



***WILLIAM
TAPLIN***

***THE ÆSCULAPIAN
LABYRINTH
EXPLORED; OR,
MEDICAL
MYSTERY
ILLUSTRATED***

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The Æsculapian Labyrinth Explored; Or, Medical Mystery Illustrated

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TO THE ACCOUCHER, OR, MAN-MIDWIFE.

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TO THE CHYMISTS AND DRUGGISTS.

BOOKS lately published by G. KEARSLEY,

TO THE COLLEGE OF WIGS.

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“Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
“My very noble and approved good” Doctors.

The solemnity of your somniferous aspects, no less than the professional gravity of your external ornaments, lay claim to a bow of obedient recollection in passing through W — k-lane to public inspection. As one of the most *popular* descendants from your great progenitor, permit me to acknowledge, I revere the *vast extent* of your *medical abilities*; that I feel most forcibly the *enormous weight* of your *accumulated learning*, and *tremble* at the very idea of your *experimental abilities*.

Condescend, dread Sirs, to sanction this analization of *Æsculapian imposition* and *medical mystery*, with such proof of approbation, as the dignity of a *diploma*, and the muscular rigidity of *physical countenance* will permit you to bestow; nor let it be the less entitled to your favor, that a long list of *valetudinarians* (to whom you are daily pensioners) become partakers of the *banquet of mirth*; or the small fry of *pharmacopolists* (your humble dependents) *for once* permitted to take a seat at the *same table* with yourselves.

Anxiously solicitous to obtain belief, that

“I shall nothing extenuate,
“Nor set down aught in malice,”

you may in justice conclude me,
Sage Sirs!

Your very candid,
And obedient representative,
GREGORY GLYSTER.



THE
ÆSCULAPIAN LABYRINTH
EXPLORED.

TO THE PHYSICIAN.

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Having passed the tedious years of abstruse study and intense application, necessary to your initiation in the mysteries of physic, and replete with a perfect remembrance of all the requisites to this *great art*, we suppose you recently emerged from the obscurity of *dreary walls* and *dull professors*, a phenomænon of universal knowledge and *family* admiration. The various and elaborate examinations you have passed, with scholastic approbation, having relieved you from the constantly accumulating load of anxiety, you are at length launched into life under a new character, and daily pant to display the dignity of your profession, in the happy appendage of *M. D.* to the prescriptive initials of your name.

You are no longer to be considered a student labouring in the heavy trammels of *unintelligible* lectures upon *philosophy, anatomy, botany, chemistry*, and the *materia medica*, with all their distinct and consequent advantages; or investigating the actual properties of *electrical fire* and MAGNETIC ENTHUSIASM, but stamped (by royal authority) with the full force of physical agency, and have derived from your *merit* unlimited permission to *cure, "kill or destroy,"* to the best of your knowledge and abilities, "so help you "God." The professional path you now begin to tread, is so

replete with danger, and the probability of success so very uncertain, that the fertile world have not omitted to make it proverbial, "A physician never begins to get bread, till he has no "teeth to eat it." The truth of this may perhaps have been *lamentingly* acknowledged by some of the most *learned men* that ever became dependant upon a *capricious* world for *precarious* subsistence.

This palpable fact may concisely serve to convince you, your embarkation (with all its alluring prospects) will not only be encumbered with difficulties, but your ultimate gratification of success exceedingly doubtful. Great depth of learning may afford consolation to the equity of your own feelings (if you fortunately possess them) but it is by no means necessary to the acquisition of *public opinion*, however it may tend to contribute to the general good.

To avoid entering into a sentimental disquisition upon the *honesty, integrity, or strict propriety* of the maxims I proceed to lay down for your future conduct to obtain professional splendour, and *insure success*; I avail myself of the privilege I possess, to wave every consideration of the *conscientious kind*, and once more observe (without adverting to their consistency) they are adduced only as the unavoidable traits of character, and modes of behaviour, by which alone (in the present age) you can possibly hope for the least proportional share of practice as a physician.

At your first public entré, when the college list and court calendar have announced your qualifications and advancement to the wondering world (that such list should annually increase) let your friends and relatives be doubly assiduous in propagating reports (almost incredible) of your

great humanity, extensive abilities, and unbounded benevolence.—This will answer the intended purpose to a certainty; crowds of the afflicted and necessitous will surround your habitation, and render your place of residence constantly remarkable to all classes, who naturally enquiring the character of the proprietor, will eagerly extol your charity in contributing your “advice to the poor GRATIS.”

This method alone will gain you popularity with those that rank in the line of mediocrity; with *their superiors*, success must be insured more from the efforts of *interest*, than either *personal merit*, or *sound policy*. Your attention to the wants of the poor, must soon be regulated by the preponderation of more weighty considerations; as you *affected* to alleviate their distresses from the motive of commiseration, prompting you to promote *their ease*, you have an undoubted right to shake off such superfluous visits, to secure *your own*. In this deceptive charity, some degree of discrimination must be put in practice, for you will sometimes perceive one among the train, whose apparel or behaviour must necessarily give you reason to suspect he has assumed the cloak of necessity to save *his fee*, and avail himself of your professional liberality in such case, call to your aid a look of true *medical austerity*, and let him understand “advice is seldom of any value or “effect unless it is paid for;” this will frequently answer the purpose, and procure what you did not expect.

On the contrary, so soon as you observe your prescriptions have “*worked wonders*” upon two or three of the most *credulous* and *superstitious*, who are extolling your