AN ACCOUNT OF SOME OLD BOOKS IN THE COLLEGE LIBRARY.

By COLONEL CHARLES H. MELVILLE, C.M.G.

Army Medical Service (Retired Pay).

(Concluded from p. 438.)

IV.

SIMPLICIUM / MEDICAMENTORUM / EX NOVO ORBE DELA-TORUM, QUORUM IN / MEDICINA USUS / EST, HISTORIA, / Hispanic serînone descripta a D. Nicolao / MONARDIS, Hospallesi / Medicò; / Latio deinde donata, & annotationibus, iconibusque / affabre / depictis illustrata a CAROLO / CLUSIO Atrebatæ / ALTERA EDITIO. / ANTVERPIAE, / Ex officina Christophori Plantini, / Architypographi / Regii. / M.D.LXXIX.

Woodcut on title page: hand issuing out of clouds and holding a compass, encircled with a band on which motto, LABORE ET CON-STANTIA is inscribed. Surrounded by a decorative design. On reverse of title page a “Summa Privilegii” in same terms as in case of No. II. Pages numbered to 34. Three pages of index. Bound up with No. II.

The author, Nicolas Monardes, was a native of Seville, and studied Medicine at Alcala de Henarez. He was chiefly a naturalist, and wrote several books. He died in 1578. His publications were:

- De secunda vena in pleuritis, inter Graecos et Arabes concordia Hispan. 1539, 4to. Antwerp, 1564, 8vo.
- De Rosa et partibus ejus. Antwerp, 1565, 8vo.
- Dos libras de las cosas que se traca de los Indias occidentales, que sirven al uso de Medicina. Seville, 1565, 12mo.; 1569 and 1580, 4to. The editions in 4to. (augmented by a third book), Burgos, 1578; Venice, 1585, 4to. Clusius translated the first two books, Antwerp, 1574 and 1579, in 8vo. Our copy belongs to the second of these editions. The third book was also translated into Latin by Clusius, Anvers, 1582, 8vo., and into French by Colin, in Lyons, 1619, 8vo.
- Libro de dos Medicinas excellentissimas contra todo veneno la Piedra Bezaar y la yerva Escorsonera. Seville, 1580, 8vo.
- Libro que trate de la Nieve. Seville, 1591, 8vo. (Praises snow water as a beverage).
- Trattato de la Grandezza del Hiero. Seville, 1574, 4to. This book was also translated by Clusius under the title “Nicolai Monardi Libri tres magna Medicini secreta et varia experimenta continentes.” Lugdun, 1601, 8vo. (The first book treats of the virtues of bezoar, the second of iron and its properties, and the last of snow and its advantages.)
Charles H. Melville

Del Eseto da varias yervas. Seville 1571, 8vo.

There is also an English translation by John Frampton, in 1577, named "Joyeful newes out of the Newe Founde Worlde." This is believed to contain the first mention in the English language of tobacco.

An account has already been given of Clusius, and of Plantin the publisher, who was a personal friend of both authors, in the notice on No. II.

This book is very much like that already noticed (No. II) but is confined to the New World, whereas García wrote chiefly about the East. The most interesting portion undoubtedly is that which refers to tobacco, for which many therapeutic uses are given. It is recommended as a cure for toothache, and as a preventive of dental sepsis; as a remedy for asthma and persistent cough; for dyspepsia; for worms, both tape and round; for nephritis, for pains in the joints, and as an antidote for arrow poison. On this last point evidence is adduced from its use in the treatment of wounds received during an attack by the Indians, and also from an experiment carried out by the "Rex ipse Catholicus" who desiring to test the powers of the drug, ordered a dog to be wounded in the throat. Into the wound some of the poison was first poured, and then some juice of tobacco leaves; in addition a compress of leaves was tied over the wound. "Liberatus est canis, non sine omnium admiratione."

An interesting description is given of its use for the purpose of divination by Indian priests. "It is the habit of the Indians to consult their priests as to the event of war, and other matters of great moment. The priest who is consulted burns a few dried leaves of the plant and takes some of the smoke into his mouth through a cane or tube. He then falls down as if rapt into an ecstacy, bereft of all movement, and thus remains for some time. The effects of the smoke having passed off he returns to himself, and says—that he has consulted on the matter with a demon. He then furnishes an ambiguous reply of such a nature, that whatever the event may prove to be, he may easily persuade the people that he had foretold it. In this manner these barbarous men are miserably deceived."

Another use is mentioned. "Our Indians when exhausted with carrying loads or other hard work, inhale the smoke of tobacco, and therewith fall down as if out of their minds; when roused they feel that their powers are recuperated. Negro slaves in imitation of them too often follow their example, from which it follows that their masters beat them severely, and to take away all temptation of an excessive use burn the tobacco." "The Indians also use tobacco to alleviate thirst and hunger as follows. They burn the shells of shell fish, and pound them like lime. They then mix this with the leaves of tobacco and make a mass of the mixture. From this they roll pills larger than a pea which they dry in the shade. These are set aside for future use. If they have to make a journey through deserts where neither food nor water are to be found they take a store of these pills, and place one between the lower lip and the teeth, sucking the juice assiduously. When one is finished they replace it by
another, and so on till the journey is finished, sometimes for three days, sometimes for four. By this means they say that neither hunger nor thirst trouble them. The cause of this I take to be that the juice of these pills draws down the mucous humours (humores pituitos) from the brain, which being swallowed and taken into the stomach, damp down the natural heat, but are eventually consumed by it (the stomach) in the absence of other food; as may be observed in many animals, who remain all winter in their lairs, without any store of nourishment, by reason that their natural heat is preserved by the consumption of their fat, which they have accumulated during the summer."

Monardis concludes his treatise with a letter which he had received from a certain Petrus de Osma, a Spanish officer who apparently had travelled a good deal in Peru, and kept his eyes open. The most interesting part of it is that in which de Osma makes mention of the bezar stone. He says that when on a hunting expedition in the mountains he tried to get information from his natives as to what portion of the particular animal, in which the stone was said to be found, contained it. They denied, however, any knowledge of the matter (being indeed very unfriendly to us, and loth to impart any of their secrets). An Indian boy, however, of about 10 or 12 years of age, seeing how much interest we had in the matter, showed us inside the animal a small receptacle, or as it were pouch, in which the food is stored, until passed back into the stomach for ruminating. Here the stone was found. The other Indians later on got hold of the lad and sacrificed him. De Osma refers to human sacrifice as "occurring amongst these people. They appear also to have been addicted to cannibalism, but did not favour Spaniards for this purpose, since their flesh was so hard that it had to be "hung" for three or four days, to render it edible.

V.

PHARMACOLOGIA / SEU / MANUDUCTIO / AD / Materiam MEDICAM / IN / QUA / Medicamenta Officinalia Simplicia, / HOC EST / Mineralia, Vegetabilia, Animalia earumque / partes in Medicina Officinis usitata, in Methodum naturalem digesta succincte & accurate describatur, / CUM / notis generum Characteristicis, Specie- / rum Synonymis, differentiis & viribus. / Opus omnibus Medicis, Philosophis, / Pharmacopoeis, Chirurgis, / & Phar- / macopoli utilissimum.

δ βηος βραχύς, ἡ τεχνὴ μακρὴ.

A SAMUELE DALE / LONDINI: / Sumptibus Sam. Smith and Benj. Walford / Societatis Regiae Typographorum, ad insignia / Principis in Coemeterio. D Pauli. MDCXCIII.

Carries on fly leaf sanction for publication as follows:—

Hunc librum (cui titulus est PHARMACOLOGIA) dignum censenus; ut typis/mandetur.
Charles H. Melville

Thomas Burwell, Propraeses
Samuell Collins
Edwardus Hulse
Richardus Morton
Joh. Bateman

Datum 5. Septembris A.D. 1692/in Comitiis Censoribus ex aedibus,/ Collegii nostri.

Dedication:

CELEBERRIMO/COLLEGIO REGALI/Medicorum Londinensium,/
HAEC/NATURAE SPOLIA /ET/ARTIS ORGANA /CONSECRAT/
Devotissimus AUTOR.

Preface of five pages; list of abbreviations, two pages; Officina Simplicium, thirty-one pages; Errata, one page; Advertisements, three pages. The body of the work consists of 656 pages, and is followed by four pages of: Catalogus Librorum Medicorum, qui prostant Venalium apud Sam Smith & Benjamin Walford Londini 1693.

Bound in leather octavo. Ribbed back; no sign of title label. Lightly tooled boards.

Dale was born, probably, in the parish of St. Mary, Whitechapel, in the year 1659, his father being a “silk thrower.” He was apprenticed to an apothecary, in 1674, for eight years, and subsequently went into practice at Braintree, Essex, where he probably made the acquaintance of John Ray, the well-known naturalist, whose intimate friend and executor he afterwards became. It does not appear that he ever took any medical degree, or became either a member of the Society of Apothecaries, or a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians. He died on June 6, 1739, and was buried in the Dissenters’ burial ground at Bocking, near Braintree. He was a careful and hardworking botanist, and Ray acknowledged himself as much indebted to him on account of his critical knowledge of plants. Dale’s Herbarium is now in the British Museum and exhibits signs of careful and painstaking work.

His chief work was the PHARMACOLOGIA, of which the first edition in 12mo. was published in 1693. The copy in the College Library belongs to this edition. A supplement was produced in 1705, a second edition in 1710, and a third (in folio) in 1737. The British Museum possesses a copy of each edition, but the Physicians’ and Surgeons’ Libraries have only the later issues. He also wrote an appendix to Silas Taylor’s “History and Antiquities of Harwich and Dovercourt” which forms the bulk of the completed work, and gives a full account of the natural history of the district.

That Dale was in a stronger position as a botanist than as a pharmacologist is very evident from a study of his work. As long as he is dealing with the vegetable kingdom he is clearly on his own ground, and writing on a subject with which he is familiar. His descriptions of plants are terse and clear, and yet complete in all necessary detail. Had he been
Some Old Books in the College Library

wise he would have limited himself to writing a herbal. The scheme of his work is however much more ambitious, and he undoubtedly found the labour of completion hard. In his preface he complains, with an obvious reminiscence of Virgil, "De Ortu et Progressu Simplicium Medicamentorum scribere; majoris molis est, quam Romanam condere gentem."

He claims to be a follower of Bacon, relying on observation of the processes of Nature, not on imagination and conjecture, and complains not without some justification of the impostors, who through sloth and ignorance have introduced confusion into the Commonwealth of Medicine; preferring rather to err through laziness, and slay pedantically (otiose errare & erudite necare) than to work out carefully, and examine, the properties of the drugs in daily use.

It is interesting to note the struggle going on in his mind between the desire to adhere to his principles, and the necessity of saying something about substances of which he is clearly absolutely ignorant, in order to complete the scheme he had laid down for his book.

This is particularly noticeable in the section dealing with precious stones. As regards the diamond he rejects it as a possible test for adultery, and considers that its value in cognate directions is fabulous. When it comes to the question of its administration as a cure for dysentery he evidently prefers to found his objection on its excessive cost, the minimum dose being one drachm.

He is apparently not prepared to deny that the amethyst in two drachm doses can inhibit intoxication, but objects that only a Prince could afford such a prophylactic. On the general question of the use of gems he concludes that even if they do possess some value the same results could be produced from one or other of the commonest herbs.

When again he deals with the animal kingdom he gets very wide of his ideal, and here less excusably. Precious stones, and patients in a position to pay for them, may have been rare in Braintree, but the humbler friends of man were probably easily enough met with. It is, one would think, difficult to support with any actual experimental evidence the exhibition of the louse in jaundice, or the use of earthworms as galactagogues. Doubtless the former, if, as recommended, it is placed inside the meatus urinarius, will incite to micturition, and the common bug may have the same power, but the use of spiders and stagbeetles as amulets to ward of paroxysms of intermittent fever, particularly the quartan variety, must one would think have been arrived at by that process "fingendi aut excogitandi," which he in his preface so stoutly condemns.

The human body, dead or alive, was also an ample storehouse of remedies. The details are unpleasant; it may suffice to say that without distinction of age, sex, or condition, no portion or secretion of the human body was rejected from use in the treatment of disease.

At the outset, looking back, one is at first disgusted, and later amused by the various materiae medicae used, and the virtues ascribed to them.
Later still one sees the justification. There seems to have been two factors at work. One was the realization of the absolute unity of nature. All things, the parts of the body, the various members of the animal and vegetable kingdom, and the various diseases, had certain definite qualities of dryness or humidity, heat or cold, and by means of these any one was able to counteract or supplement the action of any of the others. Thus in one place as an argument in favour of the efficacy of a certain drug in a certain disease it is urged not that it has been tried and found useful, but that because it possesses a certain degree of dryness and heat, it must counteract the action of a certain disease, which has the necessary opposed qualities.

The other factor present was intellectual courage. However much they might boast of their knowledge to impress the vulgar (after all an assumption of infallibility is not unknown amongst successful practitioners at any period of medical history) the best of them realized their ignorance. It was only by working from the widest base that they could possibly arrive at truth: everything had to be tried before the real truth could be attained. Of course we are nearer the truth than they were, since we have had their experience to help us. At the same time if no remedial agents were to be used except those whose intimate reaction on the body could be explained, the professional arsenal would be considerably barer than it is.

Take, for instance the use of radium in the removal of tumours. It certainly does seem to remove them, but what difference after all is there (if it comes to a question of actual knowledge of the agent) between wearing one or more radium tubes for cancer, and carrying an amulet to protect one against rheumatism or ague. I have not the slightest doubt that Dale could have produced plenty of cases in which a stag beetle had been worn as an amulet, and the next paroxysm of quartan fever had failed to appear. His failures he would ignore, as we are all apt to do when we want to prove a particular point.

So I am inclined to be particularly indulgent to our professional ancestors. We shall probably need a good deal of the same indulgence ourselves from our professional offspring, and that is particularly true of those of us who have given hostages to fortune in the shape of books.

Dale mentions in his preface the friends to whom he was chiefly indebted for advice and help, about whom, since a man may be known by the company he keeps, a few words may be not out of place. Of Ray and Hans Sloane it is unnecessary to speak. Martin Lister, who is of the company, came of a well-known medical family, his father, two of his uncles and his son all belonging to the medical profession. I do not know if the greatest holder of the name belonged to the same stock: it would be interesting to know. Lister was a Cambridge man (John's) and became a fellow of his college. He was a naturalist and antiquarian, presenting a considerable number of coins, Roman altars, etc., to the Ashmolean.
He travelled as far as Paris, in the train of the Earl of Portland, in 1698, and his account of the visit (included in Pinkerton's voyages) has a certain historical value. He is also supposed to have been one of the first to suggest the making of geological maps. He was an M.D. of Oxford, a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, and second Physician-in-Ordinary to Queen Anne. Evidently a man of wide interests and knowledge, on the top of which it is strange to hear that he was a strong conservative in his opinions and a severe critic of Sydenham. He died in 1712.

Samuel Doody was an apothecary in Staffordshire, in succession to his father. Head of the Botanical Garden at Chelsea and a F.R.S. A friend of Ray and Sloane. His attention was directed chiefly to cryptogams.

James Newton lived from 1664 to 1750. He kept a private asylum near the turnpike at Islington, and studied botany to divert his mind from his otherwise depressing occupation. He apparently designed a herbal, but only the engravings, 176 in number, and a list of references is extant.

Tancred Robinson: the longest lived but one of the circle. Born before the Restoration, he saw the Stuarts go, and also the failure of their last serious effort to recover the throne, dying in 1748. Sir Hans Sloane who was born a year or two after him lived five years later. Robinson does not appear to have written anything beyond occasional papers. No systematic publication is to his credit. He was F.R.S. and Physician-in-Ordinary to George I.

Leonard Plukenet, who is supposed to have been at Westminster under Busby, was an assiduous botanist. His publications contain 2,740 figures of plants with descriptive letterpress. He kept a small herb garden in Old Palace Yard; though a M.D. in practice, it may be conjectured that he spent more time on his plants than his patients.

In fine Dale's friends seem to have been honest hard-working botanists and naturalists, a small constellation revolving round the greater luminaries Ray and Sloane. "Honest hodmen of science" as Huxley described, or is said to have described, Gosse. After all it is greater fame than most of us attain to.

VI.

One hundred and fifty-three / CHYMICAL / APHORISMS / Briefly containing / Whatsoever belongs to the / CHYMICAL SCIENCE / Done by the labour / and study of / EREMITA · SUBURBANUS / Printed in Latin at Amsterdam / Octob. 1687 / To which are added / Some other Phylosophic Canons / or Rules pertaining to the / HERMETICK SCIENCE / Made English and published for the / sake of the Sedulous Labourers in true / Chymistry / By Chr. Packe, Philo-Chymico-Medicus / London printed for the Author, and / are to be sold by W. Cooper at the Pelican / in Little Britain; and D. Newman at the / Kings-arms in the Poultry 1688.

The preface by the translator explains how the Chemical Aphorisms came into his hand from Vienna, via Antwerp, and when “I had perused them and well weighed them, with what little judgment I could, I thought that I could do nothing more grateful to the Sons of Art, than to publish them in English, which I have done with all the care and exactness I could.” After a careful consideration of the matter I have come to the conclusion that the only pertinent part of this preface is the remark about “little judgment.” The book indeed appears, to me, one of the last flickers of the Alchemic lamp. It is strange to think that it lasted so long; yet even Boyle (“Father of Chemistry and Brother to the Earl of Cork”) who was certainly a clear thinker had not quite emancipated himself from those superstitions. And he was an old man when this book came out.

The Aphorisms compose a sort of alchemist’s litany, consisting of short detached statements, as follows:

Aphorism 6. Nevertheless they (the Adepti) have delivered it (Alchemy) but confusedly, enigmatically, and under Allegories.
Aphorism 7. Lest it should fall into the hands of the unworthy.
Aphorism 8. But that it should be known to its own sons only.

Such a method of composition, unless intended to meet the demands of liturgical antiphony, when of course it is reasonable enough, can, one feels, be intended merely to spread a little knowledge over a very wide space. The aphorisms in general consist of a description of the metals, as then known, viz: gold, silver, tin, lead, copper, and iron: their relations to each other, and their composition, as for instance:

Aph. 21. The Matter of Metals is either remote or proximate.
Aph. 22. The Remote is the Rays of the Sun and Moon, by whose concourse all Natural Compounds are produced.
Aph. 23. The Proximate is Sulphur and Argent vive, or the Rays of the Sun and Moon determined to a Metallic Production, under the form of certain humid, unctious, and viscous Substance.
Aph. 24. In the Union of this Sulphur and Argent vive, consisteth the form of Metals.

The basic idea, and I suppose that there is at least a possibility that...
we may come back (or go on, is there much difference?) to that sooner or later, is the essential unity of metals, as thus:—

Aph. 60. All the Metals therefore are of the same Original, and arise from the same Principles: and thus naturally to,

Aph. 67. Which transmutation of the imperfect Metals into perfect; that it is not only possible,

Aph. 68. But also true;

Aph. 69. Is confirmed by the common opinion of Philosophers, and by Experience.

The Aphorisms are followed by "Some Phylosophick Rules or Canons, concerning the Stone of Philosophers" 157 in number taken, according to the preface, from Bernardus G. Penotus a Portu Aquitano, intended in conjunction with the aforementioned Aphorisms to "together make up a Compendium of the Chymical Art, and may serve the studious for a vade mecum, or small pocket Companion, with which he may converse in his retiresments." These date back to 1582, and are quite unintelligible to anyone who has not studied Alchemy. Evidently some previous possessor of the book has done so, and found them of value, for here and there paragraphs are marked in the margin as especially valuable. The whole concludes with a few parting words, in that exquisite seventeenth century language, which is almost as impossible to recover in its dignified rhythm and well balanced sentences as the science of alchemy itself.

"Here thou hast (friendly reader) those Phylosophic Canons without which whosoever thou art, thou wilt hardly attain to thy wished-for End. If thou receive these Hermetick Fundamentals with a grateful mind, and exercise thy Self in this Theory with a pious Meditation, time may hereafter bring forth the Praxis of those Rules, not that imperfect or maimed one, which I have shewed to some, but Intire and Compleat confirmed by many Arguments, and solid Reasons. In the mean time, Farewel."

Following on the Canons comes a Postscript to the Reader containing proposals for the publication of all the works of "that indefatigable and highly experienced Chymist, GLAUBER, in one entire Folio." Glauber is known to most of us as the originator of an extremely useful laxative, which, under disguise, has probably made the fortunes of many patent medicine men. His activities were much wider, however, and Packe says, "That before his death Glauber was Master of some Phylosophick secrets, I verily believe by his manner of writing; and himself professeth in one of his last Writings, speaking concerning the secret Fire of Artephius, That he could now, sitting still in his Chamber, do more with an Egg-shell than heretofore with all his Furnaces and Glasses." This book eventually came out by subscription in 1689.

Christopher Packe himself appears to have been a quack doctor, styling himself a Professor of Chemical Medicine. He does not appear to have possessed any medical qualification, which renders the fact that his book
received the imprimatur of the College of Physicians the more extraordinary. Perhaps it may be accounted for by the fact that he was under the patronage of the Hon. Robert Boyle. He wrote several other books, but they do not bear the stamp of much originality.


His son, Edmond, took to medicine and seems to have started a family tradition.

The author of the book advertised at the end of the book under notice, "Myographia Nova," &c., was a rather noted surgeon at St. Thomas's; he appears to have been appointed by Charles II (to whom he was Surgeon-in-Ordinary) against the wishes of the governors, in 1683. In 1691 the surgeons revolted against the governors; on the strength of their appointment by royal mandamus; but a new Pharaoh having arisen in 1688, the governors, under Sir Robert Clayton, got their own way, and the surgeons were, it would seem, turned out. In 1698, Browne applied to be restored without success, but was still surgeon to William III, who apparently did not consider that politics need interfere with a man's professional ability. Browne wrote an interesting account of the process of touching for the King's Evil, under the title of Charisma Basilicon. He states that 92,107 cases were so treated between 1660 and 1682. Browne, though a Norwich man, and apparently a friend or at least acquaintance of the great Sir Thomas, was no relation of that wonderful writer. He died in 1700.

VII.

HISTORIAR/PLANTA-/RUM. Earum imagines, Nomenclaturae, Qualitates, &c., Solum. Accedere Simplicii medicamentsorum facultates, secundum locos ex Dioscoride./Secunda editio.

The whole title page is enclosed in an ornamental classical renaissance border. At foot of page is an oval space in the ornament in which is printed LU-GDUNI. Ad Scuti Mediola/Apud Viduam Ga-/brielis Co^ery./1567.

Above the word HISTORIA in the title some one has written in MS. in the Greek character "Phytologia," followed underneath by the word "seu." A little lower in red ink "Franciscus B. verus possessor."

The book is 12mo, bound in vellum and in good condition, but looks as if it had been rebound at some date. The pages are numbered to 640, including title page. At the foot of the last is: Historiae Plantarum./ Finis.

Pages, renumbered, 1 to 229. Heading on first page SIMPLICIUM/ MEDICAMENTO-/RUM FACULTATES/secundum locos ex/Dioscoride. There are twenty-five pages of index unnumbered.

The book opens with a preface, GABRIEL COTERIUS LECTORIS, which explains the purpose of the book, which is merely a compilation, giving illustrations of plants with their names in several languages, places
where found, and their virtues. The name of the authority is given in each case. It is in fact what it professes to be, a very handy manual. The plates, of which there are upwards of 638, are very clear and accurate. The English names which are not given in the text have been supplied in MS. in the margin, apparently by Franciscus B., whose name appears on the title page.

The second part of the book, on Simple Medicines, is arranged in sections by diseases or rather symptoms, and parts of the body. Thus the first section refers to the head, and begins with "Ad capitis dolorem ex frigidate genitum," which is followed by "Ad Capitis Dolores a calida causa." Then come the Nerves, Eyes, Ears, Teeth, and so on. On page 133 we get another heading, "Simplicium Medicamentorum facultates secundum genera ex Dioscoride." This section is arranged under Diseases, beginning with Fevers and going on to Tumors, Wounds, Ulcers and Poisons. Next we have a heading, page 200, "Simplicium Medicamentorum Facultates, quae corpori, decorem praestant, ex Dioscoride." This begins with baldness, and treats also of depilation, destruction of pediculi, and various unsightly skin affections. Last of all three pages on expulsive drugs for the expulsion of "exuberantes in corpore humores."

Pages 226 and 227 give "Mensurarum et ponderum typi, ad Dioscoridis mentum, Ex Galeno." This gives corresponding values of weights and measures, both liquid and solid.