

**YELLOW FEVER, A
NAUTICAL DISEASE; ITS
ORIGIN AND PREVENTION**

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Yellow Fever, a Nautical Disease; Its Origin and Prevention by John Gamgee

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JOHN GAMGEE

**YELLOW FEVER, A
NAUTICAL DISEASE; ITS
ORIGIN AND PREVENTION**

Dr. George Peck
With the Author's kind regards

YELLOW FEVER

A NAUTICAL DISEASE.

LANE LIBRARY

ITS ORIGIN AND PREVENTION.

BY
JOHN GAMGEE.

"AS FAR AS WE KNOW, LOW TEMPERATURE IS THE ONLY AGENCY THAT CAN BE
RELIED ON SAFELY TO DESTROY THE INFECTION OF THIS DISEASE."—*Dr. Carpenter.*

"FROST PUTS AN END SUDDENLY TO OUR EPIDEMIC. ART NEVER CAN DO BET-
TER THAN TO IMITATE NATURE."—*Dr. J. C. Faget.*



NEW YORK:
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY,
549 AND 551 BROADWAY.

1879.

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1879

TO

MRS. ELIZABETH THOMPSON.

MADAM: Mankind is forgetful. Perhaps I should say mankind is exacting. Every generous thought and every noble deed, assimilated for man's growth and development, is lost to sight in the very act.

"Time hath a wallet at his baek,
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion ;
A great siz'd monster of ingratitude:
Those scraps are good deeds past ; which are devoured
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
As done."

You caused the investigation of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1878. You started our dead friend, John M. Woodworth, in the excellent work which demanded one more martyr. His willing, sleepless brain and frame, stirred by your impulse, found rest only in death.

What remains? For two centuries the gnawing canker of commerce, on the Atlantic coast of America, has been that pestilence, destructive to more property than lives, but which is so well calculated by its appearance, in bustling seaports, to create panics and distract the wisest councilors.

You have brought order out of chaos. A Central Authority now coördinates for good the many willing, who, seeking the best, often attained the worst. The result is manifest. The public will be saved from that never-ending conflict of medical opinion, powerful in crushing bookshelves and powerless to save one human life. Ultimately and soon Yellow Fever will be counted with the plagues that were.

A common object, a common purpose, a common good—aimed at and secured with the same ease as touching a button atomized the Hell Gate rocks. To you the country owes this touch—a touch of human nature making the whole world kin.

With grateful appreciation of your kind friendship, I remain, madam,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN GAMGEE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *August 18, 1879.*

P R E F A C E .

A sound medical philosophy is fast becoming a reality. Whoever in the future may prove its eloquent exponent, only a John Hunter or a Helmholtz can be equal to the task. It demands a man of true genius, chained to the car of experimental physics, capable of piercing the bubbles of tradition, strong in marshaling facts and figures, prompt and clear with his relentless logic.

The science of thermo-dynamics had to be born to render this possible. Lomonossow, Rumford, Joule, Mayer, Clausius, Rankine, Sir William Thomson, and Hirn had to do their work. This science is no branch of other sciences. It is the groundwork on which astronomy, biology, pathology, and all other exact studies must be based. Writers like Dr. La Roche, whose work on Yellow Fever is a monument of painstaking zeal and industry, will continue to amass data, so slightly clouded by the fashionable opinions of their time that the vigorous reaping machine of the future may garner ready-stacked treasures.

Every reasonable hypothesis must expedite the future demonstrations. It is absolutely essential to broad scientific development. The record of known truths and the views propounded in the following pages may therefore serve an important purpose. With the confidence of just perception, guided by a

very varied experience, I commend to all the means whereby the prompt extinction of yellow fever on the Atlantic coast of the New World is, in my humble opinion, a matter of certainty.

To Dr. J. C. Faget, of New Orleans, now pertains the credit of having first formulated the idea of resorting to artificial refrigeration for the purification of ships. His clear exposition of the probable origin and definite course of yellow fever, in the shipping and seaport towns, has recently given precision and directness to my labors. His name and writings were unknown to me a few weeks since. I shall henceforth hold both in grateful remembrance.

Riggs House, WASHINGTON, D. C., *August 22, 1879.*

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