

**THE PARISH LEECH: A
MEDICAL
METRICAL MEDLEY,
BY A "PARISH DOCTOR"**

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The Parish Leech: A Medical Metrical Medley, by a "Parish Doctor" by Robert Fowler

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ROBERT FOWLER

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MEDICAL METRICAL MEDLEY.

BY
A "Parish Doctor."

LONDON:
NICHOLLS BROS. GREAT JAMES STREET, W.C.

1870.
Two Shillings and Sixpence.

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Medical Metrical Medley,

BY

A "PARISH DOCTOR."

London:

NICHOLLS BROS., PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS,
* GREAT JAMES STREET, BEDFORD ROW, W.C.

1870.

To the Memory of
RICHARD GRIFFIN, Esq., J.P.

FOR MANY YEARS

ONE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICERS OF THE WEYMOUTH UNION,

AND

Chairman of the Poor Law Medical Reform Association

FROM 1856 TO 1868,

WHO, NOTWITHSTANDING THE MANY CALLS ON HIS TIME AND TALENTS,

BOTH IN PAROCHIAL AND PRIVATE PRACTICE,

DEVOTED, WITH UNWHAVERING ASSIDUITY, CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION

TO THE CAUSE OF

POOR LAW MEDICAL REFORM;

AND,

DESPITE MANIFOLD DISCOURAGEMENTS,

PERSEVERED, WITH UNDAUNTED ENERGY AND COURAGE,

(EVEN AFTER HEALING WAS SERIOUSLY BROKEN)

IN HIS ATTEMPTS TO AMELIORATE THE CONDITION

OF THE

OVERWORKED, ILL-USED, UNDERPAID,

"PARISH DOCTOR,"

THIS POEM IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



P R E F A C E .

IF Campbell be correct in his definition, that Poetry is the eloquence of Truth, then forsooth may the Author claim to have the following narrative rhyme styled a Poem. Composed, indeed, as it has been, in the few spare moments which exist in the routine life of a "Parish Doctor" (one, too, who does not profess to a musical ear), it cannot but be—what he fears it is—a perfect jumble of different metres. It was not, however, written for poetical criticism. It originated in a desire to present to the public eye, and, through it, to the public heart—which, 't was thought, would be sooner captivated by a poetical novelty than a lengthened prosaic epistle—a picture of occurrences which, too frequently, not only thwart the onward progress in life, but often abase the spirits and embitter the feelings of Medical Men—more especially of those engaged in the thankless office of Parochial Surgeons.

The Notes and References are given not only as a proof of the veracity of the statements, but also, culled as many of them are

PREFACE.

from sources not frequently resorted to by the general public (but for whose behests it were frequently well were it otherwise), that the people at large may be able to peruse, in a collected form, the very many excellent remarks on the subject by various writers of the day. Thus, it is hoped that not only will the *οἱ πολλοὶ* and the Upper Ten thousand be enabled to thoroughly understand the true position and real condition of the Union Surgeons ; but also that the Legislature of the land will no longer procrastinate in devising further means to abate the grievances of the "Parish Doctors."

Should the perusal of the following "rhyme" tend to so desirable an event, the Author will not be offended should the unanimous judgment of his readers vote him Crabbe's advice to poetical "scribblers"—

Curb then, O youth, these raptures as they rise,
Keep down the evil spirit and be wise ;
Follow your calling, think the Muses foes,
Nor lean upon the *pestle* and compose.—*The Newspaper.*

JULY, 1870.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Numbers in the Text refer to the "Notes and References," arranged, according to their respective Chapters, in an Appendix.

The facts there detailed have happened, or been recorded in the Public Press, during the last fifteen or twenty years. The majority of them date from the earlier part of the period. A few, however, of present day occurrence have been introduced, to prove that the leaven so degrading to those immediately answerable—so destructive of the best zeal and energies of the Medical Service—so injurious to the welfare of the Sick Poor, and so detrimental to the interests of the Ratepayers—is still rampant in the administration of the English Poor Law.

Had space and other exigencies permitted, the recorded facts could have been easily multiplied!

The intelligence of an educated public—instructed by a free Press—has of late been apparently roused to the truism of the dependence of Pauperism on Sickness. It is, therefore, to be sincerely hoped that the pressure on the Legislature will be such, as to preclude the possibility of another "Parish Doctor" finding any groundwork in the future for another "Parish Leech."

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