volume. Meyrich, who is taken as the authority on the examination of dust, finds in every gramme 1,000,000 germs. The authors themselves found 18 varieties of bacteria. A detailed description of Pettenkofer's air analysis is also given. Diagrams of stoves in which the air is heated before it enters the room are reproduced, and various systems of ventilation are described.

The sixth part continues the discussion of heating and ventilation problems, and then goes on to the question of reading and writing. Great importance is attached to the size of the print and clearness. Tables illustrating this point are given. The causes of myopia are discussed at great length, but no definite answer is given to the question—Why is myopia so common in Germany?

### SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

WE have received a small but excellent book,<sup>1</sup> which contains some of the best works of one of the most famous of all the great authors who have adorned the profession of medicine, and we are sure that the grateful thanks both of the profession and of the public will be given to Dr. Lloyd Roberts for it, and for the admirable and tasteful biography which he has prefixed thereto. The book contains, besides Sir Thomas Browne's well-known treatises, the *Religio Medici* and the *Hydriotaphia or Urn Burial*, three which will be new to many readers—*On Christian Morals*, a *Letter to a Friend on the Death of his Intimate Friend*, and a short tract on *Dreams*.

Few of our older authors have been more appreciated in the present century than Sir T. Browne. For this appreciation his memory is largely, we should say mainly, indebted to Charles Lamb, who claims (in Elia's essay on the *Two Races of Men*) to have been the first of the moderns to discover the beauties of the "Urn Burial," and to have introduced it to the notice of Coleridge. Lamb, indeed, paid to his favourite author the most sincere of all tributes—that of imitation. Many of his most humorous and fanciful passages might have been written by the author of *Religio Medici*. This imitation was very probably unconscious, for Browne's style is easier to caricature than to acquire; but it resulted probably from a similarity of humour in the mind of one saturated with the constant perusal of his predecessor.

But Lamb was far from being left alone in his admiration. Dr. Lloyd Roberts quotes eloquent tributes from De Quincy and from Carlyle, and refers to many authors of the present day. Yet he says with truth that Browne is not "read and appreciated as he deserves to be." We cannot doubt that the present publication will do much to reform this state of things.

Browne will always be identified chiefly with the *Religio Medici*. This is, indeed, a most singular work. At first sight, it appears to be the summing-up of a long life of meditation; it gives a critical account—almost a dissection—of the author's opinions, his inmost feelings, his character, hopes and fears. We know that the author lived to old age,

and we should have expected to find that his book was the product of his latest years, written to guide his children along the thorny path which their father had trod with so much pain and so careful thought. But, to our amazement, we find that it was written before the age of 30, and several years before his marriage. "As yet I have not," he says, "seen one revolution of Saturn,"<sup>2</sup> nor hath my pulse beat thirty years." But he was evidently of a precociously grave disposition, for he adds: "Methinks I have outlived myself, and begin to be weary of the sun;"<sup>3</sup> I have shaken hands with delight in my warm blood and canicular days; I perceive I do anticipate the vices of age; the world to me is but a dream or mock show, and we all therein but pantaloons and anticks to my severer contemplations" (p. 61). None can read Browne carefully and intelligently without seeing that what he wrote came from his heart; and a man who could write thus, without affectation, before he was 30, must have always regarded with indifference the aims and methods of political factions, and still more so in after-years.

We should not, therefore, be surprised to find him quiescent in any ordinary political struggle, yet it does seem a blot on the character of a man "of light and leading," who evidently sympathised with the royal cause, that he remained perfectly passive, cultivating his gardens, attending to his patients, and pursuing his philosophical meditations, while the king's cause was ruined and the king's life was taken. Still, we must recollect that he was only an ordinary country practitioner, and however enthusiastic could have done but little. But enthusiasm, except for great ideas, was certainly not in Browne's character.

The same quiet temper is shown in his depreciation (or, indeed, deprecation) of posthumous fame: "At my death I mean to take a total adieu of the world, not caring for a monument, history, or epitaph—not so much as the bare memory of my name to be found anywhere but in the universal register of God" (p. 60). Yet no one was less cynical. "For my conversation," he says, "it is like the sun's, with all men, and with a friendly aspect to good and bad. Methinks there is no man bad, and the worst best, that is, while they are kept within the circle of those qualities wherein they are good," a profound reflection which he thus goes on to explain:—"There are in the most depraved and venomous dispositions certain pieces that remain untouched which by an *antiperistasis* become more excellent, or by the excellency of their antipathies are able to preserve themselves from the contagion of their enemy vices, and persist entire beyond the general corruption" (p. 110).

No one has ever given more perfectly beautiful expression to the idea of sympathy than in these words: "It is not the tears of our own eyes only but of our friends also that do exhaust the current of our sorrows; which, falling into many streams, runs more peaceably, and is contented with a narrower channel. It is an act within the power of charity to translate a passion out of one breast into another, and to divide a sorrow almost out of itself; for an affliction, like a dimension, may be so divided as, if not indivisible, at least to become insensible" (p. 98). Whatever, then, might have been the cause of the apparent indifference with which he regarded the stirring events around him, we may be sure that it did not proceed from want either of sympathy or of patriotism.

A perusal of the *Religio Medici* gives the reader a lifelike portrait of its author. It shows, in the first place, the firm and simple faith with which he clung to the essential points of the Christian religion as he understood them, and yet the easy temper and the tolerant understanding which declined to see an enemy in a papist or a sectary. Hear him on this question—a burning one at that time: "Nor must a few differences, more remarkable in the eyes of man than perhaps in the judgment of God, excommunicate from heaven one another..... Take our opinions together, and from the confusion thereof there will be no such thing as salvation; for first the Church of Rome condemneth us; we likewise them; the subreformists and sectaries sentence the

<sup>2</sup> The note explains that "The planet Saturn maketh his revolution once in thirty years."

<sup>3</sup> He makes no reference here to Macbeth, but no doubt was familiar with Shakespeare's works. Browne was 11 years old when Shakespeare died.

<sup>1</sup> *Religio Medici, and other Essays*. By Sir Thomas Browne. Edited with an Introduction by D. Lloyd Roberts, M.D., F.R.C.P. Revised Edition. London: Smith, Elder and Co. 1898. 12mo, pp. 305. 3s. 6d.

doctrine of our Church as damnable; the atomist or familist reprobrates all these; and all these, them again..... Thus we go to heaven against each other's wills, conceits, and opinions, and with as much uncharity as ignorance, do err, I fear, in points not only of our own, but one another's salvation" (p. 83).

A noble utterance, and one which could not have been too common at the time of the rising of the mighty sect who, as Hudibras said,

Do build their faith upon  
The holy text of pike and gun,  
Decide all controversies by  
Infallible artillery,  
And prove their doctrine orthodox  
By apostolic blows and knocks.

Browne's inquiring mind, in fact (sceptical in the true sense of the term), showed him that there were many things inexplicable to his philosophy, so that he sums up his creed with: "This is the tenour of my belief: wherein, though there be many things singular, and to the humour of my irregular self, yet, if they square not with maturer judgments, I disclaim them, and do not further father them than the learned and best judgments shall authorise them" (p. 86).

He shows the same tolerance in everyday matters as in religion. "I have no antipathy," he says, "or rather idiosyncrasy in diet, humour, air, anything. I wonder not at the French for their dishes of frogs, snails, and toadstools, nor at the Jews for locusts and grasshoppers; but being amongst them, make them my common viands; and I find they agree with my stomach as well as theirs..... I feel not in myself those common antipathies that I can discover in others; those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch..... I am no plant that will not prosper out of a garden. All places, all airs, make unto me one country; I am in England everywhere, and under any meridian. I have been shipwrecked, yet am not enemy with the sea or winds; I can study, play, or sleep in a tempest. In brief, I am averse from nothing" (pp. 87, 88). But his tolerance had its limits, though he still stops short of hatred, for on the same page he is constrained to add, "If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do contemn and laugh at, it is that great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion—the multitude; that numerous piece of monstrosity which, taken asunder, seem men and the reasonable creatures of God, but, confused together, make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than Hydra. It is no breach of charity to call them fools..... Neither in the name of *multitude* do I only include the base and minor sort of people; there is a rabble even amongst the gentry."

That he had turned to good account his experience of foreign travel appears from the fact that he could say of himself, "Besides the jargon and *patois* of several provinces, I understand no less than six languages" (p. 104). His travels seem to have extended over five years or more. He took his M.A. degree at Oxford in his 23rd year (1627), and began to practise medicine in the neighbourhood of that city, but soon went abroad, and "finished his medical studies at Leyden in his 28th year (1633), where he took the degree of Doctor of Medicine" (p. xiii). After his return to England he first practised near Halifax, and it was here that he is believed to have written the *Religio Medici*; but in 1637, having been admitted M.D. *ad eundem* at Oxford, he removed to Norwich, where the rest of his life was spent, and where he died on his 78th birthday, October 18th, 1682.

He seems to have always been in good circumstances, and though he never wrote anything on medicine, he passed his life in the practice of his profession, and was regarded as the equal of any of the gentlemen in his neighbourhood. And in those days the distinction of classes was sharper, and knight-hood was not given with so lavish a hand as at the present day. He was knighted in 1671, his 66th year, by Charles II on a visit to Norwich—no doubt because of his distinguished position in the county. Whether the medical profession as a whole has risen in the social scale in proportion to the other learned professions, is a wide question; but the case of Sir T. Browne will certainly prove that, even as long ago as the era of the Stuarts, the ordinary duties of a country practitioner were sufficient to satisfy the ambition of a man of good family, adequate means, and most uncommon attain-

ments. Many and many a "general practitioner" has earned a well-deserved reputation for learning and virtue in his own neighbourhood, though unknown elsewhere. It was Browne's good fortune, through his literary accomplishments and genius, to have secured a high place in the great galaxy of our English classics, while always remaining fixed to the homely duties of his country practice.

He married in 1641, at the ripe age of 36, a Norfolk lady "of such symmetrical proportion," says Whitefoot,<sup>4</sup> "to her husband, both in the graces of her body and mind, that they seemed to come together by a kind of natural magnetism" (p. xvi). His marriage seems to have cost him (like Benedick) a few cheap jests, for the *Religio Medici* (pp. 106-7) speaks of marriage and the procreation of children in quite another vein from *Paradise Lost*. Probably if our author had ever noticed these jests, it would have been, to say with Benedick, "When I said I would die a bachelor I did not think I should live till I were married." The marriage, at any rate, seems to have been a most happy one, and he earned the Psalmist's blessing, to "see his children's children and peace upon Israel," after all the storms of his younger age.

We have given some space to our author's life, and to the matter of his writings, because we wish to arouse the interest of our professional brethren in one of the most celebrated of English country doctors. But it is as a literary man that Sir T. Browne appeals to the judgment of the public. And surely never was a man the master of a style so picturesque, so stimulating, so surprising, and yet so free from mere trickery and posture-making. It would take a profound knowledge of English literature, and a taste equally exquisite and sober, to trace the genesis of English prose style from the eccentricities of the euphuists, satirised in *Love's Labour's Lost*, through the writings of Bacon and Sir T. Browne to Dryden, Addison, and Swift, and so on to our own more strictly *pedestris sermo*. But that much of the Italian "conceitti" still lingered in the mind of our author seems beyond dispute. Can anything be more curiously conceited (in the old meaning of the term) than this?

"Now for these walls of flesh, wherein the soul doth seem to be immured before the resurrection, it is nothing but an elemental composition, and a fabric that must fall to ashes. *All flesh is grass* is not only metaphorically, but literally, true; for all those creatures we behold are but the herbs of the field, digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in ourselves. Nay, further, we are what we all abhor, *anthropophagi* and cannibals, devourers not only of men, but of ourselves, and that not in an allegory, but a positive truth; for all this mass of flesh which we behold came in at our mouths, this frame we look upon hath been upon our trenchers—in brief, we have devoured ourselves" (p. 55).

Again, to judge of the picturesqueness of his style, see with what a rapier thrust the point is urged in these sentences: "The scepticks that affirmed they knew nothing, even in that opinion confute themselves, and thought they knew more than all the world beside" (p. 81). "They that endeavour to abolish vice destroy also virtue, for contraries, though they destroy one another, are yet the life of one another" (p. 96). The last sentence contains in a few words matter for endless reflection and comment. It is the aim of the "liberalism" of the day to get everybody to think alike, or, if this is impossible, at least to think each other's contradictory opinions equally valuable, and, as the phrase goes, "interesting." Sir T. Browne seems to have known better. He saw as well as Shakespeare that it is between "the endless jar of right and wrong that justice resides," and that if you obliterate the distinction between right and wrong, you may indeed take away the jar, and so remove friction, but you will thereby abolish motion also, and stop the world's progress.

We have dipped in here and there, and culled a few extracts out of a great work, chiefly with a view of showing our readers how much entertainment and instruction they may find from a study of the *Religio Medici* itself. It is a book not to read through and have done with, but one to take in hand at any unoccupied moment, open it anywhere, and read

<sup>4</sup> Whitefoot was a clergyman of Norwich, and an old friend of Sir T. Browne, who published a memoir of his friend soon after his death.

as long as leisure will serve. Like all thoroughly good books, "*decies repetita placebit.*"

Of the other treatises included in the present volume, that on Christian Morals is a kind of appendix to the *Religio Medici*. It abounds, like that work, in pithy and far-reaching observations, as when he is contending that "natural parts and good judgments rule the world. States are not governed by ergotisms..... Where natural logick prevails not, artificial too often faileth: where nature fills the sails the vessel goes smoothly on; and when judgment is the pilot the insurance need not be high" (p. 155).

The "Letter to a Friend" on the death of an intimate friend is well worth reading, though a good deal of it is textually repeated from the Christian Morals. It must be allowed that our author sometimes seems to drop the departed friend out of his sight altogether, and to throw the reins on the neck of his hobby, and wander whithersoever it may lead him. One curious matter we may mark here for the admirers of Dickens—namely, that Mr. Pegotty was (no doubt unconsciously) quoting Pliny or Aristotle, when he said that "people can't die along the coast except when the tide's pretty nigh out;" for Sir T. Browne quotes from Pliny: "Aristoteles nullum animal nisi æstu recedente expirare affirmat: observatum id multum in Gallico Oceano, et duntaxat in Homine compertum" (p. 205), so that Mr. Barkis acted on classical precedents in "going out with the tide," though on the shore of the German, not the Gallic, ocean.

The *Hydriotaphia* or *Urn Burial* deserves a treatise by itself, but we have exhausted our space; nor is it necessary that we should speak at any length of it. All lovers of Sir T. Browne will read and reread this lovely little tract, of which Carlyle says: "The conclusion of the essay on urn burial is absolutely beautiful: a still, elegiac mood, so soft, so deep, so solemn and tender, like the song of some departing saint flitting faint under the everlasting canopy of night; an echo of deepest meaning from the great and famous nations of the dead!" (p. xxxv). Our author was too good a philosopher and theologian to suppose that it could be of any religious importance whether a man's body is consumed in a few minutes by fire or in a few weeks by corruption; nor does he indicate any personal preference for one or the other mode of disintegration. He was himself buried in the usual fashion. But there is one passage in this tract which is curious in relation to the history of his own reliques: "To be knaved out of our graves, to have our skulls made drinking bowls, and our bones turned into pipes to delight and sport our enemies, are tragical abominations escaped in burning burials" (p. 279). "Strange to say," says Dr. Lloyd Roberts, "the very fate that he had so strongly deprecated befel his remains, for in 1840, the lid of his coffin was accidentally broken open by a blow from a workmen's pickaxe, and, to quote his own words, his bones were "knaved out of his grave," his skull being deposited on show in the Museum of Norwich Hospital" (p. xxvii).

We conclude, as we began, with sincere thanks to Dr. Lloyd Roberts for the loving care he has bestowed on Sir T. Browne's works, and an earnest recommendation to all our readers to procure and study this volume.

## FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

STATEMENTS OF THE FRIENDLY SOCIETIES, AND THE FACTS AS ASCERTAINED.

At the conference between representatives of the British Medical Association and of representatives of certain of the leading registered friendly societies held on March 17th last at the office of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, it was stated on behalf of the friendly societies:

1. That it was a matter of perfect notoriety that no person was admitted to the friendly societies unless he was a working man, and that there was practically existing all the wage limit possible, because people were not admitted who had a higher income than those to whom the medical profession would be quite willing to render their services as members of a club.
2. That in many cases members joined the society, and paid for medical aid, but did not accept such aid.
3. Further, it was suggested that members who had joined

clubs as working men when young, and rose later in life to superior positions, do not as a rule claim medical benefit, though they may still remain members of the society.

Since the conference it has been thought advisable to obtain from different sources, and particularly from members of the profession connected with medical societies, information in regard to these points. In reply to some applications for information the answers received leave no doubt that the statements made at the conference by the representatives of the different societies cannot be accepted as strictly in accordance with the facts. It may be as well to summarise the answers received instead of going fully into detail.

With regard to the above points a Lincolnshire practitioner states that in a local friendly society about half the members are well-to-do tradesmen, some of whom, however, do not take advantage of medical aid. He states that one of the leading tradesmen of the town received for himself and family in one year as club members medical attendance which would have cost at least £60 if charged at the rate of 2s. 6d. a visit. He states also that he has obtained evidence confirming his experience from two other local practitioners, one of whom supplied him with a list of sixty tradesmen in good positions who were attended by him as club members, whilst the other gave him a list of forty-eight names of tradesmen who had claimed medical aid as club patients.

A practitioner in Norfolk states that in local clubs—Odd Fellows, Foresters, etc.—there is no wage limit whatever, and that anyone is permitted to claim medical aid at club rates.

A medical man at Kidderminster informs us that in this town it is a matter of notoriety that anyone and everyone is admitted as a paying member of friendly societies. Among members in the local friendly societies there are, he says, manufacturers, accountants, auctioneers, surveyors, publicans, and shopkeepers of all sorts. He has known people attended as club patients who can afford to pay 10 or 20 guineas to a consultant from Birmingham, and persons earning £300 and £400 a year have to his knowledge been attended as club patients.

Another correspondent states that a schoolmaster at a large grammar school was admitted a paying member of a friendly society and made use of the medical benefit.

Medical men in London who are surgeons to friendly societies, Oddfellows, and Foresters have informed us verbally that they are called upon to attend members as club patients who are in good positions and who are considerably above the average well-to-do artisan as far as income is concerned. Our informants do not believe there is any wage limit whatever.

In a letter from a correspondent in Essex he says that the question of well-to-do people availing themselves of the benefit of the club doctor is a very old-standing grievance.

A medical man practising in Coventry states that the Oddfellows, and he thinks the Foresters, belong to the Coventry Dispensary, as these societies are represented on the committee. In 1892 there were between 25,000 and 26,000 members. There is no wage limit of any kind, all classes being admitted as members, including the well-to-do.

A practitioner in Cambridgeshire writes that he knows of many instances where well-to-do persons were admitted as paying members of friendly societies, and took advantage of these for medical benefits. He enumerates some cases—cab proprietor and farmer, druggist, jeweller and watchmaker, owner of landed property, gardener owning his own house and conservatory; each of these had good incomes. This gentleman also states that he is not acquainted with any cases of members who having joined a society and paid for medical aid did not accept it.

Another practitioner in the same county states that in an Oddfellows club there are such members as the following who take advantage of the medical benefit—clerk in holy orders, an old-established tradesman, a farmer farming his own land, a very well-to-do horse dealer, and a large farmer and coal merchant. He also states that he knows of no instance in which a member pays for medical aid and is treated privately.

A practitioner of standing in Inverness writes: "That these friendly societies (Oddfellows, Shepherds, etc.) are abused is an acknowledged fact. And this extends all over Scotland." Another practitioner in the same town enumer-