

**HISTORY OF MEDICINE FROM
THE EARLIEST AGES
TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

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History of Medicine from the Earliest Ages to the Commencement of the Nineteenth Century by
Robley Dunglison

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HISTORY OF MEDICINE

FROM THE

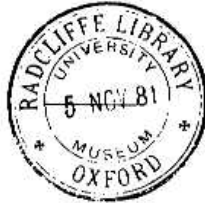
EARLIEST AGES TO THE COMMENCEMENT
OF THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY

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PREFACE.

THE history of the progressive steps in the development of medicine, embraced in these pages, is an embodiment of the course of lectures delivered by my father at the University of Virginia many years since. The arduous duties devolved upon him in that institution covered a much more comprehensive field than would be possible or practicable at the present day. The labor now usually allotted to almost an entire faculty of professors was there assigned to him alone; for, according to the terms of his appointment, he was expected "to teach to the best of his ability, and with due diligence, Anatomy, Surgery, THE HISTORY OF THE PROGRESS AND THEORIES OF MEDICINE, Physiology, Materia Medica, and Pharmacy." Such an aggregation of branches of instruction must have severely taxed the energies, while it doubtless stimulated the ambition, of the then young professor.

It seemed to be the desire of Thomas Jefferson, at that time Rector of the University, and of those associated with that illustrious personage in its government, that the student should learn something of the earlier progress of the science and the art, while he was at the same time pursuing a course of instruction in the usual technical details of a collegiate medical education. It was a wise provision that thus incorporated with the other

features of a didactic course a knowledge of medical literature, which, however valuable, is generally considered as an accomplishment rather than as an indispensable necessity. The students of those times were therefore, in this particular, a step in advance of the condition of their successors of the present day, who are left to gather their information on the previous state of medicine in whatever manner they may find it practicable or convenient to do so, after graduation. Even at this period, however, the difficulty arises that there is scarcely a convenient congenial work on the history of medicine to which they can have access, and the study of this subject is therefore usually wholly neglected.

It is believed that the present work will supply the want, long felt by the profession, of a condensed history of the progress of medicine, presenting all the main facts in systematic order, avoiding, as much as possible, prolixity or unnecessary discussion of the merits of men and theories, and not laying any claim whatever to the title of an exhaustive treatise. When these lectures were delivered, the works of Freind, Sprengel, and a few other foreign authors, were the main reliance of the medical historiographer. It is but just to state that some of the material used in the lectures, on which this volume is based, were derived from these trustworthy sources. Some portions, especially those referring to the history of the progress of medicine among the most primitive nations, are translated or condensed from the celebrated *Geschichte der Arzneykunde* of Kurt Sprengel, published near the beginning of this century.

The section included in brackets, relating to American medical history, has been added by the Editor, to give greater completeness to the work.

R. J. D.

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