

**A TREATISE CONCERNING THE
INFLUENCE OF THE SUN AND
MOON UPON HUMAN BODIES.
TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN BY
THOMAS STACK**

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A Treatise concerning the Influence of the Sun and Moon upon Human Bodies. Translated from the Latin by Thomas Stack by Richard Mead

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RICHARD MEAD

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A
T R E A T I S E
concerning the
I N F L U E N C E
of the
S U N and M O O N
upon
H U M A N B O D I E S,
and
the D I S E A S E S thereby produced.



B Y
R I C H A R D M E A D,
Fellow of the Royal Colleges of Physicians at *London*
and *Edinburgh*, and of the Royal Society,
and Physician to His Majesty.

Translated from the *Latin*, under the Author's Inspection,
By *THOMAS STACK*, M. D. F. R. S.

Rationalem puto medicinam esse debere; instrui vero ab evi-
dentibus causis, obscuris omnibus non a cogitationis artificis,
sed ab ipsa arte rejectis. Cels. in Præfat.



L O N D O N :
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the Prince of WALES, in *New Bond-street*, MDCCLXVIII.



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HAVING resolved, at the instance of some friends, to give a second edition of this small Treatise, I thought it incumbent on me, to read it over attentively; in order to make such additions and improvements, as above forty years experience might have suggested to me since its first publication. Accordingly, in this review, I have explained some mathematical matters in a clearer manner than I had formerly done; and I have illustrated and confirmed the medicinal part by several additional observations and cases, which may prove useful in the practice of physic. And indeed, that a due consideration of this subject is extensively

A 2 useful

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useful to a physician, will appear with sufficient evidence, from the various kinds of diseases, the courses and returns of which I have herein shewn to depend on the different positions and revolutions of the Sun and Moon. Now, though a previous acquaintance with the *Mathematical principles of natural philosophy* be requisite for comprehending this subject in its full extent; yet as those, who are little affected by geometrical demonstrations, may possibly be convinced by a number of facts, I shall not, with respect to this little work, insist on that saying of *Plato* :

ΟΤΔΕΙΣ ΑΓΕΩΜΕΤΡΗΤΟΣ ΕΙΣΙΤΩ.

Let none unskilled in geometry enter here.

London,
July 1. 1746.

P R E F A C E



P R E F A C E.

AS the study of physic has in all ages undergone various changes, according to the different opinions of philosophers; I have often wondered, how it comes to pass, that, notwithstanding the considerable advances made in the study of nature by the moderns, especially in the last century, this useful art has not received those benefits, which might reasonably be expected from a surer method of reasoning, than men were formerly acquainted with. That some of the moderns, particularly Galilei, Kepler, Torricelli,
and

and Sir Isaac Newton, have made vast improvements in natural philosophy, by joining mathematical reasonings to their inquiries into nature, is well known to the learned world: and yet medicine still deals so much in conjecture, that it hardly deserves the name of a science. Whether this be owing to the nature of the art, as being incapable of sure principles; or rather, to the artists, who having got into a wrong track, will not take the pains to return into the right road; may possibly be a matter of inquiry on some other occasion. In the meantime, in order to prove, how beneficial the study of geometry must be to physicians, as well for investigating the causes of diseases, as for finding proper remedies for them; I have attempted to explain a very difficult question, concerning the courses and returns of some distempers;

P R E F A C E. vii

pers ; the nature of which is such, that it cannot be thoroughly well handled by any other means.

THUS I am necessitated, in this disquisition, to enter into a few more minute calculations, than a medical subject might seem to require. Wherefore the reader ought to have some knowledge of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy; or at least, understand the learned and sagacious Dr. Halley's Theory of the Tides, upon the principles of that great philosopher, as published in the Philosophical Transactions. And those, who have no taste for mathematical studies, may, if they please, pass over this part of the work. For my part, I never expect to acquire reputation by algebraical calculations, thoroughly sensible of the mediocrity of my genius in that branch of learning. But I flatter

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flatter myself, that these sheets will be found to contain some histories and instructions, from which even those, who despise all reasoning in physic, and rely on experience alone, will reap benefit in practice: which indeed is the main design of this little Treatise.

*THE field is large, in which we run our career; nor are the innumerable evils, with which we are daily surrounded, to be remedied by any one method. The two great pillars of medicine are experience and reason; and he that has no confidence in the latter, at least bids the fairer towards relieving the sick, in proportion to his stock of the former. But yet the business of our profession requires the joint assistance of both; because a rational theory will teach a man to apply
his*