

**REFLECTIONS ON
ORGANIZATION; OR,
SUGGESTIONS
FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF
AN ORGANIC ATOMIC THEORY**

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Reflections on organization; or, Suggestions for the construction of an organic atomic theory by
Henry Freke

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BY
HENRY FREKE, A.B., M.B., T.C.D., M.R.I.A.



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TO

SIR HENRY MARSH, BART.

My dear Sir,

Could he, by adorning so unpretending a page with a name pre-eminently proud in that department of research, which sheds upon inquiries of its kind their brightest lustre,—could he, by giving it the impress of a stamp its own intrinsic merit might not claim,—convey, however faintly, the extent at once of his attachment to your person and admiration for your intellectual gifts, it were, though humble such a tribute to your worth, to realize the anxious wish of

HENRY FREKE.

DUBLIN, 28, HOLLES-STREET,

November 1, 1848.

P R E F A C E .

IN submitting to the public the following reflections on organization, the Author has to regret that circumstances have induced him to do so in a form as incomplete, and to himself unsatisfactory, as it is remotely distinct from what he had originally contemplated.

Having been engaged some time back in analyzing for Sir Henry Marsh the blood of some of the clinical patients in Steevens' Hospital, the thought was suggested to him of hazarding some observations of his own on the physiology of that fluid.

He then conceived the design of tracing man progressively through the distinct stages of his developement: from the time of conception through utero-gestation to the period of birth; from that to maturity, during the period of his adaptation for the reproduction of his species; and from thence to have followed him in his progress towards decay. His object was to have pointed to what he conceived to be the physiological peculiarities of each of those periods, calling attention to what he regarded as the functions respectively of our so called incidental

constituents, namely, of potash and soda, of lime and magnesia, and of phosphorus and sulphur; while the motive which chiefly induced him to embark in such inquiries was the developement of certain views having a relation to practical medicine, and more especially to inflammation, as well ordinary as that called specific.

He now publishes, leaving such topics for the most part untouched on, while others, which have been but glanced at, he has been prevented from developing at all to the extent he had originally hoped. In relation, for instance, to his observations on the nature of death, it was his intention, in a more advanced part of his work, and when his views as to the nature of a complex organism like man had become somewhat intelligible, to have pointed to the great variety of contingencies upon which the period of death's occurrence, as a natural event, must, in an organism of much complexity, of necessity, be dependent. Such intentions, with others, he has been obliged to abandon.

Having brought his inquiries to their present position, (an outline of what he had hoped to have realized,) the Author was in the autumn of 1847, honoured by the Central Board of Health in Ireland with an appointment as Inspector of the Government Hospitals throughout the country under the temporary Fever Acts, and thus had his attention withdrawn from such pursuits.

In the spring of 1848, while in the discharge of his official duties as Inspector of Hospitals, he contracted malignant typhus fever, and on recovery was induced to leave Ireland for a time. He has now returned, and finding that other avocations, as well as considerations of a different kind, make it imperative on him to abandon his original intention, he feels somewhat reluctant to carry into execution his primary impulse of committing so unfinished a fragment to the flames. Trusting, then, to their leniency towards his many defects, and, it may be, his numerous errors, the Author now ventures to submit his reflections as they stand to the indulgent consideration of his professional brethren. His regret at being unable to put into execution his contemplated plan has, at the same time, been lessened by the reflection, that should his foundation possess any firmness, the superstructure will be erected by abler workmen; while (which is, perhaps, the more likely result) should it prove to be unstable, escaping the painful realization of a laboured application of valueless views, he shall be spared the mortification of seeing his edifice in the position of the house which was built upon sand.

H. F.

Some apology may be required for the application to which the term "physics" has in the following obser-